

JOURNEY

Journal of Tourismpreneurship, Culinary, Hospitality, Convention, and Event Management

POLITEKNIK INTERNASIONAL BALI



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
AS AN ECOTOURISM ENABLER:
EVIDENCE FROM PELIATAN, BALI
Km. Deddy Endra Prasandya

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS'
PERCEPTIONS OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTORS
Jasmine Naizura, Iim Siti Karimah, Yadi Mulyadi

FORMULATION OF TAPIOCA CRACKERS
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JOURNEY

(Journal of Tourismpreneurship, Culinary, Hospitality, Convention and Event Management)

E-ISSN 2654-9999

P-ISSN 2774-1923

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JOURNEY
(JOURNAL of TOURISMPRENEURSHIP, CULINARY, HOSPITALITY,
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PREFACE

Om Swastiastu,

Praise to the God, the Almighty (Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa) Because of his blessings and through the truly efforts of the editorial staff, the JOURNEY Scientific Journal Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026 has been published according to plan. I, as the Director of the Politeknik Internasional Bali (PIB) proudly welcome the publication of this scientific journal, as the implementation of one part of the Three Pillars of Higher Education on the scientific research pillars.

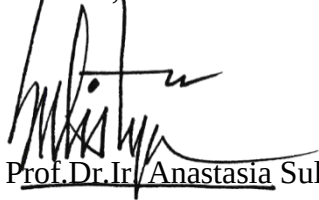
As a private higher educational institution, having a scientific journal is mandatory, as a tool to publish research results and/or scientific thoughts from members of the academic's community, in order to participate in spreading this knowledge to the wider community. These scientific studies can later be used by students, lecturers and other parties in order to develop ideas and advance the world of education and tourism.

Through this opportunity, I really hope that the Lecturers at PIB can carry out one of the dharma (obligations) in the Tri Dharma function of Higher Education in accordance with what is required by Law no. 12 of 2005 and Law no. 14 of 2005.

At last, I would like to express my highest appreciation and deepest gratitude to all the editorial board who have worked hard in the publishing process of this PIB scientific journal. Likewise to all academicians who have contributed their scientific work.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

Tanah Lot, June 30th, 2026
Politeknik Internasional Bali
Director,



Prof. Dr. Ir. Anastasia Sulistyawati, B.A.E., M.S., M.M., M.Mis., M.H., D.Th., Ph.D., D.Ag.



Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 1-20

THE INFLUENCE OF SERVICE QUALITY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF MCDONALD'S GADING SERPONG

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Received: 28/11/2025

Revised: 24/02/2026

Accepted: 22/04/2026

Abstract

McDonald's is a widely recognized fast-food chain known for its efficient service and convenience, particularly through its drive-thru options. Despite this, customers have expressed complaints about inconsistencies in food portions and slow service, which can influence their views on service quality. This study aimed to assess how service quality affects consumer perceptions at the McDonald's Gading Serpong drive-thru. A quantitative approach was taken, using questionnaires distributed to 50 participants, and the data were analyzed through simple linear regression in SPSS. The results indicated that service quality positively and significantly impacts consumer perception, with a correlation (R) value of 0.742 and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). These results highlight the importance of ensuring consistent food portions to foster positive perceptions among customers at McDonald's Gading Serpong.

Keywords: Service Quality, Consumer Perception, Drive Thru, McDonald's

1. INTRODUCTION

Anggraini, Herviana, and Rizma (2024) explain that fast food is a type of food that is not very nutritious but is high in sugar, salt, and fat, and is served quickly. The rise in fast-food popularity is driven by social media promotions that make it appear attractive and practical. Consumers consider fast food an efficient option because it can be obtained quickly. One of the largest global fast-food chains is McDonald's, founded in the United States in 1940 and opening its first branch in Indonesia in 1991 at Sarinah, Jakarta. Today, McDonald's has more than 300 branches, including one in Gading Serpong, and is known for its drive-thru service that allows customers to order without leaving their vehicles.

However, there are still consumer complaints regarding inconsistencies in food portions, especially for items such as sauces or condiments provided by staff, as well as main menu items that are not uniform across orders (Sugiharto et al., 2020). Additionally, some consumers have reported that the service is not always fast and tends to be slow at certain times, such as during long queues at peak hours. These issues can affect consumers' perceptions of efficiency and the reliability of the drive-thru service. Such inconsistencies and service delays may influence consumers' perceptions of service quality, as they assess it based on consistency, time effectiveness, and attention to detail.

When service quality is perceived as inconsistent, it can create a negative view of the brand, whereas fast, friendly, and accurate service can generate a positive perception of the restaurant.

Therefore, McDonald's needs to maintain and improve its service quality, especially for drive-thru services. Good service quality is an important factor in shaping consumer perceptions, as direct interaction between employees and customers significantly influences the restaurant's image in consumers' minds. Friendly, fast, accurate, and consistent service will create a positive impression, while service that fails to meet expectations can diminish McDonald's image and consumer perception. With its strong reputation, consumers have high expectations of McDonald's, making service quality improvement a key priority.

Although drive-thru services are now widely used in the fast-food industry, but on the previous research only has focused on general service quality and customer satisfaction during dine-in or in the overall experience. Furthermore, existing research is limited in its examination of the dimensions of service quality that influence consumer perception of drive-thru service, especially in Indonesia. Also, there are still inconsistency in service times and customer waiting time during the peak hour. This also indicates the need for research that focus spesifically on the service quality factors influencing consumer perceptions of drive-thru services.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of service quality on consumer perception of drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong. Spesifically, this study not only to assess the level of service quality perceived by consumer in drive-thru services but also to analyze consumer perception of their experience during the drive thru process. Furthermore, this research seeks to measure the extent to which service quality significantly influences consumer perceptions. Furthermore, from a theoretical perspective, this study can contribute to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the relationship between service quality and consumer perceptions in drive-thru services. From a practical perspective, these findings are expected to provide additional insights for restaurant management in improving service consistency, customer experience, and efficiency.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A restaurant is a business that provides food to meet consumer needs while offering a place to rest from daily activities (Sihombing & Arnomo, 2023). Fast food is a type of food that can be served in the shortest time possible. Fast food has various forms, ranging from light snacks to full meals (Isnaiar, Norlita, & Oktavia, 2024). According to Cahya, Mulia, and Hidayat (2024), a drive-thru is a business or restaurant service that serves consumers who remain inside their vehicles. Orders are placed and service is provided through a dedicated window without consumers having to get out of their cars. Irawan et al. (2024) explain that drive-thru services offer a practical solution for consumers who want to purchase food without having to enter the restaurant.

2.1 Service Quality Theory

Kotler and Armstrong (2003) argue that service quality refers to the overall characteristics of a product or service that are capable of satisfying needs both directly and indirectly, and can be measured based on consumer perception. Satisfactory service quality gives a positive impression of the provider, while disappointing service leads to a negative impression. According to Yurindera (2023), service quality is defined as

consumer evaluation of how well service standards are delivered consistently to meet their needs and wants. Service quality encompasses how good or bad a service is perceived directly. Examples include speed, consistency, accuracy, and friendliness. Quality service providers are those who consistently meet the needs, wants, and expectations of consumers. Service quality has a significant impact on customer perception of a brand or service (Hidayat, Putra, & Digdowiseiso, 2024). Ulhaq, Hariasih, and Prapanca (2023) explain that service quality is built upon indicators such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Among these indicators, responsiveness contributes the most, reflecting the ability of restaurant staff to respond quickly and accurately to customer needs, requests, and complaints. Based on Kotler and Keller (2016), good service quality will provide customer satisfaction if it meets consumer expectations. Furthermore, the service quality theories comprise five main dimensions such as tangible, empathy, responsiveness, reliability, and assurance. Although this model has widely used in the previous research, but recent studies focused more on how it can be applied in service environments expected to provide rapid service, like drive-thru services.

- a. Tangible aspect in drive-thru service includes physical elements that can be directly observed by customers, such as an organized drive-thru lane, informative digital menu boards, and accessible payment and food pick-up booths. It also includes the cleanliness of the drive-thru area, communication tools (like headsets and speakers) used to facilitate the ordering process, and the neat, professional appearance of staff. These physical elements significantly contribute to customers' perceptions of drive-thru service quality. In the previous studies indicated that the tangible dimensions significantly influence the first impression and also perceived professionalism (Ulhaq et al, 2023). However, in drive-thru aspects, tangible dimension may be under-optimized based on to stronger focus on operational speed, and can potentially reducing their impact on service perception.
- b. Empathy reflects the willingness of employees to pay attention to customer needs and complaints. In drive-thru service, empathy is shown when staff listen to complaints about incorrect or mismatched orders. Good empathy is demonstrated through quick responses and offering solutions, such as replacing incorrect items with the correct ones without causing inconvenience for customers. Yurindera (2023) explained that even a small gesture like attentive listening and also giving quick response of the problem can significantly enhance customer perception. This also suggest that empathy, although limited in duration still plays meaningful role in shaping service experience.
- c. Responsiveness refers to the company's readiness to help customers and provide prompt and accurate service. In drive-thru settings, responsiveness is visible in how quickly staff take orders, serve food, and manage queues. Ulhaq et al., (2023) found that responsiveness has the strongest influence on the customer satisfaction compared to SERVQUAL dimensions. Additionally, fast responses to complaints whether on-site or via social media reflect the company's responsiveness.
- d. Reliability is the ability to deliver consistent, accurate service that meets customer expectations. Sugiharto et al., (2020) founds that frequent order errors and inconsistent in portion can reduce customer trust. In a drive-thru, this is reflected through accurate orders, consistent food portions, and timely service. If the service is inconsistent, such as frequent order mix-ups or uneven portions, customer trust in the restaurant may decline.

- e. Assurance relates to the staff's ability to inspire trust and guarantee service quality. In restaurants, assurance can be seen through friendly staff interactions at the drive-thru and the certainty that orders will be handled professionally. According to Kottler and Keller (2016), assurance is an essential aspect on building customer trust, specifically in the situation where the interaction is on the brief and transactional. The presence of official complaint channels, such as hotlines, email, or social media, also shows the company's commitment to listening to customer feedback.

2.2 Consumer Perception Theory

Consumer perception refers to the way an individual interprets and gives meaning to something received from their surroundings, such as products, services, brands, or experiences (Alicia & Dewantara, 2024). According to Kotler and Keller (2016), perception is defined as the process through which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to form a view of something. This perceptual process can be explained through three main stages:

- a. Selection stage is the initial step in which consumers determine what to focus on. In the context of a restaurant, this stage occurs when customers choose to use the drive-thru service instead of ordering inside the restaurant. This decision is influenced by time efficiency, ease of access, and the restaurant's reputation for being fast and practical. Beside that, recent studies also suggest that the consumer are more likely to choose their drive-thru services when they perceive time savings as primary benefit.
- b. Organization stage involves the process through which consumers group and arrange information from their experiences using the drive-thru service. For example, consumers evaluate the design of the drive-thru lane, the clarity of the digital menu, service speed, and order accuracy. All this information is organized in the consumer's mind and forms the basis for assessing the quality of the restaurant's service. Furthermore, according to Hidayat et al., (2024), inconsistencies in these elements can impact into fragmented services, including reducing overall service evaluation.
- c. Interpretation stage occurs when consumers give meaning to their experience based on the information they have previously received and organized. If customers experience quick service, friendly staff, and accurate orders, they will interpret the experience positively. Conversely, if there are order mistakes or slow service, consumer perception may become negative and influence future purchase decisions.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach because it aims to empirically test and analyze the influence of service quality on consumer satisfaction with the drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong. This approach was chosen to obtain measurable and objective data so that the relationships between variables can be statistically explained. The research method used is a survey method, in which data were collected through the distribution of a Google Form questionnaire to consumers who have used the drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong. The research instrument was developed based on service quality and consumer satisfaction indicators adapted from the SERVQUAL model, covering the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The survey research method is used to collect data from a group of individuals representing a population, with the aim of measuring specific opinions, attitudes, behaviors, or characteristics. Data collection is typically conducted using instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, or online surveys (Waruwu et al., 2025).

The population in this study consists of all McDonald's Gading Serpong consumers who have used the drive-thru service, while the sample includes 50 respondents selected using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling approach respondents who meet the criteria of having made at least one purchase through the drive-thru service.

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software with several stages of analysis, including:

- a. Descriptive Statistical Analysis to determine the general overview of service quality and consumer satisfaction levels.
- b. Normality Test to examine whether the data are normally distributed.
- c. Simple Linear Regression Analysis to determine the extent to which service quality influences consumer satisfaction.
- d. Anova Test to assess the significance of the regression model.

The analysis results show that service quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception, with a correlation value (R) of 0.742 and a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). These findings confirm that the better the service quality provided in the drive-thru service, the higher the level of satisfaction perceived by consumers. Therefore, the quantitative approach effectively provides empirical evidence supporting the issue presented in the background, namely the importance of improving service quality to maintain customer satisfaction at McDonald's Gading Serpong.

However, this study has several methodological limitations. This study using of a non-probability purposive sampling technique with only 50 respondents. It may limit the representativeness of the sample and also can reduce the generalization of the findings from this study. Furthermore, about the data were collected through a self-reported Google Form questionnaire. Using this technique can make bias and also limit the accuracy of the responder's answer. Beside that, this study also employs a cross-sectional design, with capturing data at a single point in time. It does not reflect changes in any consumer perception over time. This study also only research to single location that make not reflect on other branches.

a. Hypothesis

Based on the theoretical framework and the results of data analysis, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): Service Quality does not have a significant effect on Consumer Perception. ($\beta = 0$).
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Perception. ($\beta > 0$).

Based on the results of the simple linear regression analysis:

- Regression coefficient (β) = 1.782.
- t-value = 7.675 with Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05 .

Since the significance value is smaller than 0.05, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Perception. This means that the better the service quality provided, the more positive the consumer perception toward the service will be.

b. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Descriptive Statistics			
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Service Quality	50	9	32	17.12	6.113
Consumer Perception	50	20	78	47.06	14.672
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Figure 1. Descriptive Statistics
Source: Researchers (2025)

According to Priandanagari in the book “A Comprehensive Guide to Understanding and Applying Descriptive Statistics in Data Analysis”, descriptive statistics refers to the process of collecting, organizing, processing, and presenting data in numerical form through tables or diagrams, with the aim of providing a clear and concise overview of a situation or event (Priandanagari & Kurniati, 2024). This SPSS data analysis presents descriptive statistics for two variables, namely Service Quality and Consumer Perception. The data were collected from 50 respondents for each variable. For the Service Quality variable, the lowest score recorded was 9 and the highest score was 32. The average service quality score was 17.12, with a standard deviation of 6.11, indicating a fairly large variation of data around the mean.

Meanwhile, for the Consumer Perception variable, the minimum score was 20 and the maximum reached 78. The average consumer perception score was 47.06 with a standard deviation of 14.67, meaning that the variation in consumer perception data is greater compared to service quality. In conclusion, both variables have the same number of respondents, but Consumer Perception shows a wider range of values and greater variability than Service Quality. The mean values of these two variables can be used as a general overview of the level of service quality and consumer satisfaction within the studied sample.

c. Regression

Models	Variables Entered/Removed ^a		Method
	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	
1	Service Quality ^b		Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Perception

b. All requested variables entered

Figure 2. Variables for the Service Quality Model
Source: Researchers (2025)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742 ^a	.551	.542	9.933

a. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality

Figure 3. Regression Model Summary for Service Quality
Source: Researchers (2025)

According to Iba and Wardhana (2023), regression in quantitative research is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables. This method helps researchers understand the extent to which the independent variable influences the dependent variable, and it can also be used to make predictions, evaluate causal relationships, and identify the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

This table presents a summary of the regression model used to analyze the relationship between the Service Quality variable as the predictor and the dependent variable, which is not explicitly stated in the table (typically consumer satisfaction or another dependent variable).

- The R value of 0.742 indicates a fairly strong correlation between the predictor variable (Service Quality) and the dependent variable.
- The R Square value of 0.551 means that approximately 55.1% of the variation or changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the Service Quality variable.
- The Adjusted R Square value of 0.542 provides a more accurate estimate of the model's ability to explain data variability, taking into account the number of predictors and sample size.
- The Standard Error of the Estimate of 9.933 indicates the model's average prediction error in the units of the dependent variable.

This regression model is considered fairly good in explaining the relationship between service quality and the dependent variable, with about 55% of the dependent variable's variation explained by service quality.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5812.776	1	5812.776	58.913	.000 ^b
	Residual	4736.044	48	98.668		
	Total	10548.820	49			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Perception

b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality

Figure 4. Anova Results for the Service Quality Model

Source: Researchers (2025)

This table presents the results of the Anova test for the regression model that examines the effect of the Service Quality variable on the dependent variable, namely Consumer Perception.

- The Sum of Squares value for the regression is 5812.776, which indicates the amount of variation that can be explained by the model (Service Quality).
- The Sum of Squares value for the residual is 4736.044, which represents the variation that cannot be explained by the model.
- The degrees of freedom (df) for the regression is 1, and for the residual is 48, with a total of 49.
- The Mean Square value for the regression is 5812.776, and for the residual is 98.668.
- The F value of 58.913 indicates how well the regression model explains the variability in the data overall.
- The significance value (Sig.) of 0.000 (less than 0.05) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, meaning that the Service Quality variable has a significant influence on Consumer Perception.

These Anova results show that the regression model using Service Quality as a predictor is highly significant in explaining the variation in Consumer Perception. In other words, Service Quality has a meaningful effect on Perception based on the data analyzed.

d. Linear Regression Analysis

Model		Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients Beta	1	Sig.
		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	16.559	4.215		3.929	.000
	Service Quality	1.782	.232	.742	7.675	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Perception

Figure 5. Coefficients Table

Source: Researchers (2025)

This table presents the results of the regression analysis that examines the effect of the Service Quality variable on the dependent variable, namely Consumer Perception.

- The constant (Intercept) value of 16.559 means that if service quality is zero, the predicted value of consumer satisfaction is 16.559.
- The regression coefficient for the Service Quality variable is 1.782, which indicates that every one-unit increase in service quality will increase consumer satisfaction by 1.782 units, assuming other variables remain constant.
- The Beta value of 0.742 shows the standardized influence of Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction, indicating a relatively strong effect.
- The t-value of 7.675 with a significance value (Sig.) of 0.000 (less than 0.05) shows that the effect of service quality on consumer perception is statistically significant.

These results indicate that service quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception. In other words, the better the service quality, the higher the level of consumer satisfaction.

e. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro- Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df.	Sig.
Consumer Perception	.246	50	.000	.864	50	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Figure 6. Tests of Normality for Consumer Perception

Source: Researchers (2025)

This table shows the results of the normality test for the Consumer Perception variable using two methods: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test.

- In the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the test statistic is 0.246 with a significance value (Sig.) of 0.000.
- In the Shapiro-Wilk test, the test statistic is 0.864 with a significance value (Sig.) also of 0.000.
- The significance values of both tests are below 0.05, which means the data are not normally distributed according to both tests.

These results indicate that the consumer perception data do not meet the normality assumption. This is important to note because many statistical tests, including linear regression, assume that residuals are normally distributed. If the data are not normal, data transformation or non-parametric statistical methods may be required.

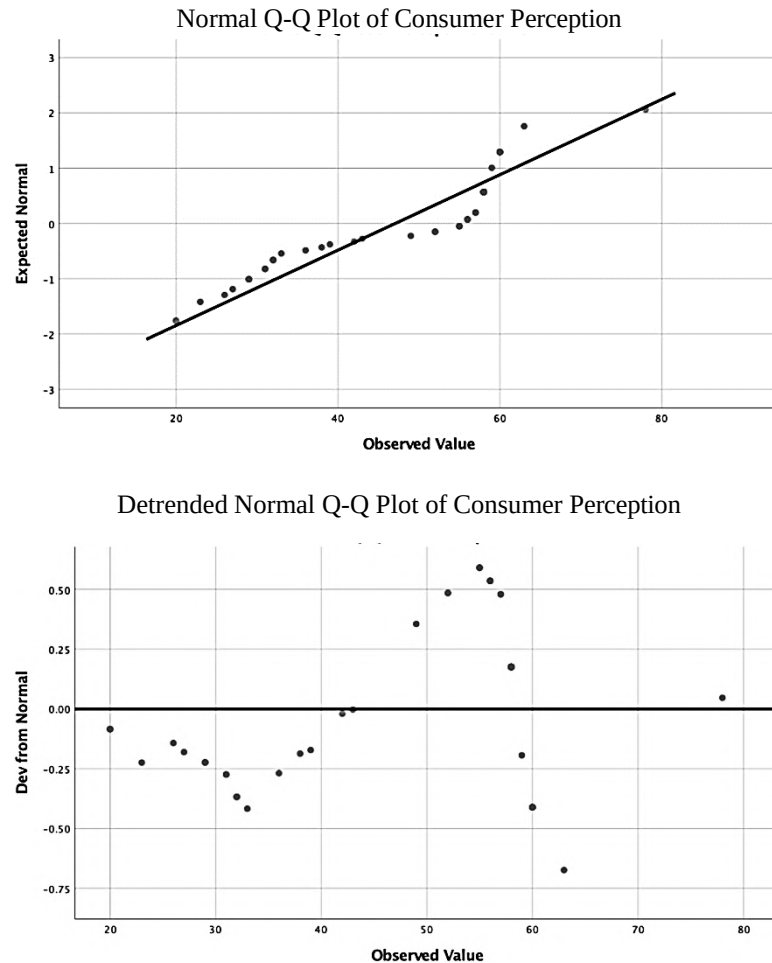


Figure 7. Q-Q Plot for Consumer Perception
Source: Researchers (2025)

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the research data are normally distributed. The test was performed using the Normal Q–Q Plot and Detrended Q– Q Plot for each variable, namely Service Quality and Consumer Perception. Based on the figure, the points in the Normal Q–Q Plot for Consumer Perception are scattered around the diagonal line and follow its direction. This indicates that the consumer perception data are normally distributed. Meanwhile, in the Detrended Q–Q Plot, the points appear randomly distributed around the zero line, which further supports the indication that the data do not show significant deviation from a normal distribution.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Statistic	Shapiro- Wilk	
	Statistic	df	Sig.		df.	Sig.
Service Quality	.136	50	.022	.940	50	.014

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Figure 8. Test of Normality for Service
Source: Researchers (2025)

This table presents the results of the normality test for the Service Quality variable using two methods: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test.

- In the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the test statistic is 0.136 with a significance value (Sig.) of 0.022.
- In the Shapiro-Wilk test, the test statistic is 0.940 with a significance value (Sig.) of 0.014.
- The significance values for both tests are below 0.05, indicating that the data are not normally distributed according to both tests.

These results show that the service quality data do not meet the normality assumption. This is important because many statistical tests, such as linear regression, assume that residuals are normally distributed. If the data are not normal, data transformation or non-parametric methods may need to be considered.

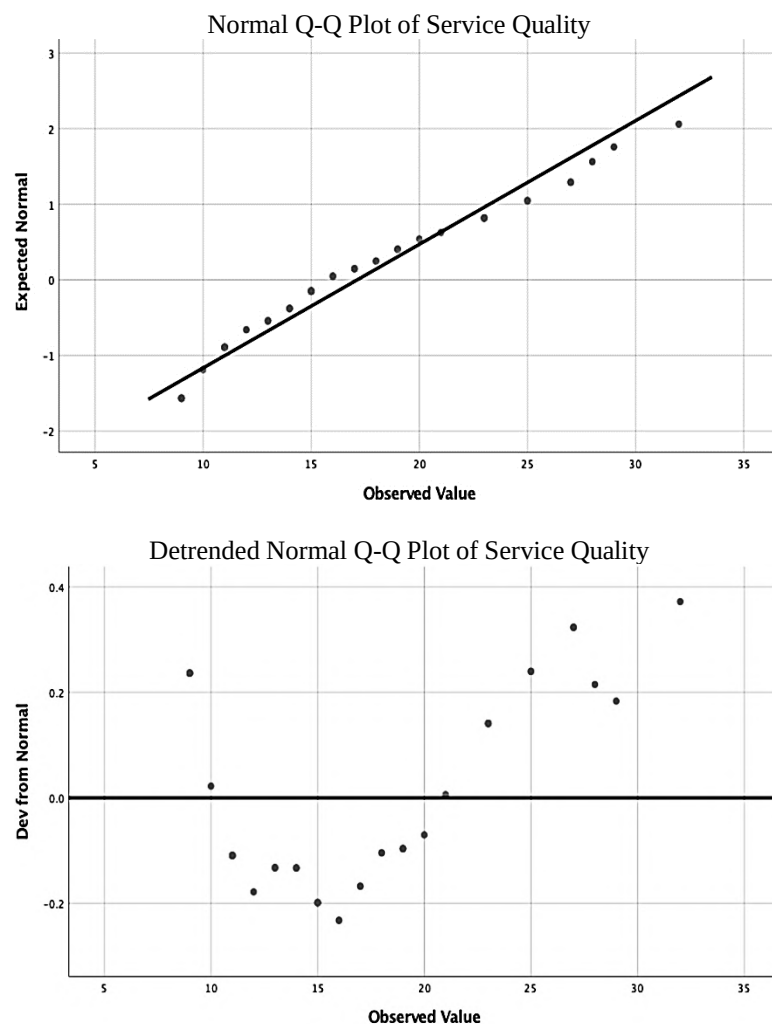


Figure 9. Q-Q Plot for Service Quality
Source: Researchers (2025)

In the figure, namely the Normal Q–Q Plot for Service Quality, the data points appear to follow the diagonal line with a distribution pattern that is relatively close to normal. The Detrended Q–Q Plot shows only minor and random deviations, suggesting that the service quality data also exhibit a normal distribution. Therefore, both research variables Service Quality and Consumer Perception meet the normality assumption, making it appropriate to proceed with the simple linear regression analysis.

f. Data Results

- Descriptive Statistics

Data from 50 respondents show that the average service quality score is 17.12 with moderate variation, while consumer perception has an average score of 47.06 with greater variation. This provides an initial overview of both variables prior to testing their causal relationship.

- Model Summary (Simple Linear Regression)

The R value of 0.742 indicates a fairly strong correlation between service quality and consumer perception. The R Square value of 0.551 means that 55.1% of the variation in consumer perception can be explained by service quality. This supports the hypothesis that service quality has a meaningful impact.

- Anova

The F-value of 58.913 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) shows that the regression model is statistically significant overall. In other words, the influence of service quality on consumer perception does not occur by chance but is statistically proven.

- Linear Regression Analysis (Coefficients)

The regression coefficient of 1.782 with a significance value of 0.000 indicates that every one-unit increase in service quality will increase consumer perception by 1.782 units. The significant t-value (7.675) further confirms the statistical significance of this influence. This strengthens the hypothesis that service quality has a positive effect on consumer perception.

- Tests of Normality

The normality test results show that the data for both service quality and consumer perception are not normally distributed (significance values < 0.05). This is important for the validity of regression assumptions and may require data transformation or alternative methods to ensure more valid analysis results. Based on the regression analysis results, the hypothesis that "Service Quality has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Perception" can be accepted. This means that the better the service quality provided, the higher the consumer perception within the sampled respondents.

g. Questionnaire Results

Based on the data collected through Google Forms from 50 respondents who have used the drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong, an overview of respondent characteristics and their perceptions of service quality was obtained.

h. Respondent Data

Respondent Gender 50 Answer

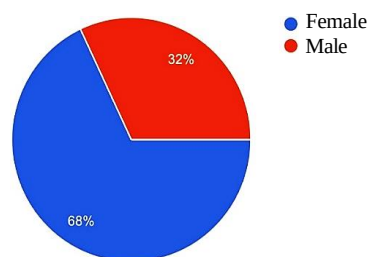


Figure 10. Respondents Gender
Source: Researchers (2025)

In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female at 68%, while males accounted for 32%. This indicates that female consumers are more dominant in using the drive-thru service at this location.

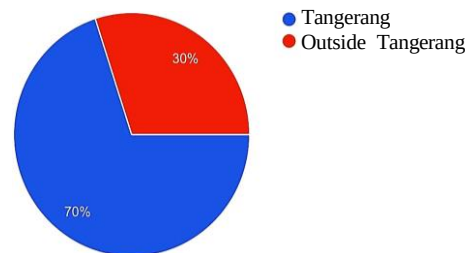


Figure 11. Respondents Domicile
Source: Researchers (2025)

Based on domicile, most respondents live in Tangerang (70%), while the remaining 30% are from outside Tangerang. This suggests that the majority of users are local consumers who reside near the operational area of McDonald's Gading Serpong.

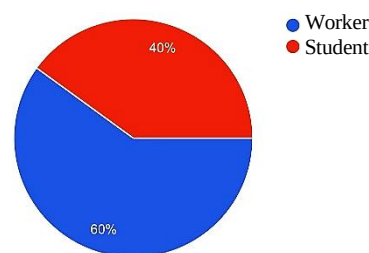


Figure 12. Respondents Occupation
Source: Researchers (2025)

Regarding respondent occupation, 60% are workers and 40% are students. This shows that workers are the main users of the drive-thru service, likely due to time efficiency and the practicality of fulfilling meal needs while engaging in daily activities.

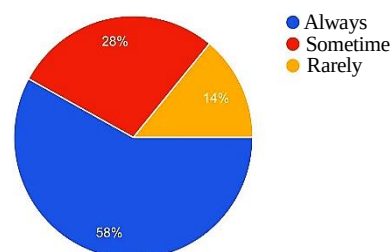


Figure 13. Respondents Frequency using Drive Thru
Source: Researchers (2025)

In terms of frequency of drive-thru usage, 58% of respondents stated that they frequently use the service, 28% use it occasionally, and 14% use it rarely. This means that most consumers have had substantial experience with the McDonald's drive-thru service, making their evaluation of service quality fairly representative.

i. Problem Identification

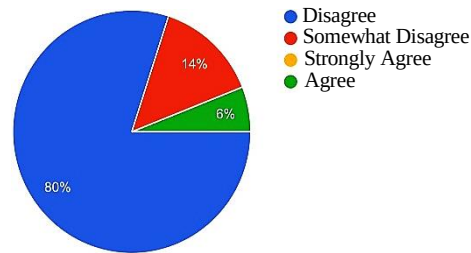


Figure 14. Problem Identification Survey Results
Source: Researchers (2025)

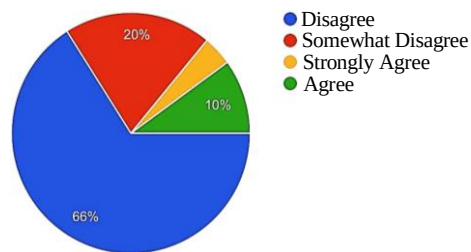


Figure 15. Problem Identification Survey Results
Source: Researchers (2025)

Based on the survey results, several key issues were identified regarding the service quality of the McDonald's Gading Serpong drive-thru. First, there is a significant problem related to food portion consistency. A total of 80% of respondents disagreed that the portions they received were always consistent, 14% slightly disagreed, and only 6% agreed.

This indicates that most consumers feel there is inconsistency in the portions of food served through the drive-thru service. Such inconsistency becomes an important factor affecting consumer perception and satisfaction because customers expect a major brand like McDonald's to maintain standardized and consistent portion sizes in every transaction. This finding aligns with the issues highlighted in the background section, where inconsistent food portions have been noted as a source of customer complaints and a contributor to decreased overall satisfaction.

Therefore, this issue reinforces the urgency to improve service quality, particularly in the aspect of food portion consistency, to maintain positive consumer perceptions of the McDonald's Gading Serpong drive-thru service. Second, the survey results also reveal a problem related to service speed. The majority of respondents, 66%, disagreed that the drive-thru staff at McDonald's Gading Serpong serve customers quickly.

A further 20% slightly disagreed, while only 10% agreed and 4% strongly agreed. This indicates that most customers feel the service speed is not yet optimal. Therefore, improvements in service speed are necessary to meet customer expectations for quick service, which is a defining characteristic of drive-thru operations. Overall, these findings highlight two major issues portion consistency and service speed that need to be addressed to enhance service quality and maintain customer satisfaction at the McDonald's Gading Serpong drive-thru.

j. Spreadsheets Results

Usia	Ukuran Serpong	Membarhru	Tertata de	an baik	agar ting	Serpong nka	terjadi	kenal	jelas	dan r
24	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju				
23	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
28	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
30	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju				
19	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju				
25	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
46	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju				
24	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju				
33	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju				
40	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju				
36	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju				
20	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju				
19	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju				
24	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju				
29	Sangat setuju	Sangat setuju	Sangat setuju	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju	Sangat setuju				
25	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
24	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
20	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Tidak setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
23	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju	Sangat setuju				
22	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju	Sangat setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju				
35	Setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju				
22	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Sangat setuju	Tidak setuju				
53	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju	Tidak setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju				
31	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju				
25	Sangat setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju				
18	Sangat setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Sangat setuju				
24	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju				
21	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Sangat setuju				
19	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju	Tidak setuju				
38	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Setuju	Kurang setuju	Setuju	Tidak setuju				
23	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Kurang setuju				
68	Sangat setuju	Tidak setuju	Tidak setuju	Sangat setuju	Kurang setuju	Kurang setuju				
26	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju	Setuju				

Sheet1		Angka						
Usia	Jenis Kelamin	Domisili	Status Anda	kan layanan McDc	X1.1	X1.2	X1.3	X1.4
24	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	3
23	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	3	3	3	3
28	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Jarang	2	2	2	3
30	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	2	2	2	3
19	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Jarang	2	1	4	2
25	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	2	1	1	3
46	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	2	1
24	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	1	3
33	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	1	1
40	Laki-laki	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	1
36	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	1	1
20	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	1
19	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	2	1	2	1
24	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	3
29	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	4	1	2	4
25	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	3	3	3	3
24	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	3	3	3	3
20	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Jarang	2	1	2	3
23	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	2	2	2	2
22	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	4
35	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Jarang	3	2	3	3
22	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	1
53	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	3
31	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	2	1	2	1
25	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	1
18	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	2	1	2	1
24	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	2	1	2
21	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	2	1	1
19	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	2	1	2	1
38	Laki-laki	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Jarang	2	1	1	2
23	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	2	1	2	1
68	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	1	1	3	3
26	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	3	3
35	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	4	4
22	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Kadang-kadang	3	1	3	3
29	Laki-laki	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	2	2	2	2
23	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Kadang-kadang	1	1	1	3
22	Laki-laki	Diluar Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	3
21	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Jarang	1	1	1	2
32	Perempuan	Diluar Tangerang	Pekerja	Jarang	1	1	2	3
50	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	1	3
22	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	3	3
23	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	3	3
27	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	3	1	3	3
21	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	3
21	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	3
26	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	3
17	Perempuan	Tangerang	Mahasiswa	Sering	1	1	1	1
57	Perempuan	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	3	3
42	Laki-laki	Tangerang	Pekerja	Sering	1	1	3	3
Variabel Persepsi K								
1. Layanan drive-thru								
2. Jalur antrian drive-						X1.1		
3. Antrian drive-thru c						X1.2		
4. Staf drive-thru McD						X1.3		
5. Staf memberikan p						X1.4		
6. Papan menu digit						X1.5		
7. Peralatan drive-thr						X1.6		
8. Peralatan dan tekn						X1.7		
9. Proses pemesanan						X1.8		
10. Saya merasa fasl						X1.9		
11. Saya merasa nyar								
12. Saya merasa ama								
13. Saya merasa laya								
14. Penampilan staf M								
15. Staf McDonald's i								X = Kualit
16. Staf memberikan								Y = Kepua
17. Staf mendengar								
18. Jika ada kesalah								
19. Staf McDonald's Gading Serpong memahami kebutuhan saya sebagai pelanggan.								
20. Saya yakin staf memahami menu dan produk McDonald's dengan baik.								
Variabel Kualitas Pelayanan								
21. Pesanan saya di drive-thru McDonald's Gading Serpong selalu sesuai dengan yang saya mir								
22. Porsi makanan, saos dan minuman yang saya terima selalu konsisten								
23. Pesanan saya jarang tertukar dengan pelanggan lain.								
24. McDonald's Gading Serpong menyediakan saluran resmi untuk menyampaikan keluhan.								
25. Kualitas pelayanan yang saya terima selalu konsisten dari waktu ke waktu.								
26. Saya merasa puas								
27. Saya merasa kualitas pelayanan drive-thru McDonald's Gading Serpong sesuai dengan hara								
28. Saya merasa puas dengan kinerja pelayanan yang saya dapatkan lewat drive thru McDonald								
29. Saya merasa kinerja pelayanan yang saya dapatkan lewat drive thru McDonald's Gading Ser								
1								
2								
3								
4								
Tidak Setuju								
Kurang Setuju								
Setuju								
Sangat Setuju								

Figure 16. Spreadsheets Results
(https://1drv.ms/x/c/5a14cfab6e593225/EQILFhf9YLBGigt5x80u7sMBj82gDh70M0hhb7Nsb3_SlQ)
Source: Researchers (2025)

Based on the spreadsheet results, the data show that respondents generally provided any kind of positive evaluations of both service quality (X) and the consumer perception (Y) in the drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong. Most responses fall within in the categories of Agree and Strongly Agree. It can indicate that consumer perceive the service as the satisfactory across multiple aspects. On the service quality variables represent the SERVQUAL in 5 aspects like tangibles dimensions like tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and also empathy. The majority respondent rated positive on the service. This indicates that customer perceive the drive-thru facilities, staff performance, service speed, and also communication as generally effective. Beside that related to responsiveness and reliability appear consistently strong, it is reflecting that the customers value quick service and accurate order fulfillment in drive-thru settings. The total score further supports this finding, shows relatively high cumulative any values across the respondents. This also indicates that overall service quality is perceived to be good, but there are still somewhat disagree, disagree response that indicates there still inconsistencies as order accuracy on peak hour. In aspect of consumer perception variables, the data also shows of positive responses. This indicates that customer in general feel satisfied with their experience in drive-thru. This also including the suitability of orders, the consistency of food quality, and also overall service performance. Overall, the results that get from spreadsheet confirmed that while McDonald's Gading Serpong drive-thru service performs well in delivering quality service, but there is still need improvement, especially in maintaining consistency across all of service encounters. These findings also give an important thing to improving efficiency in service standardization.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data collected through Google Form from 50 respondents, it was found that the majority of respondents were female (68%), lived in Tangerang (70%), and were either workers (60%) or university students (40%). A total of 58% stated that they frequently used the drive-thru service at McDonald's, indicating that their evaluations are representative of the service quality provided. The analysis results show a strong relationship between service quality and consumer perception, with a correlation value of 0.742 and a significance level of 0.000, indicating a positive and significant influence between the two variables. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.551$) shows that service quality explains 55.1% of the variation in consumer perception, while the remaining percentage is influenced by other factors outside this study. The normality test using the Normal Q-Q Plot shows that the data points follow the diagonal line, while the Detrended Q-Q Plot displays randomly scattered points around the zero line.

This indicates that the data meet the assumption of normality and are suitable for regression analysis. Survey findings also reveal specific issues in certain service aspects. A total of 80% of respondents disagreed that the portion sizes received were always consistent, indicating a problem in the reliability dimension. Additionally, 66% of respondents disagreed that the drive-thru staff served quickly, reflecting a weakness in the responsiveness dimension. Overall, although McDonald's Gading Serpong has made efforts to provide good service quality, aspects such as service speed and portion consistency still require improvement. These findings align with the SERVQUAL theory (Kotler & Keller, 2016), which states that reliability and

responsiveness are critical components in shaping perceptions of service quality. The results also support previous studies by Hidayat et al. (2024) and Irawan et al. (2024), which similarly found that service quality significantly influences consumer perception and satisfaction.

Furthermore, from the perspective of Kotler & Keller's (2016) consumer theory, the inconsistencies that arise influence how consumers perceive their service experiences. Negative experiences perceived by consumers, such as slow service or inconsistent portion sizes, are more likely to be remembered and viewed as negative, particularly given the high expectations associated with global brands. This can impact overall perception. The theoretical implications of this study are that it extends SERVQUAL by demonstrating that not all aspects contribute simultaneously, particularly in fast-food services. In practice, the findings suggest that McDonald's itself must prioritise consistency in operational aspects and queue management strategies by providing comprehensive training and standardising food portions, as well as optimising service during peak hours. Thus, overall, although the drive-thru service is considered good, issues regarding reliability and responsiveness indicate that these shortcomings have not been fully optimised, which consequently impacts consumer perceptions consistently.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that service quality has a positive and significant influence on consumer perception of the drive-thru service at McDonald's Gading Serpong. The high correlation value ($R = 0.742$) and significance level (0.000) indicate that the better the service quality provided, the more positive the consumer perception becomes. Factors such as staff friendliness, accuracy, and the overall service experience contribute to the formation of positive perceptions. However, this study also highlights the need to improve service speed and portion consistency. These findings support the SERVQUAL theory and previous studies, which state that service quality plays a key role in shaping consumer perceptions and maintaining customer satisfaction. The recommendations arising from the findings of this study include the need to improve the standard portion sizes applied within the system. Furthermore, queue management and staff allocation at McDonald's Gading Serpong need to be optimised, particularly during peak hours. A real-time monitoring system should be implemented to prevent service delays. Additionally, a limitation of this study is its focus on a single location and a small sample size. Consequently, there are still many factors that could be examined further in subsequent research. The findings cannot be generalised to all McDonald's branches.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 21-32

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTORS

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Received: 15/12/2025

Revised: 15/03/2026

Accepted: 27/04/2026

Abstract

The French language is the sixth most widely used language globally, and proficiency in it is essential in the growing international tourism and hospitality sectors, where effective foreign language communication is highly demanded. However, students in the French Language Education Study Program are primarily prepared for careers as educators, despite preliminary data indicating a strong preference among graduates for non-education sectors, specifically tourism and business. This study addresses a significant research gap by exploring how French Language Education students with their unique linguistic and cultural mastery perceive career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality industry. This research aimed to identify these perceptions, analyze influencing factors, and assess students' career readiness outside the education sector. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected from sixth to eighth semester students specializing in Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques (FOS) using semi-structured interviews and analyzed with the Miles and Huberman model. The findings reveal that students generally hold positive perceptions of career opportunities, driven by external factors such as the increasing number of foreign tourists and high earnings potential as well as internal factors including strong confidence in French proficiency and the influence of FOS-related courses. Main barriers identified include a lack of specialized training and limited practical experience. The study concludes that students possess a strong, informed understanding and generally high readiness for non-education careers, suggesting a need for a curriculum that integrates multilingual vocational preparation and fieldwork to enhance global competitiveness and support the tourism workforce.

Keywords: French Language Education, Career Opportunities, Tourism, Hospitality Industry, Student Perceptions

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), there are approximately 321 million French speakers worldwide. Similar estimates indicate that French is spoken by at least 76 million native speakers, as well as 235 million speakers who use it fluently in daily life, and an additional 77–110 million speakers who use French as a second language, making it the sixth most widely spoken language after English, Mandarin, Hindi, Spanish, and Arabic. French language proficiency in the hospitality industry is not merely an added value but an essential requirement amid the growth of

global tourism (Sunaryono et al., 2024; Ishak et al., 2025). Furthermore, jobs in this sector, such as tour guides, hotel receptionists, airport service staff, and other hospitality roles, require effective communication skills in foreign languages, including French (Ab et al., 2023; Salsabilah et al., 2025). The tourism sector itself is considered a modern industry with significant potential to drive economic development, create jobs rapidly, and stimulate other productive sectors (Sari et al., 2025; Siregar et al., 2025).

However, in theory, there is a mismatch between pedagogically oriented educational curricula and the practical competencies required in the tourism industry. Students in the French Language Education Program are essentially prepared to become educators in both formal and non-formal institutions, equipped with pedagogical competencies and educational character development. In reality, field conditions indicate a significant horizontal mismatch. This is supported by the researcher's preliminary survey of alumni from a state university in Bandung, where 68.4% of graduates actually work in the non-educational sector. This finding aligns with research conducted by Geni et al. (2009), which recorded a figure of 65% for a similar phenomenon in Jakarta. This theoretical gap is exacerbated by variations in students' perceptions of job opportunities, which directly influence their readiness and motivation. Although courses in French for Specific Purposes (FOS) are available, the existing literature remains limited in explaining how external factors (the job market) interact with internal factors (personal abilities) in shaping the career decisions of language education students.

Therefore, there is a pressing need to analyze the factors influencing students' interest in choosing careers outside of education. This analysis is crucial because it serves as the data foundation for evaluating whether such interest is driven by the appeal of the tourism industry (pull factors) or by students' low self-efficacy in teaching roles (push factors). The relevance of this analysis to the overall research objectives is to bridge the gap between academic output and the demands of the global market. Understanding students' perceptions and attributions will provide a foundation for institutions to formulate more adaptive curriculum policies, ensuring that graduates not only master linguistic and educational aspects but also possess professional readiness relevant to the dynamics of the modern industry. Based on these considerations, this study aims to:

- a. Determine French Language Education students' perceptions of career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors.
- b. Analyze the factors influencing students' interest in pursuing careers outside of education.
- c. Assess the extent to which French Language Education students are prepared to face career challenges in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Dynamics of Foreign Language Competence in The Tourism Sector

Previous research has consistently shown that proficiency in a foreign language is a key determinant of success in the tourism sector. Research on the analysis of perceptions regarding career opportunities is particularly important for senior students, with various studies conducted from diverse perspectives and academic programs. For example, Hutagalung (2020) examined the use of German in tourism and found that students are often unfamiliar with specialized vocabulary in hospitality and tourism terminology, leading them to frequently borrow terms from English, which negatively impacts their linguistic competence as workers in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Similarly, (Harahap, 2024) highlights English as one of the most widely used foreign languages,

which often leads to a skills gap among local workers. In line with this, (Dewi, 2023) explains the critical role of foreign languages in tourism promotion, reservations, services, and guiding. However, foreign languages such as English and German have demonstrated how students' perceptions of the workplace are shaped. These perceptions are influenced by intrinsic motivation and information about career opportunities (Syamsudin et al., 2023).

Critical analysis: although these studies emphasize the important role of foreign languages, there is a tendency to generalize linguistic challenges to all languages. Hutagalung's (2020) research shows that reliance on English actually weakens proficiency in certain other foreign languages (such as German or French). This highlights a gap in language education curricula, which often fail to integrate industry-specific technical vocabulary (French for Specific Purposes), leading to a professional culture shock when students enter the workforce in the tourism sector.

2.2 Attribution Theory and The Formation of Career Perceptions

Perception is a cognitive process that involves processing environmental information to form an individual's understanding of specific objects or situations (Nisa et al., 2023; Simbolon et al., 2025), encompassing the reception, selection, interpretation, organization, evaluation, and response to sensory stimuli and data (Mubarok, 2025). In this context, students' understanding of career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors influences their attitudes and career choices. Regarding social and self-perception, Harold Kelley, a social psychologist who developed the Kelley Covariance Model in formulating attribution theory, emphasizes the importance of considering the relationship between two variables or covariates when attempting to understand why a person behaves in a certain way (Azan et al., 2025). Attribution is used to analyze the factors influencing actions, whether caused by individual traits or environmental conditions (Wiratraur et al., 2025). Furthermore, Kelley's attribution theory explains how individuals understand the causes of an event through three main dimensions: consensus, consistency, and uniqueness. This theory is crucial for analyzing how students attribute factors influencing employment opportunities, whether internal or external (Fuah et al., 2025).

Individual perceptions do not arise spontaneously, but rather through a series of processes and factors that influence a person's perspective. This results in everyone having different interpretations, even of the same observed object (Nisa et al., 2023). This aligns with the factors influencing individuals according to Stephen P. Robbins, including:

- a. The perceiver: when observing something and attempting to explain it, a person is influenced by personal characteristics such as attitudes, goals, interests, experiences, knowledge, and expectations.
- b. The object of perception: the object of perception can be a person, an object, or a specific situation. These characteristics generally influence how people view them. Perceptions involving others in such situations lead to the grouping of similar individuals, objects, or events, distinguishing them from other groups.
- c. Situation: perception must be analyzed within a context, meaning the situation in which the perception arises and requires attention. These conditions are elements that play a role in how a person forms their perception.

An object or event generates a stimulus, which then affects the sensory organs (receptors). The object is then observed and interpreted by the sensory organs, which serve as the primary tools for individuals in forming perceptions and receiving stimuli

(Tanjung et al., 2022; Maukari et al., 2026). Perception is not merely a process of information reception, but a complex cognitive construction (Nisa et al., 2023; Mubarok, 2025). Using Harold Kelley's Covariance Model, individuals evaluate actions based on consensus, consistency, and uniqueness (Azan et al., 2025).

Critical Analysis: Recent literature (such as Said & Iskandar, 2020; Miysell & Wasisto, 2020) has extensively explored how perception influences career interest. However, a critical analysis of this literature reveals that most studies still focus on individual internal factors. There remains room to investigate how the interaction between environmental situations (external factors according to Robbins) and the personal attributions of French Language Education students specifically shapes resistance to or, conversely, attraction toward non-teaching professions.

2.3 Work Readiness: Integration of Internal and External Factors

Students' readiness to enter the job market is influenced by career planning, resilience, and practical experience (Azky & Mulyana, 2024). Internship experience (Angelina et al., 2023) and social support are key variables in the transition from academia to the workforce. According to Azky & Mulyana (2024), the factors influencing students' readiness to face job opportunities are divided into internal and external factors as follows:

a. Internal factors:

- Career planning: Activities undertaken by individuals related to achieving professional goals, aligned with their desired career path through self-awareness, decision-making, exploration, and preparation for entering the real working world (Latif et al., 2017, in Azky and Mulyana, 2024).
- Resilience: An individual's ability to cope with and endure life's challenges. Individuals with high resilience view difficulties as a growth process and strive to achieve specific goals (Agusta, 2014, in Azky and Mulyana, 2024).
- Internship or field work experience (PKL): Plays a crucial role in preparing students to enter the workforce, as through this program, students learn to perform tasks according to assigned roles and experience the real job market, thereby gaining insights and understanding of what is required in the workplace (Angelina et al., 2023, in Azky and Mulyana, 2024).

b. External factors: Social support. With adequate social support, individuals can adapt more easily to new circumstances. This makes it easier for someone facing challenges during the job search process or when starting a new job at a company (Anjani et al., 2024).

Critical analysis: a review of various documents revealed that while internship programs are considered crucial, there is a disconnect between the types of internships undertaken by education program students and the needs of the tourism industry. Most literature merely describes internships as experiences but has not deeply analyzed how school-based internships (PLP) conflict with career aspirations in the hospitality sector. This study aims to address this gap by evaluating readiness specifically within a cross-sectoral context (from education to tourism).

2.4 Macroeconomic Challenges: Industrial Demand and Unemployment

Employment is a vital aspect of supporting the economy; every individual has the right to employment opportunities. However, the opportunities available must align with skills, education, and industry demand. The expansion of employment opportunities

should be viewed not only from an economic perspective but also from a social one. As a developing country, unemployment remains a serious issue for the government and citizens, as it can affect national income levels and public welfare (Ponto, 2023).

The development of tourism areas in Indonesia must involve community participation so that local residents can benefit from the tourism sector. Measures such as empowerment, entrepreneurship training, and enhancing the role of traditional leaders in tourism development can contribute to achieving this. Through the active participation of local communities in the development of Indonesian tourism, this can also help preserve cultural heritage and traditions (Wibowo et al., 2023; Indrawati & Sari., 2024; Rifdah & Kusdiwanggo, 2024). The presence of the hospitality industry in tourism development indicates that hotels support the growth of the tourism industry in the city (Singgalen, 2024). The annual increase in the number of tourists serves as a source of regional revenue across various business sectors, including the hospitality industry.

Critical analysis: at the macro level, labor absorption must align with industry demand to avoid wasting human resources (Ponto, 2023). The rapid growth of the hospitality industry (Azky & Mulyana, 2024) requires a workforce that is not only technically skilled but also culturally adaptable.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach within an interpretivist paradigm; this approach allows for a deeper, contextual exploration of meaning to comprehensively understand and describe the perceptions of students in the French Language Education Program regarding career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors (Hasan et al., 2025). This approach is frequently used in social phenomenology, which focuses on research questions regarding who, what, where, and how an event occurs, and then analyzes these to identify emerging patterns. In line with this, Annasthasya et al. (2021) argue that qualitative research is an effort to explore the characteristics of relationships, activities, conditions, or other relevant elements.

The heterogeneous nature of the respondents as French Language Education students allows for diverse perspectives among individuals. Consequently, the research findings were not predetermined by the researcher but were derived through the respondents' participation and subsequent analysis. The use of this method provides the researcher with insight into the underlying dynamics and processes, where human interaction with the environment continues to evolve, remains dynamic, and changes over time (Pugu et al., 2024). This study was conducted within the French Language Education Study Program at the Indonesia University of Education, where social and academic interactions in the FOS (Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques) specialization course served as the primary context for shaping the perceptions of 11 students.

The study population, as defined by Susanto et al. (2024), refers to the totality of individuals, objects, or events that are the focus of the study. In line with this, Sugiyono (2017, as cited in Nuraisyah et al., 2021) describes the population as an area of generalization containing objects or subjects with specific qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher for the purposes of the study and drawing conclusions. In this study, the population consists of students in semesters 6–8 majoring in Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques (FOS). Suriani et al. (2023) explain that a sample is a subset selected from the population to represent all its members, as a high-quality sample reflects the characteristics of the population. Sampling in this study used purposive sampling based on specific criteria, including:

- a. Active French Language Education students in semesters 6 through 8.
- b. Focusing on the French for Specific Purposes (FOS) specialization.
- c. Having taken courses related to the workplace or tourism, and willing to participate as respondents.

Respondents were recruited through an open invitation in the students' internal communication group, as well as through direct invitations. In these interactions, the researcher explained the study's objectives and guaranteed the confidentiality of respondents' identities before obtaining their informed consent.

Ridwan (2013, as cited in Makbul, 2021) argues that research instruments serve as tools that act as a source for researchers in gathering information. The quality of this tool directly influences the quality of the information obtained, highlighting the interdependent relationship between the tool and the data in research. The method used in this study was semi-structured interviews, aimed at exploring issues in greater detail and with more openness. This method allows researchers to delve deeper into respondents' responses regarding each question posed. The researcher also has the flexibility to add questions during the process, provided that the responses to the previously prepared questions yield satisfactory results. In other words, the researcher can adapt the previously designed questions (Latifah & Supena, 2021; Qomaruddin, 2024).

The interview guidelines were developed with guidance from experts in the relevant field. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The data collection procedure followed these steps:

- a. Pre-Interview: researchers developed interview guidelines that were validated by experts in the relevant field.
- b. Conduct: interviews were conducted in person and online (via a meeting platform) based on the informants' availability. Each session lasted 30–45 minutes.
- c. Recording: all conversations were recorded using a voice recorder with the informants' permission to ensure the accuracy of the primary data.
- d. Transcription: the recordings were transcribed into written text and then verified (member checking) with the informants to ensure the validity of the data.

For data analysis, the researchers applied the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three sequential stages:

- a. Data Reduction: summarizing and selecting key data from interview transcripts regarding perceptions, enabling factors, and career barriers.
- b. Data Display: presenting data in the form of thematic tables and key patterns to facilitate understanding of the relationships between variables.
- c. Conclusion Drawing/Verification: drawing conclusions based on the identified patterns and verifying them using Kelley's attribution theory.

This study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. First, the study's focus is limited to students at a single educational institution, so the results may not reflect the perceptions of French language students throughout Indonesia in general. Second, this study only explores the perceptions of students (prospective workers) and has not yet incorporated the direct perspectives of employers in the tourism industry to assess competency alignment from both sides. Third, this study focuses only on students who have a greater interest in working outside the education sector.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings are summarized into three main themes in line with the objectives of this study, as shown in Table 1, which highlights the most prominent

patterns following the data reduction process, such as grouping similar responses to avoid data duplication and emphasize the core of the discussion.

Table 1. Themes and Main Patterns from Interview Data Theme Main Patterns

Themes	Main Patterns
Knowledge and General Perceptions of Career Opportunities	Broad and positive opportunities with regional variations; positive aspects include global prospects, while negative aspects relate to workload pressures.
Factors Influencing Career Interest	External factors: international job opportunities and income potential; Internal factors: confidence in French language ability and the influence of FOS-related courses.
Career Readiness Outside the Education Sector	Generally high, supported by French language proficiency; some doubts remain due to limited practical experience. Limited practical experience, lack of specialized training, and concerns about career stability.

Source: Researchers (2025)

4.1 General Knowledge and Perceptions of Career Opportunities

Regarding the first research objective on student perceptions, it was found that the majority of respondent's view career opportunities in the tourism industry as highly promising. The findings consistently indicate that respondents have a moderate to high level of understanding regarding career opportunities outside the field of education, particularly those requiring multilingual skills such as tour guides and call center positions. Overall, respondents expressed a very positive view of these prospects, a perception largely influenced by the increasing number of foreign tourists, particularly from French-speaking countries in Europe. This strong consensus among respondents directly reflects external attribution within the framework of Kelley's Attribution Theory, where job opportunities are viewed as a consistent situational factor namely, demand from foreign tourists and generally beyond individual control. Additionally, significant differences were noted across regions, with international tourism destinations like Bali consistently offering greater job prospects. This aligns with the statement made by respondent RM, who said, "In my opinion, opportunities depend on the region. For example, opportunities are greater in Bali because there are more foreign tourists there than in Bandung." However, in general, proficiency in French remains an asset in any tourism sector. Another respondent, SIS, stated, "Consistent job opportunities are more commonly found in Bali because, since their income depends on foreign tourists, they must provide services for these tourists, one of which is having staff who are proficient in French".

The respondents highlighted positive aspects such as the opportunity to interact with international visitors. However, concerns were also expressed regarding industry uncertainties, such as irregular working hours and fluctuations in tourist numbers, which are inherent risks in the tourism sector. At the same time, the majority of respondents expressed strong confidence in their French language skills, reflecting internal attributions regarding their personal readiness to interact effectively in customer service.

4.2 Factors Influencing Career Interests

Furthermore, to address the second research objective regarding the factors influencing career interests, the data indicates a strong influence from FOS courses and the potential for international earnings. Respondents' career interests are significantly influenced by the synergy between internal and external motivations. External factors are

largely based on pragmatic and economic considerations. Dominant external factors, such as the current strong economic conditions in the tourism sector, combined with higher earning potential and rapid career advancement in the global market, collectively provide strong material incentives. This indicates that their interests are substantially influenced by rational considerations, where they perceive the rewards in the tourism sector to be greater than in traditional educational pathways. As one GP respondent put it, “Salaries in the tourism/hospitality sector tend to be more competitive, and career advancement opportunities are faster than in the education sector.” At the same time, the primary internal factor driving motivation is well-honed French communication skills, which they view as a real competitive advantage and a source of self-confidence. This internal motivation is significantly reinforced by a specialized course, *Français de l’hôtellerie et de la Restauration*. According to the SI and NF respondents, “this course is very helpful, especially for those interested in the hospitality, restaurant, and tourism industries. We learn the basics, and in addition to learning French, we also learn how things work and the culture”. The structured academic mastery within a professional context and the industry-specific terminology acquired through this course strengthen students’ internal consistency—a core concept in Kelley’s Attribution Theory—as their academic competencies provide a strong and logical justification for pursuing a career in the tourism sector. This dualism of attribution explains why students’ interest in transitioning to the non-educational sector is so prominent.

4.3 Readiness and Barriers to Pursuing a Career Outside the Education Sector

Then, to answer the research objective regarding the level of readiness, the interview results indicate that students feel linguistically prepared but require further development in technical aspects. The research findings reveal strong consensus regarding career transition: the majority of respondents stated that they are ready to move into the non-education sector. This readiness is primarily linked to a high level of proficiency in French and a strong personal interest in the tourism industry. This consensus indicates a high overall level of career readiness, a view strongly supported by the perception of opportunities to earn higher incomes in the tourism sector compared to traditional teaching roles. This aligns with respondent ZP’s statement: “I am very ready because my interests lie outside the education sector, and what I’ve experienced is very interesting and promising”. However, this readiness is not universal; a small proportion of respondents felt less prepared, primarily due to limited practical experience during their studies and concerns about adapting to the fast-paced work environment typical of the tourism industry. As respondent AI noted, “I feel fairly prepared to work outside of an educational setting, but I still feel unprepared for the fast-paced work rhythm.” However, this readiness is offset by significant structural barriers, including a lack of direct practical experience and concerns regarding the industry’s fast-paced work rhythm.” Another respondent, ST, highlighted that barriers often stem from a lack of field experience and the need for specialized training. This underscores the need for a curriculum that integrates certified internships and industry partnerships to bridge the gap between educational outcomes and market demands.

This study makes an important contribution to the literature on foreign language students’ career perceptions by demonstrating that linguistic ability is no longer the sole determinant of work readiness. In contrast to the previous study by Anjani et al. (2024), which focused on students’ general motivation to learn, these findings reveal that specific courses such as FOS (*Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques*) act as a psychological bridge

that shifts students' perceptions from those of educators to those of professional practitioners. This study expands the literature by highlighting a readiness gap in which students feel highly confident linguistically but feel technically and operationally helpless due to a lack of industry exposure in the teacher education curriculum.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted throughout this study, it can be concluded that students in the French Language Education program demonstrate a strong and well-informed understanding of career opportunities in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Their positive perceptions of job prospects are influenced by external conditions, particularly the growing demand for multilingual services driven by an increase in the number of international visitors, as well as internal factors such as their confidence in their French language proficiency. These findings address the primary research objective, demonstrating that language proficiency serves not only as a communicative asset but also as a motivational driver that strengthens students' interest in pursuing careers outside the education sector. This study also indicates a generally high level of career readiness to transition into non-educational fields, particularly when aligned with students' linguistic abilities.

On a theoretical level, this study expands the application of Attribution Theory within the context of career transitions among language education graduates. While attribution theory generally views success from the perspective of internal factors (ability) and external factors (market conditions), this study introduces the dimension of Curricular Attribution. These findings indicate that students attribute their career readiness not to natural talent, but to the specific curriculum structure they have followed. This offers a new perspective for career perception theory, suggesting that a specific academic environment can radically alter students' career orientation, even when their initial identity is that of a prospective teacher.

Based on these findings, future research agendas should shift from merely exploring what students think toward analyzing competency alignment. Further research involving tourism industry stakeholders is needed to validate whether these students' positive perceptions align with the qualifications required by the international job market. Additionally, longitudinal research is needed to track whether students with these positive perceptions actually succeed in transitioning to the tourism industry after graduation, as well as to conduct comparative studies among various universities offering French language programs to examine the impact of curriculum differences on career readiness.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 33-52

EMOTIONAL PATHWAYS BETWEEN PERCEIVED CROWDING AND SHOPPING SATISFACTION: EVIDENCE FROM A CREATIVE POP-CULTURE EVENT

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Received: 17/12/2025

Revised: 29/03/2026

Accepted: 27/04/2026

Abstract

This study investigates how perceived crowding influences shopping satisfaction through emotional responses at Comic Frontier (Comifuro), a large-scale creative event in Indonesia. This study, which was established from Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework, differentiates between Human Crowding and Spatial Crowding while exploring how emotional responses Pleasure and Arousal mediate these effects. Data were obtained from 112 shoppers, and the proposed model of the study was tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 3. Findings indicate that Human Crowding increases both Pleasure and Arousal, whereas Spatial Crowding Decreases Pleasure but does not significantly affect Arousal. Conversely, Spatial Crowding significantly reduces Pleasure but does not affect Arousal. Both human and spatial crowding have indirect positive effects on satisfaction through pleasure. However, arousal showed weaker and inconsistent mediating effects, suggesting that high stimulation does not necessarily increase satisfaction in crowded environments. The analysis revealed full mediation by emotions, emphasizing that emotions serve as the primary pathway linking environmental perception and satisfaction. This study highlights that event success relies on managing physical space to enhance comfort while leveraging the energy of social density. The results provide theoretical support for the S-O-R model in specialized event settings and offer organizers actionable insights for managing high-density environments.

Keywords: Perceived Crowding, Emotions, Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

The global landscape of popular culture is now defined by large-scale fan gatherings, which function as dynamic spaces where enthusiasts connect over shared interests, interact directly with creators, and participate in specialized marketplaces. One of them is *doujinshi* marketplace, a concept that originated in Japan as a platform for self-published creative works (*doujinshi*) made by people who share a common interest or goal (Comic Market Committee, 2014). The most prominent global example is Comic Market (Comiket) in Tokyo, attracting hundreds of thousands of attendees biannually (Miho, 2016).

Inspired by Comiket, a similar *doujinshi* marketplace is being held in Indonesia. Comic Frontier (Comifuro), as stated on its website (Comic Frontier, 2017; Comic

Frontier XX, 2025), is a major exhibition-style event that aspires to be a platform for independent creative talents, known as Circles, to showcase, distribute, and sell their self-published works directly to a large, dedicated audience. Since 2022, Comic Frontier has evolved into a major biannual event held at the Indonesia Convention Exhibition (ICE) BSD City, a modern venue that also hosts international concerts and major trade exhibitions.

Event organizers typically aim to draw a high volume of attendees. The consequence of these are that attendees have to deal with crowding within a confined space (Kim et al., 2016). While excessive crowding is often linked to negative outcomes in retail (S. Eroglu & Harrell, 1986; Machleit et al., 2000), research reveals that crowding can sometimes be positive at events and festivals, creating an exciting atmosphere that enhances the experience (Kim et al., 2016; Mowen et al., 2003). Consequently, one major issue in managing events is grasping how crowd density relates to attendee satisfaction (Kim et al., 2016). A clearer conceptualization of crowding is therefore essential to understand why it sometimes contributes positively to satisfaction and other times negatively.

The research basis is the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model originally proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). This framework proposes that the environmental stimulus (perceived crowding) is processed by the individual, first triggering an emotional response (the organism state) that subsequently drives the final behavioral outcome (response). The emotional responses investigated in this study are Pleasure and Arousal (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Pleasure reflects the hedonic valence of the affective state, reflecting how happy or joyful an individual feels, while Arousal indicates the person's level of stimulation or alertness (Das & Varshneya, 2017; Lin & Liang, 2011). Earlier research has shown that emotional responses act as intermediary factors linking perceived crowding to overall satisfaction (S. A. Eroglu et al., 2005; Machleit et al., 2000; Mehta, 2013).

Despite the increasing popularity of fan conventions, limited research explains how perceived crowding influences satisfaction in high-density creative events. Existing studies predominantly focus on retail stores, malls, and tourism context, where crowding is generally associated with negative outcomes such as reduced satisfaction (S. A. Eroglu et al., 2005; S. A. Eroglu & Machleit, 1990; S. Eroglu & Harrell, 1986; Kim et al., 2016). While these studies provide valuable insights into crowding effects in commercial settings, their findings may not fully apply to creative fan events where high visitor density and social interaction are expected in the experience. In such environments, crowding may function not only as a constraint but also as a source of excitement and social energy. Furthermore, although previous research suggests that emotional responses play an important role in linking environmental stimuli to satisfaction, empirical investigations on how emotional responses mediate the relationship between crowding perceptions and satisfaction in high-density creative fan events remain limited.

Therefore, the main aim of this study is to examine how perceived crowding influences satisfaction at Comic Frontier by investigating the mediating role of emotional responses. This study is structured to achieve four primary objectives. First, this study analyzes the effect of human crowding on attendees' emotional responses, specifically pleasure and arousal. Second, this study evaluates how spatial crowding influences these same emotional states. Third, the study assesses the direct effects of pleasure and arousal on overall satisfaction. Lastly, this study investigates the mediating role of pleasure and

arousal in the relationship between perceived crowding (both human and spatial) and satisfaction.

Understanding these relationships is particularly important for managing high-density creative events. From a managerial perspective, the findings of this study can assist event organizers in designing environments that enhance attendee experience while managing high visitor density. By identifying how different forms of crowding influence emotional responses, organizers of creative events such as Comic Frontier can better manage spatial layouts, visitor flow, and environmental conditions to create an atmosphere that maintains excitement without diminishing comfort. This understanding is particularly relevant for large exhibition venues, where effective crowd management strategies can improve accessibility, reduce stress, and ultimately enhance overall satisfaction.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the growing body of literature applying the Stimulus-Organism-Response Model to experiential consumption settings. Although previous studies have widely applied the model to retail stores and shopping malls, limited empirical research has examined how environmental density in fan-driven creative events influences emotional reactions and satisfaction outcomes. By investigating the mediating roles of pleasure and arousal in the relationship between perceived crowding and satisfaction, this study extends existing environmental psychology research into the context of fan conventions and creative marketplaces. Consequently, the findings provide a more nuanced understanding of how environmental stimuli operate within voluntary high-density event environments, where crowd presence may simultaneously function as both a constraint and a source of excitement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Perceived Crowding

Perceived crowding is a concept rooted in environmental and consumer behavior research, referring not only to the actual density in a setting but also to how individuals psychologically evaluate that density (Vaske & Donnelly, 2002). Early theoretical work emphasizes that crowding is not determined solely by physical conditions, but by subjective appraisal. For instance, Stokols (1972) conceptualizes crowding as a psychological state arising when spatial or social conditions are perceived to restrict individual goals or activities. This perspective highlights that identical physical environments may produce different crowding perceptions depending on individual expectations, tolerance levels, and situational context.

Building on this view, perceived crowding is generally conceptualized along two dimensions: the density of people (human crowding) and the limitations of physical space (spatial crowding) (Machleit et al., 1994). Human crowding describes the sensation of being surrounded by an excessive number of individuals. In retail context, this perception originates from the high number of shoppers simultaneously engaged in activities like browsing and interacting on the selling floor. Conversely, spatial crowding is the feeling of being physically restricted due to high spatial density, a condition often influenced by the configuration and number of fixtures and merchandise within the environment. This distinction is theoretically important because the two dimensions operate through different psychological mechanisms. Human crowding primarily involves social evaluation and interaction, while spatial crowding is linked to physical restriction and reduced behavioral freedom.

In traditional retail environments, both forms of crowding are generally associated with negative outcomes. Spatial crowding tend to reduce comfort, mobility, and diminished shopping performance, as excessive fixtures or narrow aisles restrict navigation (S. A. Eroglu et al., 2005; S. A. Eroglu & Machleit, 1990; S. Eroglu & Harrell, 1986). Human crowding is also often viewed as undesirable, particularly when excessive social density impedes exploration, goal completion, or decision-making. Under highly stimulating settings, individuals may feel stressed, irritated, or perceived loss of control (Machleit et al., 2000).

However, empirical findings are not entirely consistent. Studies in fields such as tourism, festivals, and environmental psychology indicate that, in some situations, a crowded environment may elevate the experience by generating a lively and engaging atmosphere, commonly described as “positive crowding” (S. A. Eroglu et al., 2005; Mowen et al., 2003; Pons et al., 2006; Popp, 2012; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). In these contexts, the presence of many people may signal popularity, excitement, and shared participation, which can increase enjoyment rather than reduce it. This indicates that crowding is not inherently negative, but its effects depend on how it is interpreted within a given context. Recent studies continue to report mixed findings regarding the effects of crowding on consumer experience, particularly in experiential settings, suggesting that contextual factors play a significant role in shaping crowding perceptions (Milman et al., 2020; Pikkemaat et al., 2020; Ruiz et al., 2021).

Despite these insights, existing literature presents an important conceptual issue. While studies acknowledge that crowding can produce both positive and negative outcomes, they provide limited explanation of why these differences occur beyond general references in a certain context or setting. In particular, prior research tends to treat crowding as a uniform construct, without sufficiently distinguishing how human crowding and spatial crowding generate different emotional responses through distinct mechanisms. As a result, the underlying process through which crowding influences experience remains insufficiently explained.

This limitation is especially relevant in high-density experiential environments, where individuals voluntarily enter crowded spaces and may interpret social density differently from utilitarian settings. In such contexts, human crowding may function as a source of social stimulation and collective energy, whereas spatial crowding may still act as a constraint by restricting movement and comfort.

2.2 Emotions

Emotion is a core psychological process that shapes how individuals interpret and evaluate experiences. It can be viewed both as a subjective feeling consciously recognized by individuals (Westbrook, 1987) and as a psychological state triggered by cognitive appraisals of situations (Bagozzi et al., 1999). In consumer contexts, emotions are not merely reactions but actively shape how experiences are judged, remembered, and evaluated (Oliver, 1997; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991).

Environmental psychology provides an important foundation for explaining how event environments evoke emotional states. Mehrabian & Russell (1974) introduced the Stimulus Organism Response (S-O-R) framework, explaining that environmental factors (S) elicit emotional states (O) which then guide consumer behaviors (R) (R. J. Donovan et al., 1994; R. Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Lin & Liang, 2011). They also proposed the Pleasure, Arousal, and Dominance (PAD) framework as a structured approach to analyze these emotional reactions. Pleasure reflects the extent of happy, comfortable, and

entertained feelings of the individuals; Arousal represents the level of excitement or stimulation; and Dominance describes on what degree does a person feel in control of their environment (Das & Varshneya, 2017; Lin & Liang, 2011).

Although the PAD framework includes dominance, prior research consistently shows that dominance plays a limited role in typical consumption settings, where individuals have relatively low control over the environment (R. Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Koo & Lee, 2011; Li et al., 2009; Vieira & Torres, 2014). As a result, most empirical studies focus on pleasure and arousal as the primary emotional dimensions influencing consumer responses.

A substantial body of research supports the role of emotions as antecedents of satisfaction. Positive emotional states, particularly pleasure, have been shown to enhance overall evaluations of consumption experiences, leading to higher satisfaction (Elmashhara & Soares, 2020; Mano & Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1997; Wirtz et al., 2000). Empirical evidence from tourism and event contexts further indicates that pleasure consistently emerges as a strong predictor of satisfaction (Bigné et al., 2005; Carneiro et al., 2019). However, the effect of arousal is less consistent. While some studies report a positive relationship between arousal and satisfaction (H. Song et al., 2019; H.-J. Song et al., 2015), others find no significant direct effect or only indirect effects through pleasure (Bigné et al., 2005; Carneiro et al., 2019; Moon et al., 2016).

These inconsistent findings highlight an important theoretical issue: emotional responses do not automatically translate into satisfaction. Instead, their influence depends on how they are cognitively processed and whether they contribute to overall value perception. In highly stimulating environments, such as events or festivals, arousal may become normalized or even excessive, reducing its evaluative relevance despite increasing momentary engagement. As a result, arousal may function more as an activating condition rather than a direct determinant of satisfaction.

In the context of perceived crowding, emotions are positioned as key mediating mechanisms within the S-O-R framework. Prior studies suggest that crowding influences satisfaction not only directly but also indirectly through emotional responses (S. Eroglu & Harrell, 1986; Kim et al., 2016; Machleit et al., 2000). However, existing findings are largely derived from retail and service environments, where crowding is typically perceived as a constraint that reduces comfort and control.

This creates a critical limitation in the literature. In high-density experiential settings, such as events or festivals, crowding may generate both negative and positive emotional responses simultaneously. Human crowding, for instance, may increase excitement and social energy, while spatial crowding may induce discomfort due to movement restriction (Das & Varshneya, 2017; Kim et al., 2016). As a result, the emotional mechanisms linking crowding to satisfaction may operate differently compared to traditional retail contexts.

Despite the recognized importance of emotions in the S-O-R framework, empirical research examining how pleasure and arousal mediate the relationship between perceived crowding and satisfaction in highly stimulating event environments remains limited. In particular, the inconsistent role of arousal and the context-dependent nature of emotional responses suggest that the crowding-emotion-satisfaction relationship requires further investigation in settings where high density is expected and even desired.

Despite extensive research on perceived crowding, emotions, and satisfaction, three key limitations remain. First, prior studies often treat crowding as a unified construct, overlooking the distinct mechanisms through which human and spatial

crowding influence experience. Second, although emotions are recognized as mediators, the specific roles of pleasure and arousal remain inconsistent and context-dependent. Third, most empirical evidence is derived from retail settings, limiting the applicability of findings to high-density experiential events where crowding may be perceived differently. These gaps indicate the need for a more nuanced examination of the crowding-emotion-satisfaction relationship within creative event environments.

2.3 Satisfaction

In consumer behavior studies, satisfaction is considered a central concept and is typically described as an evaluative assessment of the consumers after using a product or service (Oliver, 1980). Satisfaction often conceptualized as the outcome of comparing consumer's initial expectations and the performance or outcome that they perceived of the purchase or service encounter (Kotler & Keller, 2006). When performance meets or exceeds expectations, individuals tend to experience satisfaction, whereas failure to meet expectations may produce dissatisfaction (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Oliver, 1980). However, this perspective alone is insufficient to explain satisfaction in experiential contexts, where evaluations are not based solely on functional outcomes but also on affective experiences.

A substantial body of research highlights that satisfaction is not purely cognitive but is strongly shaped by emotional responses experienced during consumption (Oliver, 1997; Westbrook, 1987). Emotions serve as immediate internal reactions that consumers later integrate into an overall evaluation of their experience. Positive emotions such as pleasure and enjoyment tend to enhance satisfaction because they signal that the experience is rewarding, whereas negative emotions such as stress or discomfort reduce satisfaction by indicating that the experience is undesirable (Babin & Griffin, 1998; Machleit et al., 2000; Mano & Oliver, 1993). This suggests that emotional responses play a critical role in shaping satisfaction, particularly in contexts where experiential aspects are more salient than functional performance.

Within the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), satisfaction is positioned as a response shaped by internal emotional states. In this context, perceived crowding acts as an environmental stimulus that influences satisfaction indirectly through emotional mechanisms. Prior studies show that crowding affects satisfaction not only directly but also through emotions, particularly pleasure and arousal (S. Eroglu & Harrell, 1986; Kim et al., 2016; Li et al., 2009; Machleit et al., 2000). However, these findings are largely derived from retail environments, where crowding is typically associated with discomfort and reduced control.

This indicates an important limitation in the existing literature. In high-density experiential settings, such as events or festivals, crowding may simultaneously generate both positive and negative emotional responses. For example, high social density may increase excitement and enjoyment, while spatial restriction may reduce comfort. This suggests that the relationship between crowding and satisfaction cannot be fully understood without examining the underlying emotional mechanisms that shape individuals' evaluations.

Numerous studies further highlight the critical influence of emotions on satisfaction. The feelings consumers experience during a product or service interaction heavily shape their overall evaluation. Positive emotions like happiness, excitement, or pleasure generally boost satisfaction, whereas negative emotions such as frustration or anxiety tend to diminish it (Babin & Griffin, 1998; Machleit & Eroglu, 2000; Mano &

Oliver, 1993). Evidence from multiple service and retail contexts shows that consumers' satisfaction is directly affected by emotional reactions triggered by environmental factors, crowd density, or the quality of interactions (Elmashhara & Soares, 2020; Kim et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2008; Li et al., 2009; Machleit et al., 2000; Pons & Laroche, 2007). This pattern reinforces the view that satisfaction in experiential environments is closely linked to affective responses rather than purely cognitive evaluations.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

A quantitative research design was employed in this study to explore how perceived crowding influences attendees' emotions and overall satisfaction at the Comic Frontier event. The study adopted a non-probability purposive sampling technique to ensure that all respondents possessed the relevant experiential background required to evaluate the constructs under investigation.

The respondents' criteria are valid Comic Frontier attendees who had made a purchase during the event. Data collection utilized a hybrid approach, where questionnaires were distributed on-site QR code and post-event social media distribution, mainly through Google Forms. The questionnaire incorporated a mandatory initial screening question confirming both attendance and purchase activity. For post-event responses, participants were required to provide proof of a valid event ticket.

A total of 123 responses were initially collected. These responses then undergo screening process based on the predefined criteria. Responses that did not meet one or more of the requirements (respondents who did not attend Comic Frontier or did not make any purchase during the event) were excluded. As a result, 11 responses were removed, yielding a final sample of 112 valid respondents, which were deemed suitable for further analysis.

In this study, all latent variables were measured using established scales from previous research, which then will be adapted to the context of the research. Human Crowding (HC) and Spatial Crowding (SC) drew on items from Kim et al. (2016) to capture distinctions between social density and physical constraints. Satisfaction was assessed with items based on Han et al. (2019) and Elmashhara & Soares (2020). While most variables used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree), the emotional constructs, Pleasure (PL) and Arousal (AR), were measured with a 7-point semantic differential scale (e.g., Pleased/Annoyed, Excited/Calm), following the dimensional method introduced by Mehrabian & Russell (1974).

The hypotheses for the study are based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. This model fundamentally posits that the event's environmental conditions, referred to as the Stimulus (e.g., crowding), influence attendee's internal emotional state (the Organism), which, in turn, directly determines their satisfaction (the Response).

Crowding is conceptualized as two distinct dimensions based on the framework established by Kim et al. (2016) and Machleit et al. (2000). Human Crowding refers to the perception of high social density and the sheer number of people. Human Crowding is typically perceived positively in social and event settings, often interpreted as a sign of popularity that enhances collective excitement. Spatial Crowding refers to the feeling of physical restriction or confinement. As this limits an individual's movement and comfort, it is widely linked to negative emotions across various settings. Therefore:

H1a: Human Crowding positively influences Pleasure.

H1b: Human Crowding positively influences Arousal.

H2a: Spatial Crowding negatively influences Pleasure.

H2b: Spatial Crowding negatively influences Arousal.

Following the S-O-R framework, the emotional states experienced by the attendee are the psychological mechanism that directly shapes their overall attitude toward the consumption experience (satisfaction). Pleasure, which captures the joy and happiness derived from the event environment, is expected to be a positive factor in the attendee's overall evaluation. Arousal, which reflects the attendee's level of excitement and stimulation, may also contribute positively to the experience. However, the direct strength of its link to satisfaction is highly dependent on the specific event context. Therefore:

H3: Pleasure positively influences Satisfaction.

H4: Arousal positively influences Satisfaction.

According to the S-O-R framework, environmental stimuli such as crowding influence satisfaction indirectly rather than having a direct effect on the final evaluative judgment. Instead, this influence is theorized to be channeled through the attendee's internal emotional state (Emotions). Research in retail contexts found that while emotions often mediate the relationship between human crowding and satisfaction, the effects of spatial crowding were often not completely mediated, meaning a direct link from spatial crowding to satisfaction still remained significant even when emotions were accounted for (Machleit et al., 2000).

Given this theoretical background, emotions (Pleasure and Arousal) are hypothesized to act as the psychological bridge between the perception of density and the ultimate satisfaction with the shopping experience. Therefore:

H5a: Pleasure mediates the relationship between Human Crowding and Satisfaction.

H5b: Pleasure mediates the relationship between Spatial Crowding and Satisfaction.

H6a: Arousal mediates the relationship between Human Crowding and Satisfaction.

H6b: Arousal mediates the relationship between Spatial Crowding and Satisfaction.

The proposed theoretical model for the research was examined through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), employing SmartPLS version 3 for the analysis. This technique was selected because its causal-predictive capabilities is highly effective for estimating complex structural relationships within specialized datasets, prioritizing the explanation of variance in dependent variables. Initially, the study evaluated the Measurement Model to confirm the constructs' reliability and validity, after which the Structural Model was being analyzed to test the proposed hypotheses.

Despite the methodological rigor employed, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of non-probability purposive sampling and the focus on a single fandom-based event (Comic Frontier) limit the generalizability of the findings to other types of events or broader consumer populations. Second, the data were collected using a hybrid approach combining on-site and post-event responses, which may introduce temporal variation in emotional reporting, as immediate experiences during the event may differ from retrospective evaluations. Finally, this study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to recall bias and social desirability effects.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Measurement Model Assessment (Outer Model)

The Measurement Model Assessment began by confirming internal consistency and convergent validity of the reflective constructs. Internal consistency ensures that the indicator items measuring a single construct are reliable and highly correlated with each other. Convergent validity confirms that the indicators, which are meant to measure a particular construct, are sufficiently correlated to that construct and that the construct successfully captures the variance in its items. The structural model is being shown in Figure 1.

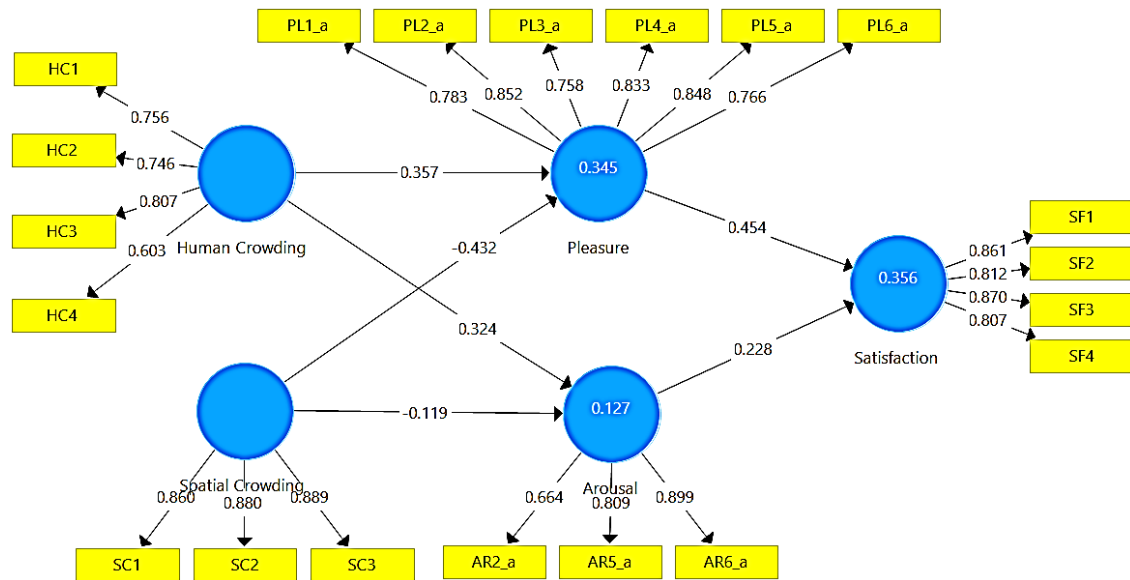


Figure 1. Research Structural Model
Source: Researchers (2025)

Evaluating internal consistency and convergent validity for the study is being done by assessing the metrics such as Outer Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All items were assessed using data from 112 respondents, with the outcomes presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Measurement Model Assessment

Factors and Items	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Human Crowding		0.738	0.821	0.536
There was much traffic at the event	0.756			
There were a lot of people at the event	0.746			
The event was a little too busy	0.807			
The event seems very crowded to me	0.603			
Spatial Crowding		0.849	0.908	0.768
I felt suffocated at the event venue	0.860			
I felt cramped at the event venue	0.880			
Moving around at the event venue was inconvenient	0.889			
Pleasure		0.893	0.918	0.652
Happy-unhappy	0.783			
Pleased-annoyed	0.852			
Satisfied-unsatisfied	0.758			
Contented-melancholic	0.833			

Factors and Items	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Hopeful-despairing	0.848	0.710	0.837	0.635
Relaxed-bored	0.766			
Arousal				
Excited-calm	0.664			
Wide awake-sleepy	0.809			
Aroused-unaroused	0.899	0.860	0.904	0.702
Satisfaction				
Overall, I am satisfied with my experience at the event	0.861			
My decision to shop at this event was a wise one	0.812			
I enjoyed shopping at the event venue	0.870			
This event venue met my expectations	0.807			

Source: Researchers (2025)

Outer Loadings of all indicator items are being examined. Although the preferred standard for loadings is 0.70, indicators with loadings below this value were considered for retention if their removal did not lead to an improvement in Composite Reliability or when they were deemed important for preserving the content validity of the construct, according to Hair et al. (2016). All indicators retained in the final model met acceptable loading standards.

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) was being used to analyze the reliability of the constructs. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) for all constructs surpassed the 0.70 benchmark, which indicates that the constructs have strong internal consistency. Convergent validity was assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all constructs surpassing the 0.50 threshold, showing that each construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. Discriminant validity, ensuring that each construct is distinct from the others, was being assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). As shown in Table 2, all HTMT values fell below 0.85, confirming that none of the latent variables were excessively correlated. This successful assessment verifies that the measurement scales employed are both reliable and valid.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Arousal	Human Crowding	Pleasure	Satisfaction	Spatial Crowding
Arousal					
Human Crowding	0.413				
Pleasure	0.581	0.419			
Satisfaction	0.542	0.349	0.623		
Spatial Crowding	0.191	0.220	0.527	0.291	

Source: Researchers (2025)

4.2 Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model)

The explanatory power of the model was assessed through the coefficient of determination (R^2), reflecting the extent to which the predictors account for variance in the endogenous variables. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

	R^2	R^2 Adjusted
Arousal	0.127	0.111
Pleasure	0.345	0.333
Satisfaction	0.356	0.344

Source: Researchers (2025)

The results show that the model exhibits moderate predictive power for both Satisfaction and Pleasure, with R^2 of 0.356 and 0.345. According to guidelines by Hair et al. (2021), R^2 values of 0.25 are considered weak, 0.50 moderate, and 0.75 substantial. This indicates that the constructs of Crowding and Emotions successfully explain approximately 35% of the variance in attendee Pleasure and Satisfaction. However, the R^2 for Arousal of 0.127 falls into the weak category, suggesting that while crowding significantly influences arousal, a large portion of the variance in attendee arousal is influenced by factors external to the model.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

To test the significant relationship of the proposed direct pathways, a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples was conducted to obtain t-values and p-values. A path was deemed significant if the p-value was below 0.05 or the t-value exceeded the critical threshold of 1.96 at a 5% significance level. The results of the bootstrapping analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing (Direct Effect)

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-value	Decision
H1a	Human Crowding → Pleasure	0.357	4.062	0.000	Supported
H1b	Human Crowding → Arousal	0.324	3.466	0.001	Supported
H2a	Spatial Crowding → Pleasure	-0.432	7.520	0.000	Supported
H2b	Spatial Crowding → Arousal	-0.119	1.138	0.255	Not Supported
H3	Pleasure → Satisfaction	0.454	5.661	0.000	Supported
H4	Arousal → Satisfaction	0.228	2.332	0.020	Supported

Source: Researchers (2025)

4.3.1 The Effect of Perceived Crowding to Emotions

The results provide strong support for Hypothesis H1a, indicating that Perceived Human Crowding positively affects Pleasure, with a path coefficient of 0.357 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This finding aligns with the literature on “positive crowding” in hedonic environments, where social density can be interpreted as stimulating rather than constraining. In the context of Comic Frontier, the presence of attendees who share similar interests appears to enhance the social atmosphere, making the crowd itself part of the enjoyment. This findings mirrors research on leisure and festival studies, where a large number of participants enhances the liveliness and emotional appeal of the event (Kim et al., 2016). The result differs from traditional retail research, where human crowding often decreases pleasure due to blocked goals or restricted movement (Hui & Bateson, 1991; Machleit et al., 2000). However, research shows that crowd evaluations are context-dependent: in voluntary, entertainment-driven activities, crowding may be interpreted as lively and socially rewarding (Das & Varshneya, 2017; Li et al., 2009). Thus, in the context of Comic Frontier, human crowding contributed positively to pleasure.

Hypothesis H1b, which proposed that Perceived Human Crowding positively influences Arousal, was also significantly supported, with path coefficient of 0.324 and p-value less than 0.05. The result suggests that being surrounded by many people heightened feelings of excitement and alertness among attendees. The result is consistent with studies showing that social density in hedonic settings functions as a powerful environmental stimulus that energizes the experience (Li et al., 2009). Although earlier work suggested that crowding can increase tension and arousal (Stokols, 1972), more recent studies emphasize that, in entertaining environments, such arousal is often

evaluated positively (Das & Varshneya, 2017). Findings from festivals and event contexts reports that human crowding enhances emotional activation and contributes to an engaging atmosphere (Kim et al., 2016). In the Comic Frontier context, human crowding appears to generate an optimal level of arousal without becoming overwhelming or unpleasant.

Hypothesis H2a, which proposed that Perceived Spatial Crowding negatively influences Pleasure, was significantly supported, with path coefficient of -0.432 and p-value less than 0.001. This finding reinforces previous findings in environmental and consumer behavior literature, where spatial constraints tend to trigger negative emotional responses by restricting individual movement. Prior studies consistently demonstrate that physical restriction, which is caused by narrow pathways, dense layouts, or obstructive fixtures reduces positive emotions in retail and consumption settings (Hui & Bateson, 1991; Machleit et al., 2000). Similar results from Li et al. (2009) further show that spatial crowding reduces positive feelings by hindering mobility and browsing. In the context of Comic Frontier, restricted spatial capacity in high-traffic zones, particularly within merchandise aisles and queueing areas, appears to reduce enjoyment by creating discomfort and limiting navigation.

Hypothesis H2b, which proposed that Perceived Spatial Crowding negatively influences Arousal, was not supported, with p-value of 0.255. Although spatial restrictions clearly lowered pleasure, they did not noticeably affect attendees' excitement or activation levels in the context of Comic Frontier. A plausible explanation lies in the nature of high-density experiential events, where arousal is driven by multiple stimuli beyond spatial conditions. In the context of Comic Frontier, elements such as social interaction, product discovery, and event atmosphere may serve as dominant sources of stimulation, potentially offsetting the negative effects of spatial restriction. As a result, while attendees may feel physically constrained, their overall level of excitement remains sustained by other environmental and social factors.

This finding aligns with the relatively low explanatory power of the model for arousal ($R^2 = 0.127$), indicating that crowding alone is insufficient to predict arousal in complex event environments. It also supports prior arguments that arousal is a context-dependent and multidimensional construct, which may not respond uniformly to environmental constraints such as spatial density. This contrasts with earlier findings indicating that spatial crowding can decrease arousal by generating frustration or tension (Li et al., 2009; Machleit et al., 2000). However, research also highlights that emotional responses to crowding are highly context-dependent (Das & Varshneya, 2017). Therefore, spatial crowding may primarily influence evaluative emotions such as pleasure, rather than activation-based responses like arousal.

4.3.2 The Effect of Emotions to Satisfaction

The analysis confirmed Hypothesis H3, with a path coefficient of 0.454 and a p-value under 0.001, demonstrating that pleasure significantly enhances satisfaction. This outcome is in line with studies across retail, tourism, and event domains, which identify pleasure as a crucial emotional contributor to overall satisfaction (Bigné et al., 2005; Carneiro et al., 2019; Walsh et al., 2011). Prior studies note that enjoyable environments, fun activities, and positive emotional states enhance evaluative judgment of the experience, often more strongly than cognitive factors (Mattila & Enz, 2002; Westbrook, 1987). In the context of Comic Frontier, attendees experience pleasure from discovering unique merchandise, interacting with creators, and engaging with other fans who share

similar interests. As pleasure rises, attendees feel more satisfied with their participation. Thus, similar to previous findings in cultural and entertainment settings, pleasure acts as an emotional driver in shaping positive evaluations of the overall Comic Frontier experience.

Hypothesis H4 was also supported, with path coefficient of 0.228 and p-value less than 0.05, indicating that arousal positively influence satisfaction. Although prior findings regarding arousal have been mixed, some studies report a significant positive effect (Li et al., 2009; H. Song et al., 2019), while others find no direct influence (Bigné et al., 2005; Carneiro et al., 2019; Walsh et al., 2011). The current result reflects contexts in which stimulation and excitement enhance the experience. Comic Frontier is characterized by energetic crowds, dynamic interactions, and anticipation surrounding limited merchandise, which can elevate alertness and excitement without becoming overwhelming. This resembles findings in shopping environments where moderate levels of arousal contribute positively to satisfaction, whereas overly intense or under-stimulating conditions reduce enjoyment (S. A. Eroglu et al., 2005). In the context of Comic Frontier, attendees appear to interpret heightened stimulation as part of the appeal, especially as participation is voluntary and highly goal-oriented. Therefore, arousal is valued as a performance cue that elevates the emotional intensity and memorability of the experience, contributing positively to overall satisfaction.

4.3.3 Mediating Effect of Emotions

To examine whether emotional states (pleasure and arousal) mediate the relationship between perceived crowding (both human and spatial) and satisfaction, a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples was employed at a two-tailed 0.05 significance level. Following Hair et al. (2016), bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) bootstrap confidence intervals were used to assess the significance of indirect effects. This method does not require the normality assumption in the sampling distribution of indirect effects and offers greater accuracy and statistical power than traditional approaches such as the Sobel test (Hayes, 2017; Hayes & Scharkow, 2013). An indirect effect is deemed significant if the 95% BCa confidence interval does not contain zero. Hence, in this study, interpretation of mediation significance is based primarily on BCa confidence intervals, while t-statistics and p-values are reported only for completeness (Hair et al., 2016). The bootstrapping result for indirect effect will be shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing (Indirect Effect)

Path	Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-values	95% BCa Confidence Interval	Significance
Specific Indirect Effects					
H5a: Human Crowding → Pleasure → Satisfaction	0.148	2.882	0.004	[0.060, 0.253]	Supported
H5b: Spatial Crowding → Pleasure → Satisfaction	-0.184	3.870	0.000	[-0.291, -0.102]	Supported
H6a: Human Crowding → Arousal → Satisfaction	0.071	1.703	0.089	[0.006, 0.162]	Supported (CI excludes zero)
H6b: Spatial Crowding → Arousal → Satisfaction	-0.027	0.916	0.360	[-0.107, 0.015]	Not Supported
Total Indirect Effects					
Human Crowding → Satisfaction	0.219	3.612	0.000	[0.092, 0.326]	Supported
Spatial Crowding → Satisfaction	-0.211	3.953	0.000	[-0.316, -0.108]	Supported

Source: Researchers (2025)

The mediation analysis strongly indicates that emotions are the crucial link connecting perceived crowding to satisfaction. The specific indirect effects through emotional states were significant for most paths. Pleasure significantly mediates the relationship between both human and spatial crowding and satisfaction, as confirmed by the BCa confidence intervals not containing zero. Therefore, H5a and H5b were supported. These findings suggest that attendees' perceived enjoyment transformed crowding experiences into satisfaction.

Similarly, the human crowding → arousal → satisfaction path was also supported, despite a marginal p-value of 0.089, as the BCa confidence interval did not include zero. This indicates significance under the bootstrapping criterion (Hair et al., 2021), supporting H6a. However, the spatial crowding → arousal → satisfaction path was not supported, as the BCa confidence intervals includes zero and p-value of 0.360, indicating that arousal induced by spatial constraints may not necessarily lead to satisfaction.

Furthermore, both total indirect effects of Human Crowding to Satisfaction and Spatial Crowding to Satisfaction were significant, with path coefficients of 0.219 and -0.211. This confirms that perceived crowding influences satisfaction only through emotional responses rather than direct perceptual evaluation.

5. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to explore the psychological processes connecting perceived crowding and satisfaction at the Comic Frontier event, utilizing the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework. The findings highlighted a clear differentiation between human crowding and spatial crowding. Human Crowding was confirmed to be a source of positive engagement, significantly increasing both Pleasure and Arousal. Conversely, Spatial Crowding negatively and significantly affected Pleasure, confirming that the physical restriction diminishes enjoyment. Furthermore, both Pleasure and Arousal were validated as direct, positive drivers of overall Satisfaction.

The findings indicate that emotional responses, especially pleasure, serve as important mediators linking crowding to satisfaction. This supports recent studies in experiential and leisure contexts, which emphasize that affective responses, particularly pleasure-based emotions such as joy, play a central role in translating environmental stimuli into evaluative outcomes (Stemmer et al., 2024). Both human and spatial crowding affect satisfaction indirectly through pleasure, implying that attendees' emotional experiences can convert potentially negative perceptions of crowding into positive outcomes when the event environment is engaging and enjoyable. In contrast, arousal showed a weaker and inconsistent mediating effect, indicating that heightened stimulation does not always translate into satisfaction in highly crowded environments. The indirect effect for both human and spatial crowding on satisfaction were significant, supporting the notion that the influence of crowding channeled through emotional mechanisms (the S-O-R framework).

Practically, the findings give valuable insights for event organizers and venue managers on how to manage crowding more strategically. Spatial crowding reduced pleasure when movement felt restricted. This means event planning must carefully consider how people circulate through the venue, how queues are organized, and how space is allocated. Providing wider pathways, directional flow planning, real-time crowd monitoring, and clear signage can reduce congestion without diminishing the vibrant social atmosphere of the event. In short, density should be managed, not eliminated. A crowded space can remain enjoyable when attendees feel they can move freely, explore

booths, and engage with others. Event success relies on maintaining this balance, where the presence of many people enhances the atmosphere, while spatial constraints are minimized to preserve comfort and emotional experience.

Despite these contributions, this study is subject to several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research focuses on a single fandom-based creative event, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other types of events or consumer settings. Second, the sample consists of attendees from one event with relatively homogeneous interests and motivations, which may not reflect broader consumer populations. Third, the use of a hybrid data collection method (on-site and post-event) introduces potential temporal bias, as emotional responses may differ between real-time experiences and retrospective evaluations. Fourth, although measurement validity and reliability thresholds were met, several indicators exhibited lower outer loadings below the recommended threshold of 0.7, possibly due to unequal exposure to environmental stimuli across respondents. Fifth, the model did not incorporate moderating variables such as crowding tolerance, task orientation, or time pressure, which may explain variations in emotional and satisfaction responses. Lastly, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of recall bias and social desirability effects, potentially affecting the accuracy of reported experiences.

Building on these limitations, several directions for future research are proposed. Future research should extend the model across diverse event contexts, such as exhibitions, food festivals, or beauty conventions, to examine the robustness and contextual consistency of crowding effects in how it affects satisfaction. Comparative studies across different types of experiential environments would provide deeper insights into whether the positive perception of human crowding is unique to fandom-based communities or generalizable to other settings. Additionally, future research should incorporate moderating variables, such as individual crowding tolerance, motivation, or time pressure to better explain heterogeneous responses to crowding. Introducing these moderators into the model will clarify under what conditions crowding leads to negative emotional outcomes (such as reduced Pleasure) or if attendees employ coping strategies, thus providing a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of consumer responses to density.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 53-62

SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW: HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM 5.0: ENHANCING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM EXPERIENCES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Received: 22/12/2025

Revised: 23/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

The rapid development of digital technologies has accelerated the transformation of the tourism and hospitality industry toward the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 paradigm, which emphasizes the integration of intelligent technologies with a human-centered approach and sustainability principles. This study aims to systematically review the development of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 in academic literature and examine its role in creating sustainable tourism experiences in the digital era. This research employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines. Literature was collected from Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Garuda databases, covering publications from 2014 to 2024. The initial search identified 120 articles, which were screened through identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages, resulting in 25 articles selected for further analysis. The findings reveal that digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, and smart tourism systems play a significant role in enhancing service personalization, operational efficiency, and tourism experience quality. Moreover, Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 supports sustainable tourism through improved resource management, reduced environmental impacts, and greater local community engagement. However, challenges related to human resource readiness, digital inequality, and data ethics remain significant barriers to its implementation.

Keywords: Hospitality and Tourism 5.0, Digital Tourism, Sustainable Tourism Experience, Smart Tourism, Systematic Literature Review

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought significant changes to the tourism and hospitality industry. This transformation is characterized by the increasing use of technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, and interactive digital platforms, which enable the creation of more personalized, efficient, and data-driven services. In this context, a new paradigm has emerged known as Hospitality and Tourism 5.0, which emphasizes the integration of intelligent technologies with a human-centered approach and sustainability principles.

The concept of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 represents an evolution from Tourism 4.0, which previously focused on the digitalization and automation of tourism services. At this stage, technology not only functions to improve operational efficiency but also to create more meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable tourism experiences. This approach is aligned with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasizes the importance of tourism development that generates economic benefits while maintaining environmental and social sustainability.

Previous studies have primarily focused on specific aspects of tourism transformation, such as smart tourism technologies, digital platforms, or sustainability practices. However, these studies often lack integration and fail to provide a holistic perspective on how these elements interact within the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 framework. In addition, most existing studies remain conceptual and do not systematically synthesize recent empirical findings, particularly from high-impact international journals.

Despite the growing body of literature on digital tourism and sustainable tourism, existing studies tend to examine these aspects separately rather than integrating them within a unified framework. Furthermore, research explicitly addressing Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 remains limited, fragmented, and lacks a comprehensive synthesis of how advanced technologies contribute to sustainable tourism experiences. Therefore, there is a clear research gap in understanding the intersection between digital transformation, human-centered approaches, and sustainability within the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 paradigm. This study addresses this gap by systematically reviewing and synthesizing existing literature.

Based on this background, this study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review of studies discussing Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 in the context of developing sustainable tourism experiences in the digital era. To address the identified research gap, this study aims to:

- a. Identify the development of the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 concept in academic literature.
- b. Analyze the role of digital technologies in shaping tourism experiences.
- c. Examine the contribution of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 to sustainable tourism.
- d. Identify the challenges and opportunities of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively examine literature related to the concept of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0. The SLR method was selected because it allows researchers to systematically and transparently identify, evaluate, and synthesize findings from previous studies. In this research, the review process follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure methodological rigor and transparency in the literature selection process. The use of PRISMA is justified as it provides a transparent, systematic, and replicable framework for conducting literature reviews, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study.

2.2 Data Sources and Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted through several academic databases, namely Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Garuda. These databases were

selected to capture both international and national publications relevant to the fields of tourism and hospitality. The selection of Scopus and Web of Science ensures the inclusion of high-quality, peer-reviewed international publications, while Google Scholar and Garuda provide broader coverage of relevant regional studies. The time range of 2014–2024 was chosen to capture the evolution from Tourism 4.0 to Tourism 5.0.

The keywords used in the search process included “Hospitality 5.0,” “Tourism 5.0,” “Smart Tourism,” “Digital Tourism,” and “Sustainable Tourism Experience.” These keywords were combined using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to broaden the scope of the search results.

The initial search process identified 120 articles. After removing duplicate records and conducting a preliminary screening based on titles and abstracts, the number of articles was reduced to 60. Subsequently, an eligibility assessment was conducted through full-text reading, resulting in 25 articles that met the inclusion criteria and were selected for the final analysis.

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance and quality of the literature analyzed, this study established several inclusion and exclusion criteria. These criteria were applied during the screening and eligibility stages to select studies that are directly related to the research topic.

Table 1. Article Selection Criteria

Criteria	Description
Inclusion	Indexed journal articles, conference proceedings, and academic books discussing tourism/hospitality, digital technologies, and sustainability
Time Range	Publications from 2014–2024
Language	English and Indonesian
Exclusion	Non-academic articles, opinion pieces, editorials, and publications not relevant to the research topic

Source: Researchers (2025)

2.4 Literature Selection Process

The literature selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines, which consist of four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. The initial search yielded 120 articles from various academic databases. After removing duplicate records and conducting title and abstract screening, 60 articles were selected for full-text evaluation. Following the eligibility assessment, 25 articles were found to meet the inclusion criteria and were subsequently included in the final analysis.

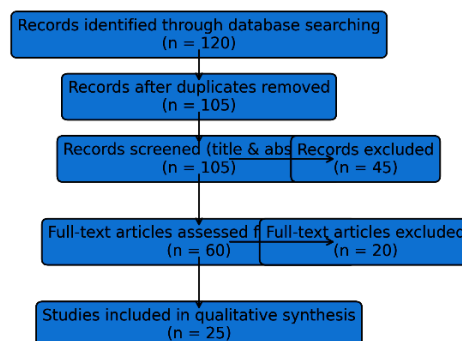


Figure 1. Literature Selection Flow Diagram Based on PRISMA Guidelines

Source: Researchers (2025)

2.5 Data Analysis Technique

The selected articles were analyzed using thematic analysis. This technique was applied to identify patterns, key themes, and conceptual relationships within the reviewed literature. The themes analyzed in this study include:

- a. The concept and characteristics of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0.
- b. The role of digital technologies in shaping tourism experiences.
- c. The contribution of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 to sustainable tourism.
- d. The challenges and opportunities of its implementation in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Furthermore, the analysis process was conducted through several stages, namely coding, categorization, and thematic interpretation. In the initial stage, each selected article was thoroughly reviewed to identify key concepts related to Hospitality and Tourism 5.0, digital technologies, tourism experiences, and sustainability. Subsequently, these concepts were grouped into thematic categories based on similarities in meaning. The final stage involved interpreting the relationships among the identified themes to produce a conceptual synthesis regarding the role of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 in developing sustainable tourism experiences.

2.6 Research Validity and Reliability

To enhance the reliability of the analysis, the coding and categorization process was conducted systematically based on the previously established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Each article was analyzed according to its relevance to the research topic, research focus, methodology, and key findings related to the concept of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0.

In addition, the use of PRISMA guidelines helps ensure transparency in the literature selection process, allowing the research procedure to be replicated by other researchers. This approach is widely used in Systematic Literature Review (SLR) studies because it minimizes selection bias and improves the credibility of the resulting literature synthesis.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Literature Selection Results

The literature selection process in this study followed the PRISMA guidelines, which consist of four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. In the identification stage, a literature search conducted through the Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Garuda databases resulted in 120 articles relevant to the research keywords. After removing duplicate records, 105 articles remained and proceeded to the screening stage, which was conducted based on the titles and abstracts. At this stage, several articles were excluded because they did not directly address the concepts of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0, tourism experiences, or sustainable tourism.

Subsequently, the remaining 60 articles were analyzed in the full-text assessment stage to ensure their suitability with the established inclusion criteria. Several articles were excluded from the analysis because they did not meet the methodological criteria, the full text was unavailable, or the studies were not relevant to the research focus. After completing all stages of the selection process, 25 articles were found to meet the inclusion criteria and were used as the primary sources for the Systematic Literature Review analysis. The complete flow of the literature selection process is presented in Figure 1, which illustrates the PRISMA diagram used in this study.

3.2 Characteristics of the Selected Studies

Based on the systematic literature review process, 25 relevant articles were selected and analyzed to identify key themes related to smart tourism, hospitality technology, and sustainable tourism development. The selected studies provide insights into technological innovation, digital transformation, and sustainability practices in the tourism and hospitality industries. Overall, the selected studies indicate a growing convergence between digital transformation and sustainability in tourism research. However, the integration of these elements within the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 framework remains limited, highlighting the importance of this study in providing a more comprehensive synthesis.

The analysis of the selected literature reveals several key themes. First, many studies highlight the role of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT), in improving service quality and operational efficiency in tourism and hospitality. Second, the literature emphasizes the importance of digital transformation, particularly in enhancing tourist experiences through personalized services and smart tourism platforms. Third, several studies underline the integration of sustainability principles in tourism development, where technological innovation is used to support environmentally responsible and socially inclusive tourism practices.

Table 2. Summary of Studies in the Systematic Literature Review

No.	Author (Year)	Country	Method	Research Focus	Key Findings
1.	Boes et al. (2016)	Spain	Conceptual	Smart Tourism Destination	ICT ecosystem improves destination competitiveness
2.	Buhalis & Amaranggana (2015)	Global	Conceptual	Smart Tourism	ICT enhances tourist experience and management
3.	Buhalis & Leung (2018)	Global	Conceptual	Smart Hospitality	Digital ecosystem improves hospitality services
4.	Gretzel et al. (2015)	USA	Literature Review	Smart Tourism	Foundation of smart tourism systems
5.	Gretzel et al. (2017)	Global	Conceptual	Smart Tourism Ecosystem	Technology enables connected tourism networks
6.	Li et al. (2017)	China	Quantitative	Smart Tourism Services	Information systems improve service quality
7.	Neuhofer et al. (2015)	UK	Conceptual	Technology Experience	Technology enhances co-creation of experiences
8.	Sigala (2018)	Global	Conceptual	Digital Engagement	Social media enhances tourist engagement
9.	Sigala (2020)	Global	Conceptual	Tourism Transformation	Digital innovation supports resilient tourism
10.	Ivanov & Webster (2019)	Global	Conceptual	AI & Robots	Automation improves efficiency in tourism services
11.	Tussyadiah (2020)	USA	Literature Review	Automation in Tourism	AI adoption reshapes tourism experiences
12.	Koo et al. (2016)	Korea	Conceptual	Smart Destination	Technology supports destination competitiveness
13.	Del Vecchio et al. (2018)	Italy	Quantitative	Big Data Tourism	Big data improves decision making
14.	Hall (2019)	Global	Conceptual	Sustainable Tourism	Policy and governance support sustainability

15.	Gössling (2018)	Global	Conceptual	Tourism Sustainability	Sustainability transition in tourism industry
16.	Xiang et al. (2015)	Global	Literature Review	Smart Tourism Research	ICT development drives tourism innovation
17.	Buhalis (2022)	Global	Conceptual	Tourism 5.0	Human-centered technology in tourism
18.	Wu et al. (2024)	China	Literature Review	Digital Tourism	Digitalization shapes tourism development
19.	Alsharif (2024)	Global	Systematic Review	Smart Tourism	Smart technology transforms tourism industry
20.	Rahmawati et al. (2023)	Indonesia	Quantitative	Smart Tourism Tech	Technology increases tourist satisfaction
21.	Wahyuningsih & Pratisti (2026)	Indonesia	Quantitative	Smart Tourism Experience	Smart systems influence tourist behavior
22.	Khalik et al. (2025)	Indonesia	Conceptual	Smart Destination	Smart systems support sustainable tourism
23.	Christianto & Adinugraha (2025)	Indonesia	Conceptual	Green Tourism	Low carbon tourism development
24.	Sudarmini et al. (2025)	Indonesia	Conceptual	Smart Green Tourism	Integration of technology and sustainability
25.	Pasquinelli & Trunfio (2023)	Global	Conceptual	Innovation & Sustainability	Innovation supports sustainable tourism

Source: Researchers (2025)

Table 2 presents a summary of the 25 selected articles, including the authors, research methods, key findings, and their relevance to the current study.

3.3 Thematic Findings

Based on the Systematic Literature Review process, a total of 25 relevant articles were selected and analyzed to identify the main themes related to smart tourism, technology in the hospitality industry, and the development of sustainable tourism. These articles provide insights into the role of technological innovation, digital transformation, and the integration of sustainability principles in the development of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Overall, the literature indicates that the integration of digital technologies within Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 not only enhances service efficiency but also contributes to the creation of more personalized and sustainable tourism experiences. These findings suggest that technology functions as an enabler, supporting more adaptive destination management, responding more effectively to tourists' needs, and placing greater emphasis on environmental and social sustainability.

a. The Concept of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0

The literature indicates that Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 represents a new paradigm that emphasizes the integration of digital technologies with a human-centered approach and sustainability principles. This concept places tourism experience as a central element in the development of tourism services. In this paradigm, technological innovation is not only used to improve operational efficiency but also to create more meaningful, inclusive, and personalized tourism experiences for visitors.

b. The Role of Digital Technology in Tourism Experiences

Digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, the Internet of Things, and augmented reality enable tourism service providers to better understand tourists' preferences and behaviors. These technologies allow tourism stakeholders to deliver more personalized, adaptive, and interactive services, thereby enhancing the overall tourism experience. Furthermore, digital platforms and smart tourism systems facilitate real-time information access, improving decision-making for both tourists and destination managers.

c. Contribution to Sustainable Tourism

The literature also highlights that the use of digital technologies can support more efficient destination management and contribute to the development of sustainable tourism practices. Technologies such as smart tourism systems and data-driven management enable more effective monitoring of tourist flows, resource use, and environmental impacts. Additionally, digital platforms can enhance the participation of local communities in tourism development, thereby promoting inclusive and sustainable tourism growth.

d. Implementation Challenges

Despite its significant potential, the implementation of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 faces several challenges. These include limited human resource competencies, the digital divide, and concerns related to ethics and data privacy. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative efforts among governments, industry stakeholders, and academic institutions to ensure the effective and responsible adoption of digital technologies in the tourism and hospitality sector.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Interpretation of Research Findings

The research findings indicate that Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 represents a paradigm shift in the development of digital tourism. Technology is no longer positioned solely as a tool for operational efficiency, but rather as an enabler that supports the creation of more personalized, inclusive, and sustainable tourism experiences.

These findings are consistent with the concept of the experience economy, which emphasizes the importance of experiences as the primary value in the tourism industry. In this context, digital technologies enable the co-creation of experiences among tourists, service providers, and destinations, thereby generating more interactive and meaningful tourism experiences.

Furthermore, the integration of digital technologies with sustainability principles demonstrates that Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 has the potential to support the development of more responsible tourism practices. However, the successful implementation of this concept largely depends on the readiness of human resources, policy support, and collaboration among stakeholders.

These findings extend previous studies by demonstrating that digital technologies are not only operational tools but also strategic enablers of value co-creation within the experience economy framework.

4.2 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the development of literature on Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 by synthesizing previous studies related to smart tourism, digital transformation, and sustainable tourism development. The findings highlight the growing role of advanced

technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things in shaping tourism experiences and improving operational efficiency in the hospitality industry.

Furthermore, this research provides a conceptual understanding of how technological innovation can support sustainable tourism practices, thereby enriching the theoretical discussion on the integration of digital transformation and sustainability within tourism and hospitality studies.

4.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide practical insights for tourism stakeholders, particularly hotel managers, destination managers, and tourism policymakers. The integration of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and smart tourism platforms can enhance service quality, improve tourist experiences, and support more efficient tourism management.

In addition, the adoption of technology-based solutions can help tourism businesses implement more sustainable practices, including resource efficiency, improved visitor management, and environmentally responsible tourism operations.

4.4 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite providing a comprehensive synthesis, this study has several limitations. The reviewed literature is dominated by conceptual studies, while empirical research remains relatively limited. In addition, variations in geographical contexts and destination characteristics have not been fully represented in the existing literature.

Future research is therefore recommended to conduct empirical studies to examine the implementation of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 in specific destinations, including measuring its impact on tourist experiences and destination sustainability. Quantitative approaches as well as mixed-methods designs may be applied to strengthen the validity of findings and to develop more applicable implementation models.

Furthermore, future studies may develop conceptual models or empirical frameworks to examine the relationships between digital technologies, tourism experiences, and destination sustainability. Comparative studies across different destinations or countries are also necessary to better understand the variations in the implementation of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 in diverse contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the development of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 through a systematic literature review focusing on technological innovation and sustainable tourism practices. By analyzing 25 selected articles, this study identifies key themes related to smart tourism, digital transformation, and sustainability within the tourism and hospitality industries. The findings indicate that the integration of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT), plays a significant role in improving service quality, operational efficiency, and tourist experiences. These technologies enable tourism stakeholders to deliver more personalized, efficient, and innovative services, which are increasingly important in the evolving tourism landscape. In addition, the literature highlights the growing importance of digital platforms and smart tourism systems in supporting tourism management and enhancing visitor engagement. Furthermore, the reviewed studies emphasize that technological innovation can support the development of sustainable tourism practices. The adoption of digital technologies helps tourism businesses improve

resource efficiency, manage tourist flows more effectively, and promote environmentally responsible tourism development.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of how technological innovation and digital transformation shape the future of tourism and hospitality, particularly in the context of Hospitality and Tourism 5.0. Future research is encouraged to further explore the integration of emerging technologies and sustainability strategies in different tourism contexts to support more resilient and sustainable tourism development. This study contributes theoretically by providing an integrated framework linking digital transformation, sustainability, and tourism experience within the Hospitality and Tourism 5.0 paradigm. Practically, it offers insights for tourism stakeholders to adopt technology-driven strategies that enhance both service quality and sustainability outcomes.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 63-80

THE PROMOTION STRATEGY FOR WEDDING PACKAGES: A CASE STUDY OF JW MARRIOTT HOTEL SURABAYA

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Received: 25/03/2026

Revised: 23/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

The MICE industry in Indonesia is projected to grow significantly, with Surabaya emerging as a key hub for meetings and events. This study examines the promotion mix strategies employed by JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya to market its wedding packages within a competitive hospitality landscape. Using a qualitative descriptive approach with thematic analysis, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two Wedding Sales Managers and three clients, complemented by observation and document analysis. The findings reveal that the hotel's promotional strategy centers on three primary elements: digital advertising reinforced by organic word-of-mouth, consultative personal selling that prioritizes client needs over transactional approaches, and value-added sales promotions that preserve premium brand positioning. Public relations and direct marketing were excluded from the active promotion mix, as contemporary wedding clients demonstrate greater reliance on peer recommendations and social media evidence than on corporate-led communication. A distinctive characteristic of the strategy is its cultural attunement, reflected in the timing of wedding exhibitions during Ramadan and the Suro month, and accommodation of local preferences such as individual set menu dining. The study concludes that authentic service delivery functions as the hotel's most powerful self-sustaining promotional tool, offering a replicable framework for luxury hospitality venues seeking differentiation beyond price competition.

Keywords: Cultural Adaptation, MICE Hospitality, Promotion Mix Strategy, Relationship-Based Selling, Wedding Package

1. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry in Indonesia has experienced growth over the past decade, due to the support of the industrial sector, education, trade and growth of the many tourist vehicles developed by the local community (Triatmanto et al., 2021). The MICE industry in Indonesia shows an increasing demand for personalization and customization in event experience. During the new normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia increased. As a result, Indonesia became one of the countries that host international events, such as Indonesia Masters 2024, Asia Pacific Media Forum (APMF), World Water Forum (WWF), Motocross Grand Prix (MXGP), Indonesia Open

2024, and MotoGP. The impact of events held in Indonesia increases the number of foreign tourist visits in Indonesia, the data shown below.

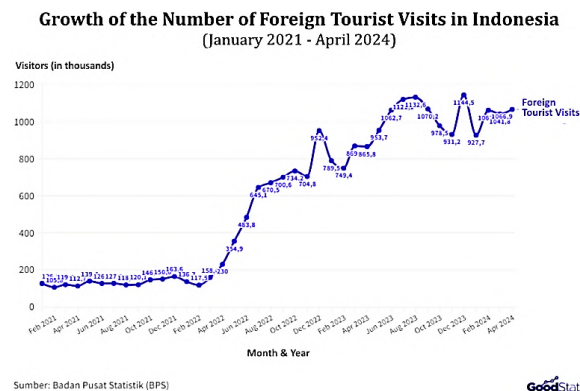


Figure 1. Growth of the Number of Foreign Tourist Visits in Indonesia
Source: GoodStats (2024)

According to Astute Analytica, the Indonesian MICE market is expected to rise from its 2023 valuation of US\$2,319.7 million to US\$7,413.6 million by 2032, driven by government support, infrastructure development, and economic growth. With a revenue share of over 85.4% in 2023, the offline channel is prioritizing physical interactions and offering immersive experience by offline or personal (Astute Analytica, 2024). As Indonesia's second-largest city, Surabaya plays a pivotal role in the growth and success of the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (MICE) sector. The role of hotels improves MICE activities by providing comprehensive services, from modern conference facilities, catering, room service, and event management (Yuniawati Ekaningrum, 2018).

Recognizing the product and quality service excellence of JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya, increases the demand of customers (Sofianti, 2022). JW Marriott Surabaya is an ideal choice to plan for a business trip or family staycation in Surabaya. It is a 5-star hotel located in the downtown, strategically located near Tunjungan Plaza, the largest shopping center in the city, creating an opportunity to combine quality time with self-balance. The hotel provides varieties of cuisine from local to fusion. Recognizing the high demand especially on social events such as weddings, birthdays and gatherings, JW Marriott Surabaya offers flexible MICE packages. Weddings and corporate gatherings representing particularly common occurrences within its facilities (Utomo et al., 2022). In this regard, attracting potential customers and providing them with services that meet their requirements and expectations is the main responsibility of any hotel (Mysova et al., 2021).

The Indonesian hospitality sector faces challenges that are impacting its growth and stability. Political instability may result in a decrease in tourism demand, affecting economic growth in destination countries (Lesfandra, 2024, p. 211). In early 2025, budget cuts by the Indonesian government led to widespread cancellation of meetings and official business trips, which caused hotels across the country, especially outside Java island, to struggle with significant revenue losses. Based on Association of Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant (PHRI) calculations in 2024, the total profit of hotels from the government market is IDR 24.8 trillion, consisting of IDR 16.5 trillion from room occupancy, and IDR 8.2 trillion from meetings (Estherina, 2025). As budget cuts occur, causes loss from the government market. Ministries and institutions cut official travel budgets up to 50%.

It has the potential to have a major impact on the tourism, hospitality, and restaurant sectors, especially in holding an event or MICE. Most of hotel revenue comes from government agendas and activities, such as official travel and meetings at hotels. With the budget cuts, this source of income causes lost as the government eliminates the budget for meetings and official travel. Furthermore, the hospitality industry fights with the rise of competitive pressures, driven by diverse accommodation options. A research by Handoko et al. (2025) reveals that inefficient budget allocation, insufficient infrastructure funding, and poor-departmental coordination have obstructed the growth capacity of the tourism industry especially in the field of hospitality. Although tourism plays a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, the absence of specific financial strategies limits the industry's capacity to leverage global trends. The JW Marriott Surabaya distinguished itself by being awarded the ASEAN MICE Venue Standard (AMVS) 2022-2024 (ANTARA, 2024). Also in 2022, ranking first among five-star hotels in Surabaya, as recognized by CNBC's "Best Hotels for Business Travelers" list (Pitrelli, 2022). Based on the background above, the author is interested in taking the title "The Promotion Strategy for Wedding Packages: A Case Study of JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya".

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The promotion mix represents a fundamental component of marketing strategy in the hospitality industry, encompassing advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, and direct marketing as integrated tools for communicating value propositions to potential clients (Kotler et al., 2017, p. 47). In the context of luxury hotels and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) services, the effective implementation of promotion mix strategies becomes increasingly critical as hotels face intensified competitive pressures and evolving consumer preferences. Boella and Goss-Turner (2019, p. 112) emphasize that promotional strategies in hospitality require comprehensive analysis of marketing mix elements adapted to specific market contexts, particularly in differentiating service offerings within competitive environments. The integration of multiple promotional tools enables hotels to create synergistic effects that amplify marketing impact beyond what individual tactics could achieve independently. Bowie et al. (2017, p. 203) demonstrate that promotional mix strategies play a crucial role in enhancing hotel competitiveness by strategically aligning communication channels with target audience preferences and behavioral patterns. Furthermore, the dynamic nature of the hospitality market necessitates continuous adaptation of promotional approaches in response to technological advancements, cultural shifts, and economic fluctuations. Rogers and Davidson (2016, p. 178) found through empirical investigation of MICE industry practices that event marketing and promotion strategies must be grounded in deep understanding of client decision-making processes, value perceptions, and relationship expectations rather than relying solely on transactional promotional tactics.

The digital transformation of hotel marketing has fundamentally altered how hospitality properties communicate with potential clients, with social media platforms emerging as primary channels for brand awareness, customer engagement, and booking conversion. Thompson and Martin (2020) argue that strategic use of social media in hotel marketing is essential for building brand awareness and fostering customer engagement, particularly among younger demographics who increasingly rely on digital platforms for travel and event planning research. The shift from traditional advertising channels to visual-centric platforms such as Instagram reflects broader consumer behavior changes

where authentic visual content and user-generated reviews significantly influence purchase decisions. Chen and Wu (2020) demonstrate that enhancing hotel competitiveness through integrated marketing communication requires sophisticated orchestration of social media strategies within luxury hotel contexts, balancing organic content creation with targeted paid advertising to maximize reach and conversion potential. Huang and Chen (2020) provide empirical evidence that digital marketing significantly impacts hotel performance, particularly through social media engagement metrics that correlate with booking behavior and revenue generation. However, the effectiveness of digital marketing depends critically on omnichannel integration that seamlessly bridges online and offline customer experiences. Rahman et al. (2022) establish that omnichannel marketing strategies in hospitality must create cohesive customer journeys across digital touchpoints (websites, social media, online advertisements) and physical interactions (wedding fairs, venue tours, face-to-face consultations), ensuring consistency in messaging and service delivery throughout the decision-making process. Liu and Zhang (2022) further emphasize that digital transformation in hotel marketing requires strategic integration of online and offline channels rather than treating them as separate domains, as customers increasingly expect fluid transitions between digital research and physical experiences.

Personal selling in luxury hospitality services operates fundamentally differently from transactional sales approaches, requiring consultative methodologies that prioritize relationship building, needs assessment, and customized solution development. Williams and Jones (2022) demonstrate that personal selling effectiveness in luxury hospitality services depends significantly on the salesperson's ability to function as a trusted advisor rather than a product vendor, establishing rapport through genuine understanding of client aspirations and constraints. This relationship-centric approach proves particularly crucial in wedding services where emotional significance, family involvement, and cultural traditions create complex decision-making dynamics that transcend purely rational cost-benefit analyses. The cultivation of strategic partnerships with industry intermediaries, such as wedding organizers and event planners, represents an efficient channel strategy for reaching end consumers who have difficulty to identify directly. Lee and Kim (2021) found that strategic marketing approaches for MICE venues require comprehensive understanding of promotional effectiveness across multiple touchpoints, including both direct client engagement and indirect influence through professional networks. Word-of-mouth marketing emerges as a particularly powerful promotional tool in hospitality contexts where service quality cannot be fully evaluated prior to purchase, making authentic testimonials from previous clients invaluable in reducing perceived risk. Wong and Kim (2020) establish that word-of-mouth marketing in the hotel industry generates significant impact through social media influencers and authentic client testimonials that extend marketing reach beyond paid advertising channels while enhancing credibility through third-party endorsement. The emphasis on service quality as the foundation of word-of-mouth generation aligns with Mysova et al. (2021), who demonstrate through systematic review that customer expectations and satisfaction in hotel services depend primarily on service excellence, responsiveness, and personalization rather than price considerations alone.

The Indonesian hospitality context presents unique characteristics that necessitate culturally-adapted promotional strategies, including diverse ethnic traditions, religious observances, and local preferences that significantly influence event planning decisions. Triatmanto et al. (2021) analyze the development of Indonesia's hospitality industry,

identifying both challenges and opportunities specific to the Indonesian market, including the importance of cultural sensitivity in service delivery and marketing communications. The timing of promotional activities around culturally significant periods, such as Ramadan and traditional Javanese observances, demonstrates strategic alignment with moments when wedding planning activities intensify and client receptivity to marketing messages increases. The post-pandemic recovery period has further complicated the hospitality landscape, as Zhang et al. (2021) document in their analysis of tourism recovery and economic development from hotel industry perspectives, noting that consumer preferences have shifted toward greater emphasis on hygiene, safety, and service configurations that minimize shared contact points. Zhou and Wang (2020) explore the relationship between sales promotion strategies and customer purchase behavior in hotels, finding that value-added benefits often generate stronger purchase motivation than direct price discounting, particularly in premium market segments where perceived value derives from service quality and exclusive experiences. However, Indonesian hotels currently face significant challenges from government budget cuts affecting official travel and meetings, as documented by Estherina (2025), potentially reducing revenue from government market segments and intensifying competition for private events such as weddings. Handoko et al. (2025) identify strategic planning and budget allocation challenges in Indonesia's tourism and hospitality sector, noting that inefficient resource allocation and insufficient infrastructure funding constrain industry growth capacity. In this challenging environment, hotels must differentiate through promotional strategies that emphasize service excellence, cultural alignment, and relationship-based value creation rather than competing primarily on price, as Sofianti (2022) demonstrates in examining service quality and customer satisfaction in five-star hotels.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher employed qualitative data analysis approaches with descriptive methods in this study. Qualitative research focuses on an in-depth understanding of social phenomena or human behavior. This research is often used to explore the experiences, perceptions, or meanings that individuals give to a particular event or context (Hasan et al., 2025, p. 3). This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the promotion mix strategies (advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relation, and direct marketing) (Muro, 2021) for its MICE packages at JW Marriott Surabaya. The research specifically utilizes thematic analysis to comprehensively investigate the potential of JW Marriott Surabaya as a meetings and events venue. Thematic analysis is a fundamentally question-driven exercise that depends on clearly articulated lines of inquiry to frame the scholar's interpretation of the data (Lochmiller, 2021, p. 2030). The thematic analysis in this study was conducted following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), ensuring a systematic and transparent analytical process. In the first phase, the researcher familiarized herself with the data by repeatedly reading interview transcripts, observation notes, and promotional documents to develop an initial sense of recurring ideas and patterns relevant to each promotion mix element. In the second phase, initial codes were generated systematically by labeling meaningful units of data corresponding to the research questions. Coding was conducted manually using color-coded annotations across transcripts, enabling traceability of evidence for each emergent concept. In the third phase, codes were sorted and grouped into potential themes by identifying broader patterns that cut across multiple data sources and

informants. The fourth phase involved reviewing and refining these themes to ensure internal coherence within each theme and clear distinction between themes, cross-checked against the full dataset to confirm sufficient evidential support. In the fifth phase, themes were clearly defined and named to accurately reflect the substance of the data rather than researcher assumptions. Finally, in the sixth phase, the analysis was written up by integrating representative excerpts from the data to substantiate each theme within the broader context of MICE promotion strategies at JW Marriott Surabaya. To strengthen analytical rigor, a peer-debriefing process was applied as a form of inter-rater reliability check, in which a second researcher independently reviewed a portion of the coded transcripts and compared emerging codes and themes with those identified by the primary researcher. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved through consensus, and the level of agreement was recorded to ensure consistency and credibility of the interpretive process (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 260).

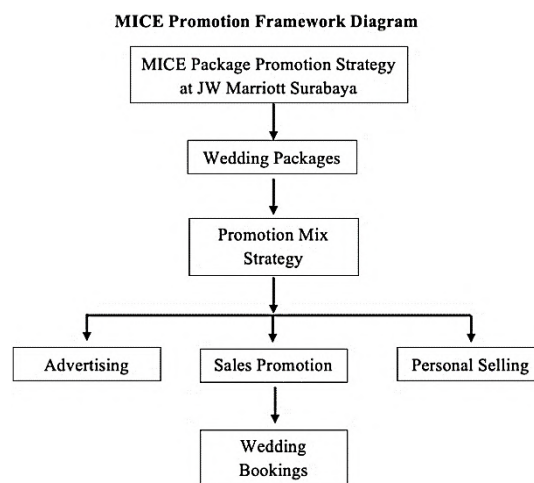


Figure 2. MICE Promotion Frame Work Diagram on Wedding Event
Source: Researchers (2025)

The promotion mix framework was refined by excluding public relation and direct marketing supported by contemporary hospitality research. Pratama and Prasandy (2023) found that MICE products, both public relation and direct marketing were ineffective in driving final purchase decisions, suggesting that modern consumers are less responsive to traditional mass-communication tools. According to Chatzigeorgiou and Christou (2020), influencer marketing and social media interaction are replacing traditional public relation duties in the modern hospitality and tourism industry. Traditional public relation is seen to be less effective for its particular service since wedding couples now rely more on peer-to-peer visual content and organic social evidence than on official corporate narratives. Additionally, based on Dwidienawati et al. (2020), modern consumers in the hospitality industry prioritize user-generated reviews and authentic digital interaction over direct promotional messages. Their study suggests that electronic word-of-mouth is considered a reliable source of information.

This study is a replication research that aligns with the topic chosen by Sumirda and Susanti (2024) in their study of Promotion mix strategy for meeting packages at Hotel Syamsiah Padang Lawas by Sumirda and Susanti, as it adopts a similar research approach on analyzing the implementation of the promotion mix strategy, previously conducted in another hotel setting. Promotion mix itself is a key component of the marketing mix strategy; it is applied to a different sample, variable, and time period. In qualitative

research, replication is defined as repeating a study among different subjects or situations, and is commonly conducted to see if the fundamental conclusions of the original study can be generalized to other circumstances (Tuval-Mashiach, 2021). Replication studies are applicable for improving and verifying findings across diverse contexts, and evaluating the theoretical frameworks. This study ensures comparability by contributing new perspectives to the case of JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya and its MICE package promotion mix strategy.

The data needed includes primary and secondary data. Primary is collected through observation and interviews using the purposive sampling method from the Sales and Marketing Department employees and customers. Purposive sampling serves a fundamental aspect of business and management research, as it allows the researcher to gather information that closely corresponds with defined criteria, situations, and studies goals. This non-probability sampling method involves a careful procedure for choosing participants according to most relevant predefined criteria or characteristics (Memon et al., 2025, p. 2). Targeting two employees from Sales and Marketing Department as wedding sales with more than three years experience, this ensures a broad understanding of the department's operations, challenges, and successes over a significant period. The informants have deeper understanding of long-term client relationships and market trends to provide detailed insight including the event planning, challenges, along with specific clients needs. Additionally, three customers with firsthand experience hosting a wedding reception were interviewed to represent different segments they are a first-first time wedding host, a Marriott Bonvoy loyalty member, and a repeat hotel customer. Furthermore, secondary data was obtained from documentation techniques and promotional materials related to the hotel's MICE services.

This qualitative research study is conducted over a period of 15 months, divided into three key phases to ensure systematic data collection, analysis, and reporting. The research proposal process was completed during the first four months. Data collection through interviews and observation was conducted over five months to ensure comprehensive, reliable data; follow-up interviews were conducted where necessary to clarify responses. Data analysis and research writing were carried out over the remaining nine months, during which the six-phase thematic analysis procedure described above was implemented iteratively alongside the writing process. The peer-debriefing process for inter-rater reliability verification was also completed within this analytical phase.

In this qualitative research, data validation is implemented through triangulation data techniques. to ensure the reliability of the findings. Before conducting an interview, member checking, also known as informant validation, refers to the practice of checking back with study informants to see if the research is in line with their views (Busetto et al., 2020). Implementing triangulation data techniques by cross-checking information from interview outcomes and document analysis of promotional materials. Triangulation refers to combining multiple data sources, in which multiple measurements are carried out from different angles to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Busetto et al., 2020). To increase reliability, research uses detailed records and transparent procedures, allowing the research to be replicated by other researchers in similar contexts. The researcher maintains objectivity in interpretation, despite working in a realm that is often rich in nuance and subjectivity. The study examines how the hotel leverages its core value of 'Pursue Excellence' to turn a single event into a perpetual marketing tool, where the high quality of service delivery serves as the primary driver for high-value word-of-mouth recommendations.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This case study examined the promotion strategy of wedding packages at JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya through a qualitative approach involving semi-structured interviews with two Wedding Sales Managers and one client, complemented by observational data and document analysis. The findings reveal a comprehensive promotional mix strategy encompassing advertising, personal selling, and sales promotion, which are systematically deployed to attract and retain wedding clients in the competitive hospitality market of Surabaya.

This finding is generated into five aspects of promotion mix strategies. Advertising has digital presence and word of mouth themes, sales promotion has added value and benefit themes, personal selling has consultative and personalized approach themes, public relation has reputation and event showing themes, B2B relations and proactive inquiries themes. More detailed explanations are provided in the triangulation table.

The exclusion of public relations and direct marketing from the promotion mix is justified by observation evidence showing a significant shift in customer behavior, where customers now value natural social proof above corporate-led communication. As stated by EV, “In my opinion, recommendations from friends are more convincing. Moreover, I have been invited to a friend's wedding here before, so I have seen the quality for myself, plus during the wedding expo I can see the packages and venues firsthand” (EV-8-14-1).

According, to interview data, customers rely more on social media, family and friend's recommendation than on official news. This is aligning with Dwidienawati et al. (2020), emphasize that customer reviews have a greater influence on purchase intention than formal endorsements.

Table 1. Triangulation Data Result

Theory Aspects	Themes	Observation	Interview Result (1-Sales)	Interview Result (2-Sales)	Interview Result (3-Customer)	Interview Result (4-Customer)	Interview Result (5-Customer)	Results
Advertising	Digital Presence & Word of Mouth (WOM)	Advertisements on social media (Instagram) and brochures serve as visual catalogues. Testimony and review contents from direct customer and influencer. Client's decisions are more strongly influenced by family or friends recommendations.	“The advertising media we use... include social media, as well as Meta Ads and Google Ads, printed media flyers and brochures.” (YL-2-3-1)	“Social media is definitely... testimonials or storytelling from clients by word of mouth, which is also a very real form of advertising.” (DS-4-3-5)	“For me, recommendations from family are much more convincing.” (FD-7-15-1)	Initially from family, and some friends recommended JWM... recommendations from friends are more convincing. (EV-7-3-1) (EV-8-15-1)	“What I know about the wedding venue at this hotel is from Instagram.” (JT-1-3-1)	Advertising is effectively shifted from formal paid ads to organic content and word-of-mouth, which acts as a “real” advertisement for high-trust clients.
Sales Promotion	Added Value & Benefit	Giving discounts or additional benefit facilities to convince customers.	“We offer additional triple perks... six options, for	“We often offer attractive promotions. we give incentives. We also offer	“Get a complimentary bridal suite and deluxe room according to the wedding	“Special room rates are offered to invitees... there is a special price.” (EV-8-11-1)	“One of the bonuses I got was a junior suite room.”	Sales promotions focus on “added value” (it can be in a form of compliments

			example, an upgrade to a presidential suite or a chairman suite.” (YL-3-15-9)	cashback.” (DS-5-15-4)	package we choose.” (FD-7-11-1)		(JT-9-11-2)	tary room upgrades, extra perks like free LED or tea pai room) rather than just price cuts to maintain a luxury brand image.
Personal Selling	Consultative & Personalized Approach	There is an in-depth personal approach where the wedding sales act as consultants. Accommodating customization like food menu.	“We don't offer wedding packages outright. Instead, we take a more personalized approach, finding out first what the client needs.” (YL-2-11-1)	“First we find out what their needs are... If they have any requests or additional needs beyond what we provide, we can adjust accordingly.” (DS-5-11-2)	“The sales staff are attentive to our needs. The menu and rooms are also good.” (FD-6-9-1)	“They provide good input and are easy to negotiate with. They are flexible with our needs.” (EV-8-9-1)	“The sales staff were very friendly and professional... offering several helpful alternative solutions.” (JT-9-9-1)	Personal selling is demonstrated through the physical presence of sales staff on the day of delivery and the ability to provide alternative solutions to technical problems or personnel changes.
Public Relations	Reputation & Event Showcasing	Peer testimonials and social media evidence are effectively replacing official company narratives as the primary source of trust for contemporary consumers	“Young couples today believe more in what they see in posts... our strategy is more focused on how we appear in their organic content.” (YL-3-17-1)	“My strategy focuses on providing service that encourages them to give honest testimonials.” (DS-5-17-1)	“For me, recommendations from family are much more convincing.” (FD-7-15-1)	“In my opinion, recommendations from friends are more convincing... I've seen the quality for myself.” (EV-8-15-1)	“I never thought about finding out the hotel's reputation through formal news... I found out about it on Instagram.” (JT-10-15-1)	Traditional public relation is largely ignored; modern couples prioritize "social proof" and direct evidence of service quality over official press releases.
Direct Marketing	B2B Relations & Proactive Inquiries	Direct promotional messaging is considered ineffective and risks being perceived as a nuisance or spam.	“Guests trust ratings and comments from other people more... focus more on maintaining guest satisfaction.” (YL-4-19-1)	“Honestly, direct promotions are often considered spam.” (DS-6-19-1)	“I never receive promotional offers via WhatsApp or personal email.” (FD-7-17-1)	“I've never received promotional offers via text or email.” (EV-8-17-1)	“So far, I've [never been offered promotions via private messages.]” (JT-17-1)	Direct marketing to end-users is no longer relevant in favor of B2B relationship building with Wedding Organizers (WO) and word-of-mouth.

Source: Researchers (2026)

4.1 Synthesis of Findings

The research findings reveal a sophisticated, multi-faceted promotional strategy that integrates advertising, personal selling, and sales promotion in complementary ways. Several overarching themes emerge from the analysis:

- a. **Strategic Coherence:** the three primary elements of the promotion mix function cohesively rather than as isolated tactics. Advertising efforts create awareness and generate initial interest. Personal selling then converts interest into commitments through consultative, relationship-based approaches. Sales promotion provides tactical incentives that overcome final purchasing barriers and create urgency.
- b. **Relationship Centrality:** across all three promotional elements, relationships emerge as a central theme. The emphasis on wedding organizer partnerships, the reliance on word-of-mouth, and the flexibility in sales promotions all reflect a relationship-oriented approach that generates trust and advocacy.
- c. **Cultural Sensitivity:** the findings repeatedly demonstrate awareness of and adaptation to local cultural norms. The timing of wedding fairs around culturally significant periods, the recognition of Surabayan preferences for seated dining, and the understanding of Chinese wedding customs all illustrate cultural attunement.
- d. **Premium Positioning Through Service:** while the hotel explicitly positions itself in the mid-to-upper market segment, the promotional strategy consistently emphasizes service quality and flexibility rather than price competitiveness. This approach aligns with established luxury hospitality marketing principles.



Figure 3. Individual Set Menu Food Tasting
Source: Researchers (2025)

Based on informant FD experience, shows that the hotel has given excellent service quality and flexibility.

“... During the food tasting, we made a few notes, such as that the fish pieces were not quite right and still had a fishy taste, and that they could be adjusted to suit our taste” (FD-6-9-2).

4.2 Advertising Strategy

a. Media Utilization

The hotel employs a multi-channel advertising approach that integrates both digital and traditional media platforms. Interview data reveals a strategic emphasis on contemporary digital platforms aligned with current consumer behavior patterns.

- **Digital Media Dominance:** social media platforms constitute the primary advertising channel, with Instagram and Facebook emerging as the focal platforms for promotional activities. As stated by Wedding Sales Manager DS:

"Social media is our main platform, particularly Instagram and Facebook. We also maintain a website and participate in the Bridestory platform" (DS-4-3-1).

The strategic selection of platforms reflects an understanding of shifting consumer preferences, particularly among younger demographics who increasingly rely on visual-centric platforms for wedding planning inspiration and vendor research.

- **Integrated Digital Presence:** beyond social media, the hotel maintains a dedicated website and actively participates in Bridestory, a specialized wedding marketplace platform popular in Indonesia. This multi-platform presence ensures broad reach across different stages of the customer decision journey. Wedding Sales Manager YL elaborated on the digital advertising ecosystem:

"Our advertising media includes social media platforms, including Meta Ads and Google Ads, print media in the form of flyers and brochures, commercial media, and wedding exhibitions" (YL-2-3-1).

The inclusion of paid advertising through Meta Ads and Google Ads demonstrates a sophisticated approach to digital marketing, combining organic content strategies with targeted paid advertising to maximize reach and conversion potential.

- **Traditional Media Persistence:** despite the digital focus, traditional advertising media retain relevance in the promotional mix. Print materials, specifically brochures and flyers, continue to serve functional purposes during physical interactions with potential clients, particularly at wedding fairs and during venue showings. These tangible materials provide prospective clients with detailed package information that can be reviewed at their convenience.

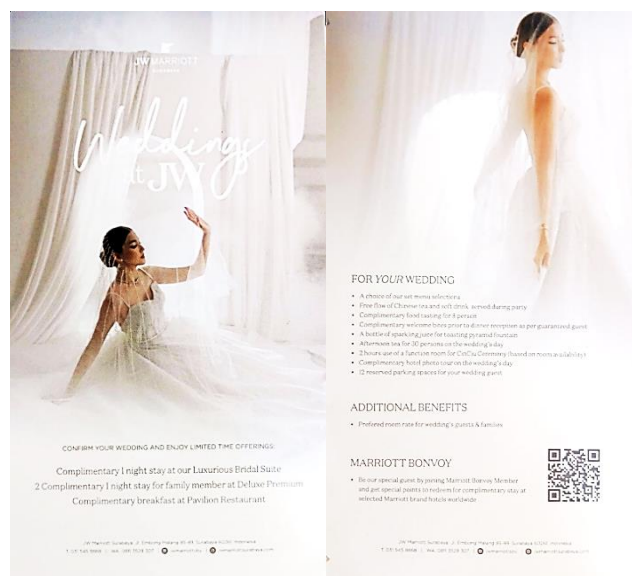


Figure 4. Brochure Wedding Package Set Menu at Royal Ballroom JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya
Source: JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya (2025)

b. Experiential Marketing

- **Wedding Fair and Showcases:** physical events represent a critical component of the advertising strategy. The hotel's marketing strategy utilizes wedding fair and showcases as key touchpoints, from international wedding to specialized heritage

wedding. By strategically scheduling these activities during culturally significant periods, International Wedding Fair during Ramadan and Heritage Wedding Fair on the month of Suro. The timing of these events demonstrates cultural sensitivity and strategic planning. The alignment with Ramadan and Suro month—culturally significant periods in Indonesian society—maximizes potential client engagement when wedding planning activities typically intensify.



Figure 5. Romance in the City Wedding Showcase 2025
Source: Researchers (2025)

This systematic approach reflects a long-term plan to maintain brand presence across different market segments, ranging from traditional heritage ceremonies to intimate, venue-focused showcases. The shift in 2025 toward a dedicated wedding showcase in September focused on venue introduction with a more intimate scale, prioritizing high-intent client engagement and physical venue immersion over mass-market visibility.

c. Word-of-Mouth Marketing

A significant finding emerged regarding the effectiveness of organic word-of-mouth promotion. Both Wedding Sales Managers identified client testimonials and personal recommendations as highly influential in attracting new clients, potentially surpassing traditional advertising channels in effectiveness.

"Word-of-mouth promotion is actually the most efficient in attracting the attention of potential clients" (DS-4-5-1).

4.3 Personal Selling Strategy

a. Relationship-Based Selling Approach

The personal selling strategy at JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya diverges from traditional direct sales approaches, instead emphasizing relationship building with industry intermediaries, particularly wedding organizers. This strategic focus addresses the unique characteristics of the wedding market.

b. Client Interaction Process

The personal selling process varies in approach between the two interviewed managers, revealing flexibility in methodology while maintaining consistent quality standards. Wedding Sales Manager DS described a venue-first approach, while Wedding Sales Manager YL emphasized a needs-assessment approach that prioritizes understanding client needs before presenting solutions.

“When we first meet, we don’t immediately offer a wedding package. Instead we take a more personalized approach. We need to know what the client needs, the scale of the event, the concept, and the menu. Only then we offer a package” (YL- 2-11-1).

This strategic aligns with the idea of William and Jones (2022), which shows that the efficiency of personal selling in luxury hotel services is largely dependent on the salesperson’s capacity to serve as a trusted advisor rather than a product vendor. By understanding the clients’ aspirations and constraints in creating a wedding event.

4.4 Sales Promotion Strategy

a. Package Offerings and Client Preferences

The hotel offers four primary wedding package configurations: Individual Set Menu, Buffet Service, Family Style (Chinese Set), and Standing Party. Individual set menu packages dominate client preferences in Surabaya, a pattern strongly influenced by local cultural norms.

"In Surabaya, the majority of clients still choose individual set menu, which is closely related to local culture. Surabayan society generally views that a proper party is one that provides seating for guests" (DS-5-13-2).

b. Promotional Programs

JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya positions itself in the mid-to-upper market segment, acknowledging premium pricing relative to competitors. However, competitive positioning is maintained through value-added services rather than price competition alone. The hotel emphasizes "added value benefits" rather than simple price discounting, offering room upgrades, LED screen additions, additional ceremony spaces, and other customizable benefits.

4.5 Client Perspective

To triangulate the effectiveness of the promotional strategies, the research included interviews with three customers, clients who held their wedding reception at JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya in 2025. Their responses provide valuable validation of the promotion strategy's effectiveness.

a. Decision Factors

The client’s venue selection process involved multiple considerations including capacity adequacy, timing constraints, and price competitiveness. Informant FD emphasizes on how important personal selling and family connects are, explaining that trust was first built through relative’s suggestions and by talking directly with the sales team. For informant EV, the promotion mix successfully integrated word-of-mouth from peer’s recommendations with the impact sales promotion of a wedding expo. informant JT highlights the significance of physical evidence choosing the venue specifically for its aesthetic appeal and ability to accommodate number of pax based on needs.

b. Satisfaction and Recommendation Likelihood

Even though there are operational challenges such as staff transitions, the hotel maintains its “Pursue Excellence” core value through attentive services, ease of negotiation, personalized, and the strategic bundling of value-added perks like Marriott Bonvoy points and upgrading luxury suites. All informants recommended JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya as wedding reception venue choice to others. This

willingness to recommend the venue validates the effectiveness of the integrated promotional approach and provides evidence that the strategy successfully converts prospects into clients and clients into promoters.

Practical Implications for Industry Practitioners, the findings from JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya offer transferable insights for hospitality practitioners operating across different market scales. Among the three active promotion mix elements examined, personal selling emerged as the most consistently effective strategy, as its consultative and relationship-based approach directly shaped client trust and final purchase decisions a dynamic that mid-scale hotels can replicate without requiring luxury-level budgets by investing in sales staff training focused on needs assessment and flexible negotiation rather than package hard-selling. Word-of-mouth, functioning as an organic extension of advertising, proved equally impactful and cost-efficient; hotels at any tier can cultivate this by prioritizing service quality that compels guests to generate authentic testimonials and user-generated content, which contemporary wedding couples value significantly above corporate-led advertising. Sales promotion, when structured around value-added benefits such as room upgrades or complimentary facilities rather than price discounts, was found to maintain brand positioning while overcoming final purchasing barriers a model that mid-range hotels can adapt by offering scaled perks proportionate to their service tier, such as food tasting sessions, complimentary decorations, or loyalty points.

For these strategies to succeed in alternative hotel contexts, three enabling conditions must be present: a sales team with sufficient product knowledge and interpersonal flexibility to serve as client consultants, a service delivery standard capable of generating genuine post-event advocacy, and a culturally attuned promotional calendar that aligns event showcases with locally significant periods to maximize client engagement at moments when wedding planning intent is highest.

5. CONCLUSION

This case study demonstrates that JW Marriott Hotel Surabaya's competitive advantage in the wedding package market rests on three strategically integrated promotional elements: digital advertising anchored in organic word-of-mouth, consultative personal selling prioritizing client needs over transactional approaches, and value-added sales promotions that preserve premium brand positioning without resorting to price discounting. A defining characteristic of this strategy is its cultural attunement reflected in the timing of wedding exhibitions during Ramadan and Suro month, and in the dominance of individual set menu preferences rooted in Surabayan social norms which amplifies the effectiveness of each promotional element within the local market context. The consistency between promotional strategies and actual client experiences, validated through client testimonials emphasizing service quality and flexibility, confirms that authentic service delivery functions as the hotel's most powerful and self-sustaining promotional tool, offering a replicable framework for luxury hospitality contexts seeking differentiation beyond price competition.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 81-90

THE ROLE OF BENOA PORT IN GENERATING TOURISM BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN BALI

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Received: 05/01/2026

Revised: 23/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

As the primary gateway for international cruise ships in Bali, Benoa Port plays a strategic role in driving the maritime tourism economy. This study aims to analyze the port's contribution to creating tourism business opportunities, particularly for local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) amidst the transformation into the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub (BMTH). A descriptive qualitative method was employed, involving field observations, literature reviews, and in-depth interviews with port authorities, MSME actors, and international tourists. The findings indicate that while cruise passenger arrivals surged to 54,000 in 2024, creating a significant multiplier effect and spending potential up to IDR 1,000,000 per visitor, structural barriers remain. Critical "service gaps", particularly the limited food and beverage facilities inside the terminal and rigid operational SOPs, hinder MSMEs from fully capturing these economic spillovers. The study concludes that optimizing "soft infrastructure" through flexible vendor licensing and synergistic partnerships is essential to ensure that the BMTH project fosters inclusive and sustainable local economic growth.

Keywords: Benoa Port, Business Opportunities, Cruise Ships, MSMEs, Bali Maritime Tourism Hub

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism remains the principal driver of Bali's regional economy, contributing substantially to employment generation, household income, and regional Gross Domestic Product (GRDP) (Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017). While international arrivals to Bali have historically been dominated by air transport, maritime tourism—particularly cruise tourism—has demonstrated significant growth in recent years (Downling, 2006). As the island's primary maritime gateway, Benoa Port plays an increasingly strategic role within Bali's tourism value chain, functioning not only as a logistics facility but also as a point of entry connecting global cruise flows with local tourism services. In response to the expansion of cruise activity, the Indonesian government initiated the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub (BMTH) as a National Strategic Project aimed at repositioning the port as an integrated maritime tourism center. The BMTH encompasses cruise terminal modernization, marina development, and the allocation of commercial spaces intended to accommodate local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). From a policy perspective, this transformation reflects a broader development paradigm that seeks to

align infrastructure expansion with inclusive economic growth objectives, ensuring that global tourism mobility generates tangible benefits for local communities.

Theoretically, port development has evolved beyond traditional logistics functions toward multifunctional regional integration. The Port Regionalization framework (Notteboom & Rodrigue, 2011) argues that contemporary ports increasingly operate as economic nodes embedded within wider regional clusters. In tourism contexts, this evolution implies that ports serve not merely as transit infrastructures but as catalysts for local enterprise development and destination branding. Complementing this perspective, community-based tourism and MSME empowerment literature emphasizes that tourism-driven growth must be accompanied by institutional mechanisms that facilitate equitable participation by local actors (Mamengko & Kuntari, 2021). More recent scholarship further highlights that the sustainability of tourism-oriented SMEs depends on adaptive strategies, institutional support, and governance flexibility capable of responding to dynamic market environments (Kaihatu et al., 2024). Despite these theoretical advances, empirical research has largely concentrated on macro-level infrastructure planning, tourism recovery strategies, and general economic impacts of cruise tourism (Putra et al., 2022). Limited attention has been directed toward examining how standardized international port governance systems—including security regulations, spatial zoning arrangements, and operational Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)—shape the actual capacity of local MSMEs to integrate into cruise-based tourism ecosystems. In many developing destinations, infrastructure-led tourism growth does not automatically translate into inclusive economic outcomes, particularly when regulatory frameworks and commercial allocation mechanisms are not fully aligned with the operational realities of small-scale entrepreneurs.

The rapid increase in cruise passenger arrivals at Benoa Port—from 6,171 passengers in 2020 to 54,000 in 2024—illustrates the substantial economic potential generated by maritime tourism flows. Cruise passengers typically demonstrate relatively high per-visit spending patterns, creating opportunities for transportation providers, tour operators, handicraft producers, culinary vendors, and other local service businesses. Nevertheless, the degree to which this quantitative growth produces qualitative improvements in local business participation remains insufficiently examined. Preliminary field observations indicate the presence of institutional and operational frictions, including limited diversification of terminal-based services, constrained vendor access within the cruise terminal area, and rigid SOP implementation. These conditions suggest the emergence of a “service gap” between globally standardized port management frameworks and the stated objective of fostering inclusive local economic empowerment.

Addressing this gap requires moving beyond descriptive accounts of cruise growth toward a critical analysis of governance structures and socio-economic integration mechanisms operating within the port environment. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze how the transformation of Benoa Port into the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub generates tourism business opportunities while simultaneously shaping the institutional constraints that influence MSME participation. By focusing on the micro-level dynamics of port governance and local enterprise integration, this research seeks to extend existing discussions on port regionalization and inclusive tourism development through an institutional perspective. Empirically, the study provides grounded insights into how national strategic infrastructure projects can better align global maritime operational standards with localized economic participation mechanisms. The findings are expected

to contribute to the refinement of inclusive port governance models and to support the development of more sustainable and equitable tourism-led growth strategies in Bali.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ports function as critical nodes in global trade and transport systems, serving not only as gateways for the movement of goods and people but also as drivers of regional development through job creation and the stimulation of associated industries (Notteboom & Rodrigue, 2011). In developing economies like Indonesia, their role has broadened beyond logistics to include tourism, fisheries, warehousing, and other service-oriented activities (Mulyono, 2021). Benoa Port reflects this expanded functionality by handling both commercial cargo and cruise tourism, while also being integrated into Bali's broader tourism value chain.

Business opportunities are understood as favorable conditions that allow for the establishment and growth of enterprises responding to unmet or emerging market demands (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In tourism, the identification of such opportunities is shaped by evolving consumer preferences, technological innovations, and new models of service delivery (Bygrave & Zacharakis, 2011). Cruise tourism generates opportunities through steady visitor flows, seasonal demand surges, and the specific expectations of international travelers, which in turn spur entrepreneurial initiatives in transportation, food and beverage, tour guiding, and cultural performances.

Tourism itself is a multifaceted activity with economic, social, and cultural dimensions, involving the temporary movement of individuals to destinations beyond their usual environment (UNWTO, 2008). Indonesia's Law No. 10 of 2009 defines tourism enterprises as those engaged in accommodation, transportation, food and beverage, guiding, handicrafts, and attraction services. These enterprises are thus central to delivering tourist satisfaction and generating economic benefits for local communities (Hall & Williams, 2019). Their sustainability increasingly depends on strategic management and the capacity to adapt to new infrastructure developments, such as the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub (Kaihatu et al., 2024).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach to gain a deeper understanding of how the transformation of Benoa Port influences business opportunities for local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). A qualitative design was considered most appropriate because the research seeks to explore lived experiences, institutional practices, and governance dynamics that cannot be sufficiently explained through numerical data alone. The focus is therefore placed on understanding processes, perceptions, and interactions within the cruise terminal environment. The research was conducted at Benoa Port in Denpasar, Bali, particularly within the cruise terminal area and its surrounding commercial spaces connected to the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub development. Fieldwork took place from February to April 2025, during active cruise docking periods, allowing the researcher to directly observe passenger flows and business activities. A total of sixteen participants were involved in this study. They consisted of three port management representatives, eight MSME owners operating within or near the cruise terminal area, and five international cruise passengers. Participants were selected using purposive sampling for port officials and MSME operators, as they possess direct knowledge and involvement in port governance and cruise-related business activities. The selection criteria included active engagement in cruise operations and willingness to share insights

regarding opportunities and constraints within the port ecosystem. Cruise passengers were approached during docking periods using convenience sampling. Their inclusion aimed to capture immediate impressions regarding terminal facilities, services, and consumption behavior.

Data were gathered through three complementary techniques. First, direct field observations were conducted within the cruise terminal area. The researcher documented spatial arrangements, vendor positioning, service facilities, passenger movement patterns, and general operational conditions. Observational notes were recorded systematically to support interview findings. Second, in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out with all participants. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes. An interview guide was prepared to explore themes such as perceived business opportunities, operational challenges, implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), access to terminal space, and experiences related to the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub transformation. With participants' consent, interviews were recorded and later transcribed for analysis. Third, document analysis was conducted to complement primary data. Policy documents, port development reports, and relevant academic literature were reviewed to provide contextual understanding and to support analytical triangulation.

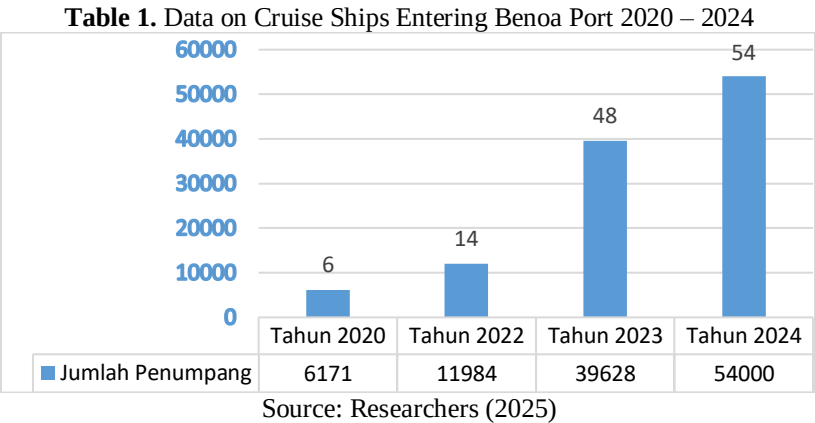
The collected data were analyzed using a thematic approach. Interview transcripts and field notes were carefully read multiple times to identify recurring patterns and significant statements. Initial codes were generated and subsequently grouped into broader themes reflecting economic opportunity generation, institutional constraints, governance mechanisms, and MSME integration dynamics. The analytical process followed an iterative pattern of reducing data, organizing emerging themes, and verifying interpretations. Findings from different sources—interviews, observations, and documents—were continuously compared to ensure consistency and depth of understanding. The interpretation of themes was then linked to relevant theoretical perspectives, particularly port regionalization and inclusive tourism development frameworks. To enhance credibility, the study applied data triangulation by comparing information obtained from multiple participant groups and data collection methods. Selected participants were also re-contacted to confirm the accuracy of key interpretations. These steps helped ensure that the findings reflect participants' perspectives faithfully and reduce the risk of researcher bias. This research focuses on a single case study at Benoa Port, which may limit the broader generalizability of its findings. The number of participants, although adequate for qualitative inquiry, remains relatively limited. In addition, the study was conducted within a specific operational period and may not fully capture seasonal variations in cruise tourism activity. Future studies could expand the scope by incorporating comparative port cases or longitudinal data collection to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cruise-based tourism integration in Indonesia.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a complex interplay between expanding cruise tourism flows and the institutional structures that shape local business participation at Benoa Port. While the transformation into the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub has generated measurable economic opportunities, several structural constraints continue to mediate the extent to which these benefits are captured by local MSMEs. The analysis produced three major themes: (1) economic opportunity expansion, (2) institutional and spatial constraints, and (3) service diversification gaps within the terminal environment.

4.1 Expanding Cruise Arrivals and Emerging Business Opportunities

The data further show that Benoa Port has become the main entry point for cruise ships to Bali, with steadily increasing cruise arrivals. Based on the passenger arrival data, there has been a drastic surge in volume: from 6,171 passengers in 2020 to 54,000 passengers in 2024. This trend indicates that cruise ship visits to Benoa Port provide significant direct economic impacts, even though the overall number of sea-borne tourists remains relatively small compared to air travel. Cruise passengers exhibit high spending tendencies per visit, making them a highly potential target market for the tourism service sector. Business actors confirm this perspective, noting that cruise ship arrivals bring hundreds of passengers who actively shop and use local services, with average spending ranging from IDR 100,000 to IDR 1,000,000 per visitor. Based on the passenger arrival data, there has been a drastic surge in volume: from 6,171 passengers in 2020 to 54,000 passengers in 2024. This trend is further detailed in the following table 1.



The figures underscore the substantial direct economic impact generated by cruise tourism. These findings align with the economic spillover theory, which posits that tourist inflows stimulate a multiplier effect across the regional economy. Some entrepreneurs have even secured direct contracts with travel agencies to deliver short excursion packages to destinations beyond the port, thereby extending economic circulation from the terminal into Bali’s broader tourism landscape. The high consumption levels of cruise passengers create robust demand for tour guides, vehicle rentals, cultural performances, and producers of Balinese souvenirs.

All participant groups acknowledged that the significant increase in cruise arrivals has created new economic prospects. MSME operators consistently reported higher customer traffic during docking periods, particularly for handicrafts, transportation services, and short excursion packages. One MSME owner explained:

“When cruise ships arrive, the number of visitors increases sharply. Even if they stay only a few hours, many of them buy souvenirs or use local transport services”.

Similarly, a port official noted:

“The growth in cruise passengers has brought new momentum. It opens opportunities not only for businesses inside the port but also for operators offering short tours outside the terminal”.

These statements reflect a perceived multiplier effect, where passenger flows stimulate demand across interconnected sectors, including transport providers, tour

guides, and cultural product vendors. Several MSME operators indicated that cruise passengers tend to spend between IDR 100,000 and IDR 1,000,000 per visit, depending on the duration of stay and the type of services purchased. However, while the quantitative growth is evident, participants emphasized that opportunity distribution remains uneven.

4.2 Institutional and Spatial Constraints on MSME Participation

Despite increased passenger volumes, MSME actors reported limitations in accessing strategic commercial spaces within the cruise terminal area. Spatial zoning arrangements and licensing procedures were frequently mentioned as key barriers. One MSME operator stated:

“We are allowed to operate, but not all vendors can access the main passenger flow area. The placement determines whether we get customers or not”.

Another participant highlighted procedural rigidity:

“The Standard Operating Procedures are strict, especially regarding security and vendor access. Sometimes small businesses find it difficult to comply with all requirements”.

Port officials acknowledged that international cruise standards require high levels of security and operational control. However, they also recognized the tension between maintaining global compliance and accommodating local entrepreneurial needs. These findings suggest that while infrastructure development has progressed, institutional arrangements may inadvertently restrict full MSME integration. The data indicate that business opportunity creation is not solely dependent on passenger volume but also on governance flexibility and spatial inclusivity.

4.3 Service Diversification and the Terminal “Experience Gap”

A recurring theme emerging from tourist interviews was the limited diversity of food and beverage options within the terminal area. While souvenir shops were relatively available, culinary services were perceived as insufficient. One international passenger remarked:

“I expected to try Balinese food as soon as I arrived, but inside the port there were mostly souvenir shops. I had to go outside to find something to eat”.

This perception was echoed by MSME participants who believed that broader service diversification—particularly in food and beverage—could significantly increase passenger spending within the terminal itself. The absence of varied culinary offerings suggests what may be described as an “experience gap” between passenger expectations and available services. Although cruise tourists are typically short-stay visitors, their first point of contact with the destination occurs at the port. Limited service diversity may therefore constrain the potential economic spillover within the terminal area.

4.4 Synthesis of Findings

Overall, the findings indicate that the transformation of Benoa Port into a maritime tourism hub has generated tangible economic opportunities for local MSMEs through increased cruise arrivals. However, the extent to which these opportunities translate into inclusive local development is shaped by institutional governance mechanisms, spatial allocation policies, and service diversification strategies. The data demonstrate that passenger growth alone does not guarantee equitable economic participation. Instead, the

alignment between global port standards and localized business integration mechanisms plays a crucial mediating role in determining how benefits are distributed across local economic actors.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the transformation of Benoa Port into the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub represents more than an infrastructure upgrade; it reflects an ongoing institutional restructuring process that reshapes the relationship between global maritime mobility and local economic participation. While cruise passenger growth has generated measurable economic opportunities, the extent of inclusive benefit distribution remains mediated by governance mechanisms and spatial arrangements within the port environment. From the perspective of Port Regionalization theory (Notteboom & Rodrigue, 2011), ports evolve into multifunctional nodes embedded within broader regional economic systems. The case of Benoa Port partially confirms this theoretical trajectory. The port no longer functions solely as a logistical gateway but increasingly acts as an interface connecting international cruise flows with Bali's tourism economy. The observed multiplier effects—particularly in transportation services, short excursion packages, and handicraft sales—illustrate how cruise arrivals stimulate interconnected local sectors.

However, this study extends the Port Regionalization framework by demonstrating that physical integration alone does not guarantee institutional inclusivity. While infrastructure expansion has progressed, governance rigidity—especially in vendor zoning, licensing procedures, and SOP implementation—emerges as a mediating factor that shapes the depth of MSME integration. In this sense, the findings highlight the importance of what may be termed “institutional alignment” between global operational standards and localized entrepreneurial capacities. The results also contribute to the discourse on inclusive tourism development. Existing literature emphasizes that tourism-driven growth must incorporate community-based participation to ensure equitable economic outcomes (Mamengko & Kuntari, 2021). The present study confirms this principle but further reveals that inclusion is not merely a matter of allocating commercial space. Instead, it requires adaptive governance that recognizes the structural limitations faced by small-scale entrepreneurs. When spatial access and service diversification remain restricted, the economic multiplier effect becomes unevenly distributed.

The identified “service diversification gap,” particularly in food and beverage offerings, further underscores the interplay between visitor expectations and institutional design. Cruise tourists' first interaction with the destination occurs at the port terminal. Limited culinary representation within the terminal suggests that experiential integration has not yet fully aligned with destination branding objectives. This gap reflects a broader challenge in balancing international security standards with the flexibility required for authentic local representation. Importantly, the findings suggest that inclusive port development requires attention to both “hard infrastructure” and “soft infrastructure.” While the BMTH project has significantly improved physical facilities, the sustainability of MSME participation depends on regulatory flexibility, transparent licensing mechanisms, and strategic tenant diversification. This insight enriches recent scholarship on tourism-oriented SME sustainability, which argues that institutional support structures are central to long-term competitiveness (Kaihatu et al., 2024).

In theoretical terms, this study contributes by introducing a micro-level institutional lens to port development analysis. Rather than treating cruise growth as inherently beneficial, the research demonstrates how governance arrangements mediate opportunity realization. By foregrounding the concept of institutional friction within

standardized port environments, the study provides a nuanced understanding of how large-scale infrastructure projects intersect with local economic ecosystems. Beyond the specific case of Benoa Port, the findings hold broader implications for maritime tourism destinations in developing contexts. National strategic infrastructure projects frequently prioritize physical expansion and global competitiveness. However, without deliberate governance mechanisms that facilitate MSME integration, the anticipated multiplier effects may not fully materialize at the community level. Thus, sustainable cruise tourism development requires institutional adaptability alongside infrastructure modernization.

5. CONCLUSION

The transformation of Benoa Port into the Bali Maritime Tourism Hub illustrates a significant institutional shift in Bali's maritime tourism landscape. The substantial growth in cruise passenger arrivals demonstrates the port's expanding role within the regional tourism economy and confirms its potential to generate a multiplier effect across transportation, handicraft production, excursion services, and other MSME-driven sectors. However, this study reveals that infrastructure expansion alone does not automatically ensure inclusive local economic participation. While business opportunities have increased, their distribution remains shaped by institutional arrangements, spatial zoning policies, and the rigidity of operational procedures. The findings highlight the importance of aligning global port governance standards with localized entrepreneurial capacities to minimize institutional friction and enhance equitable economic integration.

This study contributes to the literature by extending Port Regionalization theory through a micro-level institutional perspective. Rather than conceptualizing port transformation solely as a process of spatial and economic integration, the research demonstrates that governance structures mediate how opportunities are realized by local actors. By foregrounding the concept of institutional alignment between standardized port operations and MSME participation, the study enriches discussions on inclusive tourism development in emerging maritime destinations. To strengthen inclusive outcomes, several practical measures are recommended: (1) Greater flexibility in vendor licensing and zoning allocation within cruise terminal areas; (2) Diversification of terminal-based services, particularly in culinary offerings, to enhance experiential integration; (3) Structured partnership schemes between port authorities and local MSMEs to improve access to strategic commercial spaces; (4) Periodic evaluation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure that security compliance does not unintentionally restrict small-scale entrepreneurial participation.

These measures may help optimize the balance between global operational standards and local economic empowerment. This study is limited to a single case analysis of Benoa Port and reflects conditions observed during a specific operational period. The relatively small number of participants, while appropriate for qualitative inquiry, limits broader generalization. Future research could adopt comparative multi-port studies, incorporate longitudinal data, or employ mixed-method approaches to assess long-term economic impacts of cruise-based tourism integration in Indonesia and other developing maritime destinations.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 91-106

TOURISMPRENEURSHIP: LOCAL WISDOM-BASED INNOVATION AND MARKET EXPANSION FOR SILVER JEWELRY IN BALI

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Received: 30/03/2026

Revised: 23/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

The creative economy industry, particularly the craft and fashion sectors, continues to show positive growth in Bali as a world tourism center. This study aims to analyze product development strategies and market expansion of silver jewelry SMEs facing global challenges and digital disruption. The object of this research is Atma Silver Jewelry, which innovated through the "Luwih Jewelry" product line. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection through documentation of business proposals, financial reports, and observation of marketing activities, the study finds that innovation based on Balinese cultural wisdom (Tri Hita Karana) and feminine aesthetics successfully meets the needs of the modern market. Furthermore, the implementation of digital marketing through social media and marketplaces, as well as collaboration with influencers, has succeeded in expanding the market reach internationally. Consequently, this business model not only generates profit but also empowers local artisans in Celuk Village and supports sustainable business practices.

Keywords: Silver Jewelry, Tourismpreneurship, Product Innovation, Digital Marketing, Local Wisdom

1. INTRODUCTION

The creative economy sector, particularly the crafts and fashion sectors, continues to show positive growth both nationally and globally. Bali, as one of the world's leading tourism destinations, boasts an extraordinary cultural richness and artistic heritage, including in the art of silver craftsmanship. One of the most well-known centers for silver craftsmanship is the village of Celuk in Gianyar, which has passed down its skills through generations. This potential positions the silver jewelry sector as a significant contributor to the local economy through job creation and foreign exchange earnings however, business operators face challenges in maintaining business sustainability amid increasingly intense global market competition (Nuraini et al., 2025).

In response to these challenges and opportunities, Atma Silver Jewelry has emerged as a startup that combines the skills of local artisans with modern business strategies to produce high-quality silver jewelry, while sharing the story of the values and

philosophy behind each design. However, a significant gap remains between theoretical concepts of cultural entrepreneurship and their practical application in the face of modern competition. Although (Rajiv & Widodo, 2023) state that the integration of traditional assets is crucial, the reality on the ground shows that many SMEs in Celuk fail to achieve this integration because they are too rigidly tied to standardized traditional designs. Atma Silver, through its Luwih Jewelry line, seeks to address this tension by adopting an approach aligned with the concept of culture-based entrepreneurship and local wisdom.



Figure 1. Atma Silver Jewelry Products
Source: Researchers (2025)

Initially, Atma Silver focused exclusively on the men's market, offering jewelry designs with a strong, bold, and masculine aesthetic. However, over time, an unmet need emerged: a high demand for traditional Balinese jewelry for women. In response to this need, Atma Silver Jewelry innovated by launching a new product line called Luwih Jewelry. Luwih comes from the Balinese language and means "more" or "superior," reflecting the company's vision to create pieces that are not only aesthetically beautiful but also of superior quality. Luwih Jewelry's designs feature abstract floral forms, evoking a soft, natural feel while remaining modern. This design was developed exclusively to cater to the tastes of female consumers who desire jewelry with a distinct Balinese character that still fits with today's lifestyle.

The implementation of the Tri Hita Karana philosophy is often viewed as an additional cost burden for SMEs (Suarminiati & Subanda, 2025). However, this study argues that, in the case of Atma Silver, this philosophy actually serves as a "filter" for production quality and ethics, addressing global consumers' demand for sustainable products. By preserving Bali's local culture through jewelry designs inspired by traditional elements such as distinctive floral motifs and local artistic values which are incorporated into contemporary pieces, Luwih Jewelry also empowers local artisans, thereby improving their well-being while ensuring the survival of the craft industry, which is increasingly being marginalized by large-scale manufacturing. This is in line with the "Ajeg Bali" principle, which emphasizes the importance of preserving and sustaining Balinese culture so that it is not eroded by the tide of globalization, thereby creating new market opportunities for sacred and authentic silver craftwork (Suardana & Sumantra, 2023).

Through the Luwih Jewelry collection, Atma aims to encourage women to be bolder, more confident, and to embrace their uniqueness through accessories that reflect their character and elegance. The importance of jewelry in self-expression and social hierarchy makes this sector not only an economic commodity but also a medium for cultural preservation that holds deep philosophical value for society. Through global collaboration strategies and the strengthening of its digital branding, Atma aims to make Balinese jewelry a cultural icon that anyone around the world can wear and take pride in, without losing its local identity. Theoretically, a failure to integrate local values into digital platforms could cause Bali's silver SME products to lose their cultural identity due to the pressures of a global market that tends toward uniformity and mass production. Therefore, the urgency of this research lies in the need to formulate strategies in which digital technology serves not only as a sales tool but also as a medium for preserving the values of Tri Hita Karana, ensuring they remain relevant to modern consumers.



Figure 2. Luwih Jewelry Products
Source: Researchers (2025)

This study aims to address this practical and theoretical tension by examining how Atma Silver's Luwih line navigates these complexities. From an academic perspective, this study is therefore of significant urgency given the limited number of case studies that have thoroughly explored the integration of local wisdom values into digital marketing strategies within the silver craft SME sector. This study challenges the traditional dichotomy between cultural preservation and digital modernization that frequently appears in marketing literature. Rather than eroding local identity, digital platforms actually enable the Tri Hita Karana narrative to reach a broader international audience. This demonstrates that technology is not a threat to 'Ajeg Bali' but rather a means of amplification. This study aims to bridge that research gap by demonstrating how cultural identities such as the Tri Hita Karana philosophy are not obstacles but rather competitive advantages that strengthen brand storytelling within the global digital ecosystem. Thus, this study not only offers practical insights for business practitioners but also enriches the body of literature on culture-based marketing and tourism entrepreneurship in an era of disruption. Amid the onslaught of mass-produced goods, research on strategies rooted in local wisdom is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of Bali's creative industries. Based on this background, this study aims to:

- a. Analyze how the values of local wisdom (Tri Hita Karana) are integrated into Luwih Jewelry's product innovations.
- b. Evaluate the effectiveness of Atma Silver's digital marketing strategies in expanding its global market reach.
- c. Formulate a tourismpreneurship development model that synthesizes local traditions with digital modernization.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Tourism Entrepreneurship: Definitions in the Context of Tourism and the Creative Economy

Tourism entrepreneurship is a field that combines the allure of travel with business acumen, involving the creation and development of new businesses in the tourism sector to drive innovation and create value (Khuranaa et al., 2025). The concept of entrepreneurship generally encompasses several perspectives, including innovation-based (creating innovation through the combination of new resources), business formation (the process from intention to the establishment of a new organization), and opportunity based (the identification and exploitation of business opportunities).

In the context of the creative economy, digital entrepreneurship and the creative industries in tourism are showing strong growth, driven by technological penetration and a desire for unique experiences (Varotsis, 2022). Creative tourism entrepreneurs (CTEs) are crucial to a destination's competitiveness and innovation, and are often driven by creative individuals. They tend to adopt more sustainable business practices than large corporations, and contribute to job creation and local investment. Synergies between the creative industries and tourism can diversify the local economy, preserve cultural heritage, promote sustainable development, and improve the quality of life for the community. Entrepreneurship is often viewed as a creative endeavor, particularly when it comes to capitalizing on opportunities arising from shifting social trends. It requires a high degree of creativity to solve problems and identify business opportunities. Although tourism entrepreneurship shares the same foundations as general entrepreneurial principles, it also possesses unique aspects that set it apart. The development of an explicit conceptual framework remains an ongoing endeavor in the field of tourism entrepreneurship studies (Lupton & Samy, 2022).

2.2 Product Innovation & Local Wisdom: How Local Culture Adds Value to Products

Local wisdom plays a crucial role in the development of tourism entrepreneurship, particularly in the context of tourism villages and the creative industries (Hamdan & Basrowi, 2024). By highlighting the "Ajeg Bali" principle to preserve Balinese culture, which opens up market opportunities for silver artworks. Integrating local wisdom into business strategies is crucial for economic sustainability and competitiveness in the global market, as reflected in the "Tri Hita Karana" philosophy, which connects spiritual, social, and environmental balance in economic practices. Cultural preservation through traditional elements in product design is also a key aspect.

Art and culture are valuable sources of inspiration in product development, driving sustainable and innovative product development. Integrating traditional crafts into contemporary product design is a new approach that is gaining recognition in cultural innovation. (Xu, 2025). Innovative strategies for cultural and creative product design combine traditional cultural elements with modern design concepts to enhance market competitiveness and cultural influence (Chen et al., 2024).

Local wisdom creates value for tourism villages; it is documented and presented in an engaging way on digital platforms. This serves as a crucial foundation for value-based tourism products. Local knowledge including traditional knowledge, values, skills, beliefs, and philosophies is increasingly recognized as a significant tourism attraction and is essential for product development. (Zhang et al., 2023). Perceived cultural identity influences consumers' purchase intentions toward ethnic cultural products, mediated by

perceived values (emotional, social, functional) (Su, 2023). Cultural identity and values drive the intention to purchase cultural creative products. Local wisdom which encompasses ideas, values, and beliefs is deeply rooted in and followed by community members, serving to conserve natural resources, develop human resources, and foster cultural and scientific advancement. Previous research by (Suarminiati & Subanda, 2025) emphasized the Tri Hita Karana philosophy as the foundation for the socioeconomic balance of SMEs. However, this literature tends to be philosophical in nature and lacks practical models for how these values can be translated into modern product design innovations. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the Luwih Jewelry line as a physical representation of the synthesis between traditional Balinese values and the aesthetic preferences of the global market.

2.3 Digital Marketing: The Role of Social Media and Marketplaces for SMEs

Digital marketing has become essential for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in the tourism sector. Although (Thai & Minh, 2025) while emphasizing the importance of social media adoption among tourism SMEs in general, the study has not yet explored how specific local values such as Tri Hita Karana can be integrated into such digital content. This is where this study contributes by a powerful tool for promotion and communication. SMEs can use social media for online marketing, promotions, attracting customers, and integrating it into their digital marketing strategies. Digital marketing as a whole is crucial for SMEs to drive competitive advantage and sustainable growth. Strategies such as search engine optimization, social media marketing, content marketing, email campaigns, and data analytics provide tools for SMEs to compete effectively (Ijomah et al., 2024).

Online marketplaces provide a mechanism for businesses to remain competitive in the digital environment, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The adoption of e-commerce has had a significant impact on the handicraft industry, with various platforms collaborating with rural artisans to promote their products (Dwivedi & Pradhan, 2024). Omnichannel strategies, which integrate various marketing channels, are essential to the success of the handicraft industry in the digital age. SMEs located near tourist attractions also benefit from social media for promotion and attracting customers. A synthesis of the various literature indicates a need for a more specific approach. Although (Varotsis, 2022) has mapped out the research agenda for digital entrepreneurship in the creative industries at a macro level, the focus remains limited to technical and managerial aspects. On the other hand, (Thai & Minh, 2025) provide empirical evidence regarding social media adoption among tourism SMEs, yet neither study addresses how the intangible value of local wisdom becomes the central narrative in such strategies. In contrast to these works, this study integrates these two aspects by demonstrating that cultural identity is not merely a complement but the primary driving force behind the effectiveness of digital marketing for silver SMEs in Bali.

A synthesis of the above literature indicates that although the concepts of tourismpreneurship and digital marketing have been extensively studied, there remains a gap in the literature regarding in-depth analyses that link Balinese local philosophy with modern market expansion strategies. Previous studies often portray a dichotomy where digital modernization is perceived as a threat to the authenticity of local craftsmanship and cultural values (Poddar, 2025). These perspectives suggest that rapid technological adoption might erode the traditional identity of SMEs. However, this study challenges such views by demonstrating that digital platforms are not inherently contradictory to

tradition. Therefore, this study positions itself as a bridge connecting the tradition of silver craftsmanship with the demands of a digitally disrupted global market, proving that digital tools can serve as an amplification of Balinese local wisdom.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study strategy centered on the Atma Silver Jewelry SME in Bali. The descriptive qualitative approach is utilized to provide a detailed and accurate representation of the facts and characteristics of the subject under investigation (Yuliani & Siliwangi, 2018). Case studies, as a type of qualitative research design, allow researchers to conduct an in-depth and focused exploration of a specific event or entity (Humayra et al., 2025). Data Sources and Collection:

- a. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with the founder and management of Atma Silver to capture the underlying philosophy of the business and the practical challenges of digital marketing. Furthermore, participatory observation was conducted at the production workshop and through the company's digital platforms. These active methods were used to validate and provide context to the secondary data, such as business plan documents and financial reports. Secondary Data: Derived from the Business Plan Document, which provides the strategic vision, and the Financial Report of April 2025.
- b. Justification for April 2025 Data: the financial report for April 2025 was specifically selected as it represents the peak launch period of the Luwih Jewelry line, providing a precise "snapshot" of the market's initial response to this specific innovation.
- c. Interview Guide & Field Notes: used to record qualitative insights from direct discussions with artisans and management, ensuring that the analysis goes beyond numerical data and captures the "story" behind the local wisdom integration.

The data collection instruments used include:

- a. Product Design Documentation: includes sketches, prototypes, and final specifications for silver jewelry, specifically the Luwih Jewelry line, to analyze how local wisdom is integrated into the designs.
- b. Cash Flow Statement: used to track financial movements and evaluate the effectiveness of investments in product innovation and marketing activities.
- c. Digital Marketing Materials: includes social media content, marketplace promotional materials, and analytics data from other digital platforms used to reach the target market.

To ensure data rigor, this study employed source triangulation by cross-referencing financial reports with social media engagement metrics and direct observations of production processes at Atma Silver. The financial report for April 2025 was specifically selected as the primary focal point because it marks the initial launch period of the Luwih Jewelry line. This allows the study to capture the immediate market response to the product's innovation and the effectiveness of the startup's early-stage digital branding strategy. Data analysis was conducted systematically to answer the research questions and achieve the study's objectives. The integration of Business Model Canvas (BMC) and SWOT analysis provides a robust framework to address the research objectives. BMC is employed to holistically map how local wisdom is embedded within the SME's operational structure, while SWOT analysis translates these cultural strengths into actionable strategies for digital market expansion. Together, these tools bridge the

gap between traditional Balinese values and modern competitive requirements. The analytical methods used included:

- a. Business Model Canvas Analysis: the BMC is a graphical representation of various key elements within an organization (Astro, 2022). This framework helps companies develop business strategies by tailoring their value propositions and making clear decisions. The BMC consists of nine key blocks, including customer segments, value propositions, channels, customer relationships, revenue streams, key resources, key activities, key partnerships, and cost structure (Akbar & Ariesta, 2021; Mustaniroh et al., 2020). This analysis helps us understand how companies create, deliver, and capture value. In this study, the BMC analysis is employed to map the structural integration of local wisdom within the business operations. Specifically, this study analyzes how the Value Proposition (Luwih Jewelry's cultural identity) aligns with Customer Segments in the global marketplace, and how Key Activities are digitized to maintain the authenticity of Balinese craftsmanship.
- b. SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of Competitors: one of the most popular and widely used frameworks in strategic management (Lee et al., 2020). This method is used to evaluate an organization's internal environment (strengths and weaknesses) as well as its external environment (opportunities and threats) (Taherdoost & Madanchian, 2021). The primary purpose of a SWOT analysis is to assess the current situation in order to identify key issues, problems, or challenges facing the organization and to gain insights into its strategic direction. The results of comparing internal and external factors provide a roadmap for management to develop future scenarios that leverage strengths, address weaknesses, mitigate threats, and capitalize on opportunities. (Bakir, 2023). In this study, the SWOT analysis is utilized not merely for identification, but to formulate strategic synthesis. For instance, the analysis explores how the 'Tri Hita Karana' philosophy (Strength) can be leveraged to mitigate digital marketing barriers and intense global competition (Threats). Furthermore, it assesses how digital marketplace expansion (Opportunity) can overcome the internal limitations of traditional artisanal distribution (Weakness)

Sales Performance Evaluation: Sales performance is measured to assess the success of product innovation strategies, particularly following the launch of the Luwih Jewelry line. Sales data is analyzed based on volume, value, and trends to gauge market acceptance and the contribution of innovative products to overall business growth.

Research Limitations: This study is designed as a preliminary case study focusing on the deep analysis of a product's initial launch phase. Consequently, the financial data is limited to a one-month period (April 2025). While this provides significant early-stage insights into tourismpreneurship innovation, the researchers acknowledge that it may not reflect long-term seasonal trends. Future longitudinal research is required to evaluate the long-term sustainability and broader market trends of the business model.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Analysis Business Model Canvas (BMC)

Based on data obtained from business documents, financial reports, and marketing activities of Atma Silver Jewelry, a Business Model Canvas analysis was conducted to understand how the company creates value, delivers value to customers, and generates profit from its business activities. The results of the analysis of the nine elements of the Business Model Canvas for Atma Silver Jewelry can be summarized as follows.

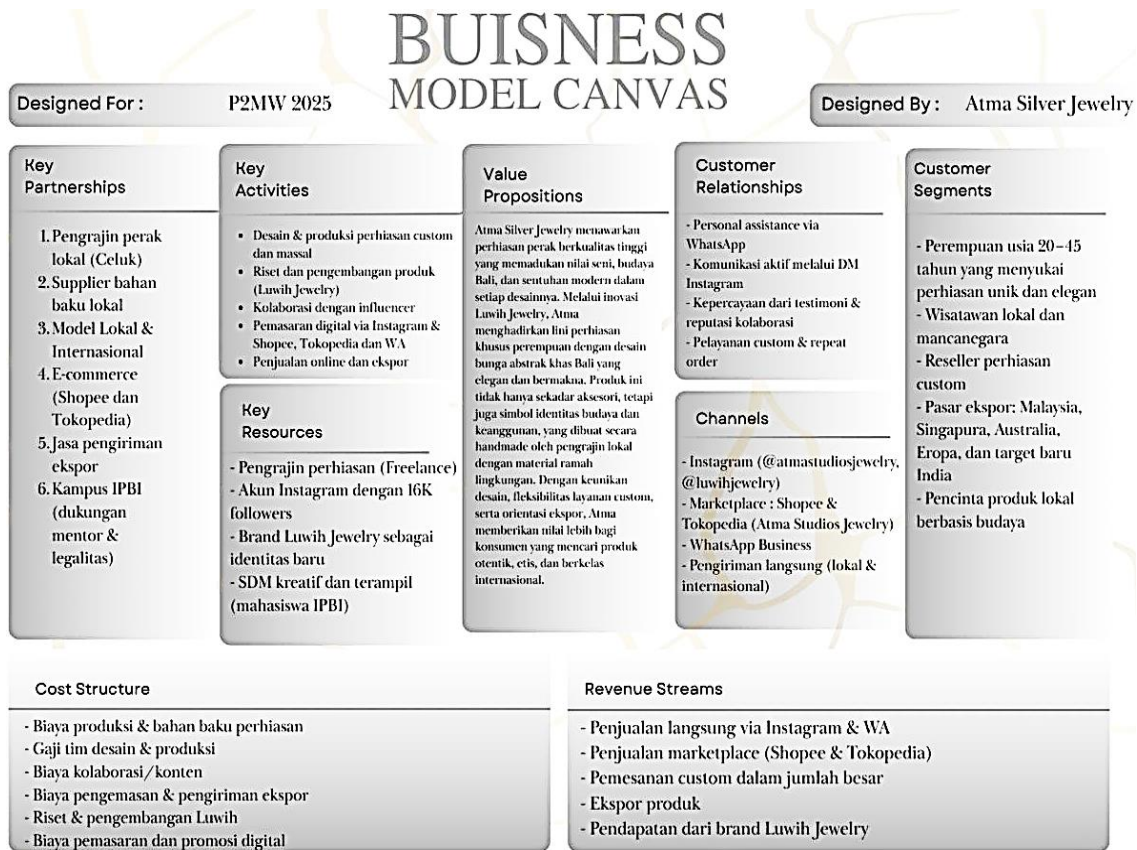


Figure 3. Business Model Canvas
Source: Researchers (2025)

- Customer Segments:** Atma Silver Jewelry's primary customer segment consists of millennial and Gen Z women who are interested in fashion products with unique cultural and aesthetic value. Additionally, international tourists visiting Bali are also a potential target market, as they tend to seek out authentic local handicrafts as part of their travel experience.
- Value Proposition:** analysis reveals that the value proposition of Atma Silver is not merely the physical product, but the philosophical commodification of Tri Hita Karana. By embedding these values, the company transforms a functional accessory into a 'cultural souvenir,' which the researcher observes as a strategic response to the saturation of the mass-produced silver market in Bali. Luwih Jewelry's products offer a blend of modern aesthetics, 925 sterling silver quality, and cultural narratives that provide emotional value to consumers.
- Channels:** product distribution is carried out through several channels, including social media such as Instagram, digital marketplaces, and direct sales to tourists. The use of digital platforms enables Atma Silver Jewelry to reach international markets more broadly and efficiently.
- Customer Relationship:** built through brand storytelling strategies, active engagement on social media, and collaborations with influencers and public figures. This approach fosters an emotional connection between consumers and the brand, thereby increasing customer loyalty.
- Revenue Streams:** the primary source of revenue comes from sales of silver jewelry, particularly the Luwih Jewelry line. Sales are conducted both online and through direct orders from domestic and international customers.

- f. **Key Resources:** the key resources in this business include the skills of local artisans in Celuk Village, product designs rooted in Balinese culture, high-quality silver raw materials, and a digital platform for marketing and distribution.
- g. **Key Activities:** the company's core activities include product design, handmade production by local artisans, digital marketing via social media, and managing product distribution to domestic and international markets.
- h. **Key Partnerships:** established with silver artisans in Celuk Village, social media influencers, and online marketplaces that help expand the products' market reach.
- i. **Cost Structure:** the main cost structure consists of the cost of silver raw materials, production costs incurred by artisans, digital marketing costs, and logistics costs for distributing products to various countries.

An analysis of the Business Model Canvas shows that Atma Silver Jewelry leverages a combination of local wisdom, design creativity, and digital technology to create a competitive and sustainable business model.

4.2 Analysis SWOT

In addition to using the Business Model Canvas, this study also conducted a SWOT analysis to identify the internal and external factors influencing the business development of Atma Silver Jewelry.

- a. **Strengths**
 - Handmade products featuring unique designs inspired by Balinese culture.
 - Made with high-quality materials, specifically 925 sterling silver.
 - Rooted in the Tri Hita Karana philosophy.
 - Supported by experienced local artisans from the village of Celuk.
- b. **Weaknesses**
 - Production capacity remains limited due to the handmade production process.
 - Reliance on digital marketing requires consistent content.
 - The business scale is still relatively small compared to global jewelry brands.
- c. **Opportunities**
 - High demand from tourists for local Balinese handicrafts.
 - The growth of e-commerce and digital marketing, which facilitates access to global markets.
 - Growing demand for handmade and sustainable products.
- d. **Threats**
 - Competition from international jewelry brands.
 - Cheaper knockoffs or mass-produced items.
 - Rapid shifts in fashion trends in the global market.

Based on this SWOT analysis, the strategies that Atma Silver Jewelry can implement include leveraging its strength in culturally-inspired design to strengthen its brand identity, expanding its digital marketing efforts into international markets, and increasing collaboration with influencers to boost brand awareness. The researcher's independent evaluation suggests a critical tension between Atma Silver's Strengths and Weaknesses. While the reliance on experienced local artisans (Strength) ensures high authenticity, it simultaneously creates a production bottleneck (Weakness). This finding indicates that the business model is currently in a transition phase, where the artisanal 'slow fashion' approach is struggling to meet the rapid demands of digital e-commerce cycles.

4.3 Product Innovations Based on Local Wisdom

Research findings indicate that the key to the success of Atma Silver Jewelry's business transformation lies in the launch of the "Luwih Jewelry" product line. The name "Luwih," derived from the Balinese language and meaning "more" or "superior," fundamentally reflects the company's vision to create high-quality jewelry that exceeds expectations. This innovation focuses not only on aesthetics but also on enriching cultural and philosophical values.



Figure 4. The Design Process for Luwih Jewelry
Source: Researchers (2025)

Luwih Jewelry's designs feature abstract floral forms inspired by the natural beauty of Bali, as well as profound philosophical symbols such as Tri Hita Karana. Luwih Jewelry's designs feature abstract floral forms inspired by the natural beauty of Bali, as well as profound philosophical symbols such as Tri Hita Karana. This philosophy, which emphasizes a tripartite harmony between humans and God (parahyangan), humans and their fellow humans (pawongan), and humans and nature (palemahan), is artistically interpreted throughout the jewelry collections (Putra et al., 2023). This creative approach aligns with academic findings suggesting that local wisdom serves as the fundamental foundation for Balinese cultural tourism, providing a unique sense of authenticity and a competitive edge for local products (Listiani et al., 2024). The integration of these cultural values creates a strong value proposition, setting Atma Silver's products apart from competitors and appealing to consumers who seek authenticity and the story behind a product. As noted in the study, jewelry in Bali serves not only as an accessory but also carries deep meaning that reflects social hierarchy and self-expression (Tenaya, 2022).



Figure 5. Luwih Jewelry's Abstract Floral Design
Source: Researchers (2025)

Atma Silver Jewelry strategically positions its "Luwih Jewelry" line as affordable premium handmade jewelry, targeting millennial women and Gen Z. This positioning sets it apart from competitors like John Hardy, known for its very high prices, or Kapal Api Silver, which tends to be more conventional. This target market, which tends to value uniqueness, ethical production, and the story behind a product, is highly responsive to the

authenticity offered by Atma Silver. This product is crafted from high-quality 925 sterling silver and is handcrafted by local artisans. This handcrafted production process not only ensures the quality and uniqueness of each piece but also conveys the values of authenticity and artisanal skill sought after by tourists and the global market. This demonstrates how local wisdom and traditional practices can be integrated into contemporary business models to achieve sustainability and market competitiveness, and to overcome the challenges posed by mass-produced products (Nuraini et al., 2025; Rifqiansyah & Wijaya, 2025).

However, a critical interrogation of the integration process reveals that translating the abstract values of Tri Hita Karana into tangible jewelry designs presents a significant challenge. While literature often suggests a seamless blend of tradition and modernity, this study finds a 'creative tension' where traditional motifs must be simplified to meet modern minimalist aesthetics without losing their philosophical essence. This suggests that local wisdom in tourismpreneurship is not a static resource but a dynamic one that requires constant re-interpretation to remain relevant in a global market.

4.4 Digital Marketing Strategies and Market Expansion

In terms of marketing, the primary strategy employed by Atma Silver Jewelry is culture-based brand storytelling. Through social media platforms, particularly Instagram, the company actively shares the meaning behind each design, the handmade production process involving local artisans, and the Balinese philosophical values embedded in its products. This strategy is effective in building emotional connections with consumers, who often seek more than just products—they seek experiences and stories. Digital marketing, particularly through social media, has proven to be a crucial tool for SMEs to improve business efficiency, expand their audience reach, build brand awareness, and increase revenue.

Atma Studios Jewelry		
Laporan Rugi Laba		
Untuk Periode Yang Berakhir (April 2025)		
Pendapatan		
Penjualan		Rp 15.390.000
Pendapatan non penjualan		Rp -
Total Pendapatan		Rp 15.390.000
Harga Pokok Penjualan (HPP)		
Harga Pokok Penjualan		Rp 5.823.800
Total Harga Pokok Penjualan (HPP)		Rp 5.823.800
Total Laba Kotor		Rp 9.566.200
Beban-beban :		
Beban Pemakaian Perlengkapan	Rp 237.500	
Beban Operasional : Gaji karyawan	Rp 4.500.000	
Beban Penyusutan Harga Tetap		
Beban Biaya Periklanan/Pemasaran : Promosi	Rp 1.250.000	
Beban lainnya : Dana punia & design	Rp 400.000	
Total Beban	Rp 6.387.500	
Lab Bersih		Rp 3.178.700

Figure 6. Atma Silver Jewelry Income Statement
Source: Researchers (2025)

Sales data for April 2025 shows that this strategy yielded promising initial results, with total revenue reaching Rp 15,390,000 and a net profit of Rp 3,178,700. While these figures represent a limited observation period, they serve as a critical 'proof of concept' for the Luwih Jewelry line. Within the framework of a qualitative case study, this early

financial performance indicates a positive market reception toward the integration of cultural storytelling and digital expansion. However, it is important to note that these figures are viewed as early-stage indicators rather than long-term validation. The effectiveness of this strategy is further supported by the high organic engagement rates on social media, suggesting that the cultural narrative acts as a sustainable driver for niche market penetration even with minimal advertising spend. Market expansion is not limited to local sales but has also successfully reached international markets through shipments to countries such as Australia, Europe, and Japan. The success of this global expansion demonstrates that local cultural values, when presented in an engaging way, can be embraced and appreciated by international audiences, proving that cultural identity can drive consumer purchasing intent for ethnic cultural products (Dong & Li, 2025).

In addition, collaborations with public figures and influencers have been a significant driver in expanding market reach. The use of influencers on social media can effectively attract tourists and influence purchasing decisions regarding SME products (Sarifiyono et al., 2024). This strategy leverages the reach and credibility of public figures to introduce "Luwih Jewelry" to a wider audience, both in the domestic and international markets, in line with the role of social media as a powerful and cost-effective promotional tool for SMEs in the tourism sector.

While current theories on SME digital marketing emphasize cost-efficiency and global reach, the case of Atma Silver highlights a practical paradox. The transition from transactional sales to culture-based storytelling demands a high level of 'narrative consistency' that traditional artisans often struggle to maintain. This interrogates the idea that digital platforms are a simple solution for SMEs; instead, they require a new form of 'digital artisanal skill' where the producer must become a professional storyteller, potentially distracting from the primary production process.

The revenue of Rp 15,390,000 in April 2025, while seemingly modest for a global scale, represents a high conversion rate relative to the startup's low marketing expenditure. Analytical observation of their Instagram engagement suggests that the 'storytelling' approach yields a deeper niche-market penetration compared to conventional promotional methods. This confirms that for tourism-based SMEs, cultural narrative is a more potent driver of sales than price competition.



Figure 7. Collaboration with Public Figure
Source: Researchers (2025)

4.5 Empowering Artisans and Sustainability

From a social perspective, Atma Silver Jewelry's business model demonstrates a commitment to social entrepreneurship by making a significant positive impact on local artisans in Celuk Village. Celuk Village, known as a center for silver craftsmanship, often faces challenges where artisans are marginalized by large-scale industries or lack access to broader markets. Atma Silver works directly with artisans, providing them with broader market access and a platform to showcase their traditional skills. This aligns with the concept of social entrepreneurship, which leverages local wisdom as the foundation for local economic development and community empowerment (Wibowo et al., 2023).

In addition to social considerations, Atma Silver also prioritizes environmental sustainability by employing ethical production processes and minimizing waste. This approach aligns with the Tri Hita Karana philosophy, which emphasizes harmony with nature (Suarminiati & Subanda, 2025). By minimizing waste and adopting responsible production practices, companies contribute to sustainable tourism development, while demonstrating that businesses can operate profitably while upholding ethical and ecological values. This reflects the understanding that entrepreneurship rooted in local culture and wisdom can create sustainable business models by balancing profitability with social and environmental sustainability.

4.6 Broader Implications and Strategic Scalability

The findings of this study offer significant implications that extend beyond the silver jewelry sector in Bali. First, in terms of policy implications, local governments should recognize that "tourismpreneurship" requires more than just capital assistance; it necessitates a supportive ecosystem for "digital storytelling" and intellectual property protection for local motifs. Policies should shift from subsidizing mass production to funding digital literacy and cultural branding for SMEs to ensure they can compete in high-value global niches.

Second, regarding scalability and applicability, the "Luwih Jewelry" model which centers on the philosophical commodification of local wisdom is highly replicable in other craft sectors such as Balinese weaving (Tenun) or wood carving. By identifying the "spiritual DNA" of a product (like Tri Hita Karana), other craft regions in Indonesia, such as the batik centers in Java or the weaving villages in Lombok, can adopt similar narrative-driven digital strategies to bypass price wars with factory-made goods.

Finally, this model suggests a territorial branding strategy for other regions. The success of Celuk Village artisans in this study provides a blueprint for "village-based global expansion." By integrating localized social entrepreneurship with international marketplace access, regional economies can achieve growth without eroding their unique cultural identity. This demonstrates that the synergy between tradition and technology is a universal strategic asset for rural empowerment across diverse geographical contexts.

5. CONCLUSION

This study evaluates the strategic intersection of local wisdom-based innovation and digital market expansion within Atma Silver Jewelry. The findings demonstrate that the "Luwih Jewelry" line serves as a preliminary proof of concept for how the Tri Hita Karana philosophy can be operationalized into a modern value proposition. While the results from April 2025 show promising initial market reception, this research acknowledges its exploratory nature. Within the context of a single-case study, the contribution of this work lies in providing an initial framework for culture-based brand

storytelling, challenging the traditional dichotomy between cultural preservation and digital modernization.

To strengthen the sustainability of Atma Silver Jewelry and similar SMEs, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a. **Production Scalability:** Management should adopt semi-automated tools to mitigate the "production bottleneck" identified in the artisanal process, ensuring they can meet digital e-commerce demands without losing handmade authenticity.
- b. **Digital Narrative Consistency:** SMEs must move beyond sporadic posting and develop a structured "narrative calendar" that links Balinese craftsmanship with global fashion trends to maintain high organic engagement.
- c. **Intellectual Property (IP) Protection:** It is recommended that the company registers its unique cultural designs to prevent mass-produced knockoffs from eroding the brand's premium positioning.

Given the limited methodological scope of this preliminary study, future research should explore the following directions:

- a. **Longitudinal Performance Tracking:** Analyzing sales and engagement over multiple years to account for seasonal tourism cycles in Bali.
- b. **Consumer Perception Surveys:** Gathering primary data from international customers to empirically measure how "cultural narrative" actually influences their perceived value and willingness to pay.
- c. **Comparative Studies:** Expanding the research scope to include other craft sectors, such as Tenun or wood carving, to identify universal strategies for local wisdom-based tourismpreneurship across different regions.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 107-120

FORMULATION OF TAPIOCA CRACKERS WITH THE ADDITION OF EGGSHELL POWDER AS A FUNCTIONAL FOOD

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Received: 10/03/2026

Revised: 27/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

This study aimed to formulate tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder and to evaluate panelists' acceptance of the resulting product. The use of eggshell powder was based on its high calcium content and its potential as a natural fortifying ingredient, as well as its role in converting food waste into value-added products. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observation of the production process and organoleptic testing using a 1–5 hedonic scale. The formulation consisted of 200 g of tapioca flour, 50 g of eggshell powder, 5 g of salt, 5 g of chicken powder, and 100 ml of hot water. The production process included mixing, dough shaping, boiling, cooling, slicing, drying, and two-stage frying to produce crispy crackers. Organoleptic testing was conducted with 32 untrained panelists who evaluated texture, aroma, taste, and appearance. The results showed that tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder were generally well accepted by the panelists. Taste and texture received the highest preference scores, followed by appearance, while aroma was rated as acceptable but still requires further improvement. These findings indicate that the addition of eggshell powder did not negatively affect the sensory quality of the product and is compatible with the tapioca starch matrix. However, no chemical or laboratory analysis was conducted to determine the actual calcium content or nutritional composition of the final product. Therefore, the classification of this product as a functional food or a natural source of calcium cannot be scientifically confirmed and remains a potential claim. Further studies are required to analyze calcium content, proximate composition, and mineral bioavailability to support these claims. From a practical perspective, panelists' feedback highlights opportunities for further product development, particularly in terms of flavor diversification. Suggested variants such as spicy, balado, and barbecue (BBQ), as well as improvements in aroma and packaging, indicate strong potential for enhancing consumer appeal and market competitiveness. Overall, this study provides an initial contribution to the development of innovative snack products based on natural fortification and food waste utilization, while emphasizing the need for further scientific validation of their nutritional value.

Keywords: Tapioca Crackers, Eggshell Powder, Functional Food, Calcium, Organoleptic Test

1. INTRODUCTION

Crackers are one of the most popular snack foods in Indonesia and are widely consumed both as side dishes and as snacks. Their popularity is closely related to their preferred sensory characteristics, especially crisp texture, savory taste, and relatively simple processing methods. However, most crackers available on the market still emphasize sensory appeal rather than nutritional value, resulting in relatively low micronutrient content, particularly minerals such as calcium. In the context of the modern food industry, this condition presents both a challenge and an opportunity to develop cracker products that are not only organoleptically acceptable but also provide added functional value for health (Suharto, 2020; Wibowo et al., 2021). The use of natural fortifying ingredients is one relevant approach to addressing this issue, especially as consumers are showing greater interest in foods that are healthier, safer, and more sustainable.

One potential ingredient for this purpose is eggshells. Eggshell is generally regarded as household or food industry waste, although it contains a very high amount of calcium carbonate and has strong potential to be utilized as a natural calcium source in food products. Putri and Rahmawati (2022) and Santoso et al. (2021) explained that the utilization of eggshell not only contributes to the improvement of mineral content but is also in line with the principle of converting waste into value-added products. In addition, Sundararajan et al. (2014) stated that eggshells are a promising natural source of calcium, while Khaskheli et al. (2017) emphasized that eggshell-derived calcium can be utilized in the development of functional foods. Therefore, the use of eggshell powder in food formulation is relevant not only from a nutritional perspective but also from the standpoint of environmental sustainability and resource efficiency.

Several previous studies have demonstrated the potential use of eggshells in various food products. Nur Qolis, Handayani, Asmoro, and Afriyanti (2022) found that substitution with eggshell powder in crackers was able to increase calcium content without significantly reducing organoleptic acceptance. Handayani, Samsul, and Prasetya (2025) also reported that the addition of eggshell powder in snack bars increased the calcium content of the product. In other food products, Safitri, Muslihah, and Winarsih (2020) showed that eggshell powder fortification in soy milk improved calcium content without significantly affecting organoleptic quality, while Telisa, Ramzy, Sartono, and Purnama (2022) found that the addition of eggshell powder in *tekwan* was acceptable to consumers and also enhanced its nutritional value. Istikomah et al. (2023) further developed a functional porridge made from eggshell and ginger extract, which showed the potential to improve nutritional quality and consumer acceptance. These studies indicate that eggshells have been recognized as a promising fortification ingredient in the development of healthy and functional foods.

Nevertheless, there is still a research gap that needs to be addressed. Most previous studies have focused primarily on increasing calcium content, chemical analysis, or the application of eggshell in products other than tapioca crackers, such as snack bars, soy milk, *tekwan*, and functional porridge. Studies involving crackers fortified with eggshell powder generally emphasize substitution and calcium measurement but have not specifically positioned the product as a functional food based on tapioca crackers, with emphasis on the combination of nutritional enhancement, waste utilization, processing characteristics, and sensory acceptance as the basis for developing an applicable local food product. In other words, only limited research has explicitly examined the formulation of tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder as a

functional snack product that maintains the typical sensory characteristics of crackers while simultaneously providing added mineral value and sustainability benefits. This constitutes the main gap analysis underlying the importance of the present study.

In addition to addressing this gap, it is also important to provide a clear scientific justification for the formulation used in this study, particularly regarding the proportion of eggshell powder added to the tapioca flour. The selection of a formulation ratio of 50 g eggshell powder to 200 g tapioca flour (equivalent to 20% substitution) was not arbitrary but was based on nutritional considerations, safety aspects, and findings from previous studies. Eggshell powder is known to contain calcium carbonate (CaCO_3) in very high amounts, approximately 94–97% of its composition, making it a highly concentrated calcium source (King'ori, 2011). In general, 1 gram of eggshell powder can provide around 380–400 mg of elemental calcium. From a nutritional standpoint, the recommended daily calcium intake for adult's ranges from 1000 to 1200 mg per day (World Health Organization, 2004). Therefore, the inclusion of 50 g eggshell powder in the formulation was intended to significantly enhance the calcium content of the product while still considering realistic portion sizes to ensure safe consumption levels. In this context, a serving size of crackers (approximately 20–30 g) is estimated to contribute a moderate amount of calcium intake without exceeding safe limits.

Furthermore, the 20% ratio is supported by previous studies on food fortification using eggshell powder. Schaafsma (2000) reported that eggshell powder can be incorporated into food products up to 20% without significantly affecting calcium bioavailability. Meanwhile, Brun et al. (2013) found that higher concentrations above 20% tend to negatively impact sensory quality, particularly due to chalky taste and undesirable texture. Preliminary trials conducted in this study also reinforced the selection of this ratio. Lower concentrations (<10%) resulted in minimal improvement in calcium content, while higher concentrations (>25%) led to decreased sensory acceptance, especially in terms of increased hardness and grittiness. Therefore, the 20% level represents an optimal balance between functional enhancement and consumer acceptability. From a safety perspective, calcium carbonate is categorized as safe for food use or Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. However, excessive calcium intake (above 2500 mg/day) may cause adverse effects such as hypercalcemia or kidney stone formation (National Institutes of Health, 2022). Thus, the formulation was designed by considering realistic consumption patterns to ensure that intake remains within safe dietary limits.

Based on this gap and formulation rationale, the novelty or scientific contribution of this study lies in the development of a formulation of tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder as a functional food, which is not solely oriented toward increasing calcium content, but also toward enhancing the added value of local cassava-based products, applying zero-waste principles through food waste utilization, and evaluating consumer acceptance of the main product characteristics.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent developments in food science have highlighted the importance of utilizing natural calcium sources, particularly eggshell-derived calcium, in the formulation of functional foods. Eggshell powder is predominantly composed of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3), which has high bioavailability and can be effectively incorporated into food systems after proper processing such as cleaning, drying, and micronization (Waheed et al., 2020). The fine particle size of processed eggshell powder plays a critical

role in improving its dispersion within food matrices, especially in starch-based systems, thereby enhancing both nutritional functionality and physical stability. In starchy food matrices such as tapioca-based products, the addition of mineral fortificants like calcium carbonate can influence physicochemical properties, including gelatinization behavior, water absorption, and expansion during frying. According to García-Lomillo et al. (2021), calcium salts interact with starch granules by modifying their swelling capacity and pasting properties, which may affect texture development in fried products. This interaction is particularly important in crackers, where expansion and crispiness are key quality attributes. Furthermore, Meziani et al. (2022) reported that mineral fortification in starch-based foods can alter the microstructure, leading to changes in porosity and hardness depending on concentration levels.

From a functional perspective, eggshell-derived calcium has been increasingly explored in recent studies as a sustainable fortification ingredient. Oliveira et al. (2020) emphasized that eggshell powder utilization supports circular economy principles by converting food waste into high-value nutritional ingredients. Similarly, Huda et al. (2021) demonstrated that eggshell calcium fortification significantly improves mineral content in food products while maintaining acceptable sensory properties when used within optimal concentration ranges. Recent empirical studies (last 5 years) have also shown the successful application of eggshell powder in various food systems. Ray et al. (2022) found that incorporation of eggshell powder in bakery and snack products significantly increased calcium content without adversely affecting sensory acceptance at moderate levels ($\leq 20\%$). In addition, Khalaf et al. (2023) reported that excessive calcium fortification ($> 25\%$) may negatively affect texture due to increased rigidity and reduced expansion, especially in starch-based matrices. These findings confirm that the balance between nutritional enhancement and sensory quality is highly dependent on formulation ratio.

In the context of crackers, which rely heavily on starch gelatinization and expansion mechanisms, the incorporation of eggshell powder must be carefully optimized. Santos et al. (2021) explained that expansion during frying is influenced by moisture evaporation and starch network formation, which can be disrupted by excessive mineral content. Therefore, understanding the interaction between eggshell calcium and tapioca starch is essential in maintaining product quality. Moreover, recent studies have emphasized the importance of particle size and processing methods of eggshell powder in improving its functionality. Ahmed et al. (2022) found that ultrafine eggshell powder enhances homogeneity in food matrices and reduces the perception of grittiness, which is a common issue in calcium-fortified foods. This is particularly relevant for cracker products, where texture plays a dominant role in consumer acceptance.

Despite these advancements, existing studies remain fragmented. Most recent research focuses either on calcium enrichment or on the application of eggshell powder in non-starch-based or non-traditional products. There is still limited research that specifically examines the interaction between eggshell-derived calcium and tapioca starch matrices in fried cracker systems, particularly in terms of formulation optimization, expansion behavior, and sensory acceptance. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by developing a tapioca-based cracker formulation fortified with eggshell powder, while simultaneously evaluating its functional value and organoleptic characteristics.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to systematically describe the formulation process of tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder and to explain the level of panelists' acceptance of the resulting product. This approach was selected because the study was not intended to test hypotheses inferentially, but rather to obtain an in-depth description of the product processing stages, sensory characteristics, and consumer preference tendencies toward the developed food innovation. In this study, simple quantitative data in the form of hedonic scores were used as a basis for generating descriptive interpretations regarding panelists' preference levels for the sensory attributes of the product. This approach was considered appropriate because the research focused on the development of a functional food product based on local ingredients and value-added food waste, particularly eggshell powder as a natural source of calcium.

The research was conducted at the Culinary Laboratory of Bali International Polytechnic, which was purposively selected based on the availability of food processing facilities and an adequate sensory evaluation setting. This location supported the implementation of the product preparation process under hygienic and controlled conditions, starting from ingredient mixing, boiling, cooling, drying, and frying. In addition, the campus environment allowed organoleptic testing to be carried out efficiently by involving student and staff panelists. The selection of this research site was also based on its suitability for the objective of the study, namely, to produce an innovative cracker product that could be directly evaluated in terms of both processing and consumer acceptance.

The object of this study was tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder, formulated as a functional food product and a natural source of calcium. The formulation consisted of 200 g of tapioca flour, 50 g of eggshell powder, 5 g of salt, 5 g of chicken powder, and 100 ml of hot water. The eggshell powder used in this research was not directly derived from untreated household waste, but from a commercially available fine powder product that had undergone cleaning, drying, sterilization, and grinding processes, making it safer and more consistent for food application. The selection of this ingredient was important because the study aimed not only to produce a sensory acceptable product but also to highlight its functional value through the calcium content contributed by eggshell powder.

The product preparation procedure was carried out through several systematic stages. First, all dry ingredients, namely tapioca flour, eggshell powder, salt, and chicken powder, were mixed in one container until homogeneous. Hot water was then gradually added while stirring until a smooth and evenly mixed dough was formed. The dough was wrapped with plastic wrap, shaped into a cylindrical form, and boiled for one hour over medium heat. After boiling, the dough was cooled to room temperature and then stored in a refrigerator overnight to obtain a firmer texture and facilitate slicing. The next stages included slicing the dough thinly, drying it under sunlight for one to two days until completely dry, and applying a two-stage frying process, namely frying in warm oil to promote expansion, followed by frying in hot oil to obtain a crispy texture. This sequence of processing steps was intended to ensure that the final product had proper physical and sensory characteristics for testing while maintaining the functional value of the added ingredient.

The data used in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through observation of the product-making process, documentation of each processing stage, and the results of organoleptic testing conducted

with panelists. Secondary data were collected from various literature sources, such as scientific journals, textbooks, and previous studies relevant to the utilization of eggshell as a calcium source, tapioca cracker processing technology, and sensory evaluation methods. The use of secondary data served to strengthen the theoretical foundation, support the interpretation of results, and place this study within a broader scientific context, particularly in the development of functional foods.

The main instrument used in this study was an organoleptic evaluation sheet in the form of a five-point hedonic scale, accompanied by open-ended questions to obtain panelists' comments and suggestions. In the hedonic form, panelists were asked to assign scores ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated "strongly dislike" and 5 indicated "strongly like." The evaluation covered the main sensory attributes, namely aroma, taste, texture, and appearance. In addition, open-ended questions were included at the end of the form to gather panelists' responses regarding the strengths of the product, perceived weaknesses, and suggestions for further development. The use of these two instruments was intended to ensure that the data obtained were not limited to numerical preference scores, but were also complemented by qualitative information that could enrich the interpretation of the findings.

The panelists involved in this study were 32 untrained panelists, consisting of students and staff members of Bali International Polytechnic. Untrained panelists were selected because the purpose of the study was to assess general consumer acceptance of the product innovation rather than to conduct a detailed sensory analysis by expert panelists. Before the test was conducted, the panelists were given brief instructions on how to complete the evaluation form and the meaning of each score on the hedonic scale in order to improve consistency in their responses. The involvement of panelists from different age ranges and backgrounds also provided a broader picture of the product's potential acceptance in the community.

Data were collected through two main techniques, namely organoleptic testing and open-ended responses. In the organoleptic test, the panelists tasted the formulated cracker product and then assessed the predetermined sensory attributes. The test was conducted under hygienic conditions and within an organized evaluation setting to obtain more consistent results. Meanwhile, the open-ended responses were used to explore panelists' comments in greater depth, for example regarding the need for flavor variation, aroma improvement, or enhancement of the product's appearance. The combination of these two techniques enabled the researcher to obtain both preference data and direct feedback that could serve as a basis for product evaluation and refinement.

The research data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis supported by simple percentage calculations. The first step of analysis involved compiling all scores given by the panelists for each sensory attribute. After that, the number of panelists giving each score was counted and converted into percentages based on the total number of panelists. These percentages were then used to describe the general tendency of panelists' preference levels toward aroma, taste, texture, and appearance. The data were not analyzed using inferential statistical tests because the aim of the study was not generalization, but rather the description of panelists' responses to the tested product innovation. In addition to the simple quantitative data, comments obtained from the open-ended questions were analyzed thematically to identify dominant suggestions, such as the need for flavor diversification, aroma enhancement, and improvement of product shape. Therefore, the data analysis in this study was conducted in an integrated manner by combining simple numerical results with narrative explanation.

The findings of this study are presented in the form of frequency and percentage tables, as well as descriptive narratives. The presentation in tabular form was intended to facilitate the reading of the distribution of panelists' evaluations across each sensory attribute, while the narrative was used to explain the tendencies of the results in greater depth. If needed, the results may also be visualized through charts or graphs to clarify the pattern of panelists' evaluations. This form of presentation was chosen to ensure that the research findings are clear, systematic, and able to show the relationship between product formulation, sensory characteristics, and its potential development as a functional food based on eggshell powder.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the formulation of tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder was able to produce a product that was technically feasible in terms of processing and acceptable in terms of sensory quality. These findings were derived from two main aspects of the study, namely the success of the product formulation process and the results of organoleptic evaluation on texture, aroma, taste, and appearance.

From a processing perspective, the incorporation of eggshell powder did not interfere with the main stages of cracker production, including mixing, dough formation, boiling, drying, and frying. The final product exhibited typical characteristics of crackers, such as proper expansion during frying and a crispy texture. This suggests that eggshell powder is physically compatible with the tapioca starch matrix and does not negatively affect the structural formation of the product.

The organoleptic test results showed that most panelists provided positive evaluations, particularly for taste, texture, and appearance, while aroma was rated as acceptable but still requiring further improvement. These findings indicate that the addition of eggshell powder did not lead to significant sensory rejection, and the product remains generally acceptable to consumers.

However, it is important to emphasize that no chemical or proximate laboratory analysis was conducted in this study to determine the actual calcium content or nutritional composition of the final product. Therefore, claims that the product qualifies as a "functional food" or as a "natural source of calcium" cannot be scientifically validated within the scope of this research. In this context, it is more appropriate to state that the product has the potential to be developed as a functional food, based on the known high calcium content of eggshell powder reported in previous studies, such as those by King'ori (2011) and other recent research on eggshell-based calcium fortification.

Accordingly, the findings of this study primarily highlight the feasibility of formulation and sensory acceptance as an initial stage of product development. To substantiate functional food claims, further research is required, including proximate analysis, quantitative measurement of calcium content using laboratory methods (such as Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy or ICP), and evaluation of mineral bioavailability in the final product. Nevertheless, this study provides an important contribution by demonstrating that food waste in the form of eggshells can be utilized as an ingredient in starch-based food products without significantly compromising sensory quality. This finding supports the potential development of innovative food products that integrate waste valorization and nutritional enhancement, while emphasizing the need for further scientific validation of their nutritional claims.

4.1 Formulation Results and Product Processing

The process of making tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder was carried out through systematic stages, beginning with the mixing of tapioca flour, eggshell powder, salt, and chicken powder, followed by the addition of hot water until a smooth dough was formed. The dough was then shaped into a cylindrical form, boiled for one hour, cooled, stored in a refrigerator, sliced thinly, dried under sunlight for one to two days, and finally fried in two stages until it expanded and became crispy. The formulation used in this study consisted of 200 g of tapioca flour, 50 g of eggshell powder, 5 g of salt, 5 g of chicken powder, and 100 ml of hot water. The results of this process showed that eggshell powder could be applied in cracker formulation without causing failure in dough structure, without disturbing the drying process, and without inhibiting product expansion during frying.

This finding is important because in cracker development, process success is strongly influenced by the stability of dough structure, the degree of dryness before frying, and the ability of the product to expand properly. Theoretically, tapioca crackers require a balance of moisture content, starch gelatinization, and appropriate drying stages in order to produce a crispy texture after frying. In this study, the addition of eggshell powder did not interfere with these basic characteristics. This is in line with Prasetya, Kurniati, and Widodo (2017), who stated that cracker quality is highly influenced by processing techniques, particularly during mixing, drying, and frying. Thus, from a technical perspective, this study shows that eggshell powder can be used as a functional additive that is compatible with the production process of tapioca crackers.

In addition to showing the success of the formulation, these results also demonstrate the product's contribution to the development of functional foods. The eggshell powder used in this study was a commercial fine powder product that had undergone cleaning, drying, sterilization, and grinding, making it safe for use in food products. The use of this ingredient provided added nutritional value, particularly as a natural source of calcium. In the context of functional food, this product does not serve only as a snack but also offers an additional benefit in the form of mineral enrichment that is important for the human body, especially calcium for bone and dental health. Therefore, the results of this formulation confirm that the developed tapioca cracker is not merely an innovation in flavor or form, but also a functional innovation based on the utilization of food waste.

4.2 Organoleptic Test Results

The organoleptic test was conducted on 32 untrained panelists aged between 16 and 67 years. The panelists evaluated four main sensory attributes, namely texture, aroma, taste, and appearance, using a 1–5 hedonic scale. The test results showed that the product was generally well accepted by the panelists. The highest scores consistently appeared in the taste and texture attributes, followed by appearance, while aroma received good evaluations but was not as strong as the other attributes. These findings indicate that the addition of eggshell powder did not result in sensory rejection and still allowed the product to maintain the cracker characteristics preferred by consumers.

For the texture attribute, most panelists gave scores of 4 (like) and 5 (strongly like), with score 5 being given by 10 panelists or approximately 31%. No low scores were recorded for this attribute. These results indicate that the cracker texture was very good and remained crispy despite the use of eggshell powder as an additional ingredient. This finding is important because texture is one of the main identities of cracker products. The

successful maintenance of crispiness indicates that the formulation used in this study was able to preserve the physical characteristics of the cracker. This result is consistent with the theory that cracker quality is influenced by proper drying and frying and supports previous studies showing that eggshell fortification does not necessarily damage the sensory quality of food products.

For the aroma attribute, the panelists' evaluations tended to be more moderate. The dominant scores were 3 (neutral) and 4 (like), while score 5 appeared only among a small number of panelists, and no scores of 1 or 2 were recorded. This indicates that the aroma of the product was acceptable, but not yet its main strength. From a sensory perspective, this may be explained by the fact that eggshell powder does not have a strong distinctive aroma, so the aroma profile of the product was more strongly influenced by chicken powder and the frying process. These findings show that the addition of eggshell powder did not create an undesirable smell but also did not provide a particularly strong positive contribution to the product's aromatic appeal. From a product development perspective, this becomes an area for future innovation, for example through the addition of spices or natural flavorings to strengthen the aromatic dimension of the product.

For the taste attribute, the product received very good acceptance. Most panelists gave scores of 4 and 5, with score 5 also appearing 10 times or about 31%. No low scores were given, indicating that the taste of the product was highly preferred. The savory taste resulting from the combination of tapioca flour, chicken powder, and eggshell powder proved to remain compatible with panelist preferences. This is a very important finding because in many food innovations, the addition of fortifying ingredients often risks altering the original taste of the product. In this study, however, this did not occur. This means that eggshell powder successfully functioned as a fortifying material without reducing taste acceptance. This finding supports the results of Nur Qolis et al. (2022), who showed that eggshell fortification in crackers remained organoleptically acceptable. However, the contribution of this study is more specific because it positions tapioca crackers as a functional snack that still preserves the typical taste of traditional crackers.

For the appearance attribute, the panelists' evaluations were also very positive. Most panelists gave a score of 4, with 19 respondents (59.4%), and a score of 5 was given by 9 respondents (28.1%), while only 4 panelists (12.5%) gave a score of 3. No panelists gave low scores. These findings indicate that the product was visually attractive in terms of color, shape, and uniformity. The crackers appeared golden in color, expanded well, and had proportionate slice shapes. These results confirm that eggshell powder did not reduce the visual quality of the product. In the context of food marketing, appearance is an initial factor that strongly influences consumer decisions. Therefore, the high level of visual acceptance is an important indicator that this product has good commercial potential.

4.3 Discussion of Findings and Scientific Contribution

Overall, the results of this study demonstrate that the addition of eggshell powder to tapioca crackers was able to produce a product that was well accepted organoleptically, especially in the attributes of taste, texture, and appearance. These findings reinforce previous studies showing that eggshell has the potential to be used as a source of calcium fortification in food products, such as crackers, snack bars, soy milk, and tekwan. However, this study makes a more specific contribution by positioning tapioca crackers as a functional food based on local ingredients and food waste, rather than merely as an ordinary fortified product. In other words, the original contribution of this study lies in its

success in integrating three dimensions at once, namely traditional product innovation, nutritional enhancement through natural calcium, and sustainable utilization of organic waste.

From the perspective of innovation theory, the results of this study show that food innovation does not always have to involve an entirely new product but can also take the form of modifying traditional products through the addition of functional ingredients that provide added value. Crackers, as a conventional food product, are generally viewed only in terms of taste and crispiness, but in this study, they were developed into a product with additional benefits, namely as a natural source of calcium. This is consistent with the views of Rogers (2003), Schumpeter (1934), and Drucker (1985), who define innovation as the application of new ideas that produce real benefits. In this context, the real benefits are not only the improvement of nutritional value, but also the efficient use of waste and the economic potential of local product development.

From the perspective of functional food, this study shows that eggshell powder can be positioned as a fortifying ingredient that provides additional health-related benefits, particularly because of its calcium content. Since the product remained sensorially acceptable, these crackers have the potential to be marketed not only as an ordinary snack, but also as a functional snack. This is important because one of the greatest challenges in the development of functional foods is maintaining a balance between health benefits and sensory acceptance. This study demonstrates that both aspects can be achieved simultaneously. Therefore, the findings of this study provide new evidence that tapioca-based crackers can be developed into practical functional foods that are familiar to consumers and offer additional health value without losing their main sensory identity.

4.4 Panelist Feedback and Product Development Implications

The panelists' comments and suggestions provided qualitative support for the hedonic test results. Most panelists gave positive responses such as "great, delicious," "okay," and "delicious and healthy product," which indicate good general acceptance of the product. However, the most dominant theme in the comments was the need for new flavor variants, such as balado, barbecue, and spicy flavors. In addition, some panelists also highlighted the need to improve the aroma and slightly refine the shape of the product. These responses indicate that although the product has already been well accepted, further development is still necessary to broaden its market appeal.

From these comments, it can be understood that the current strengths of the product lie in its basic taste, crispiness, and health value, while opportunities for development are found in flavor diversification, aroma enhancement, and refinement of appearance. The practical implication is that this product has strong commercial prospects, especially if it is developed in modern packaging with more varied flavor options. This means that the study not only produces academic findings but also offers an applicable basis for the development of culinary business products or home industries based on functional foods.

4.5 Original Findings of the Study

The original finding of this study is that the formulation of tapioca crackers with the addition of 50 g of eggshell powder in a composition of 200 g of tapioca flour was able to produce a product that remained crispy, was preferred in terms of taste and appearance, and had the potential to be developed as a calcium-source functional food.

This study also shows that food waste-based innovation can be accepted by consumers as long as the formulation and processing techniques are properly applied. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies not only in the use of eggshell powder itself, but also in its successful transformation of tapioca crackers into a functional snack product that combines sensory quality, nutrition, and sustainability in one applicable formulation.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the formulation of tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder has the potential to be developed as a value-added food product, particularly as a potential natural source of calcium. The formulation used in this study, consisting of 200 g of tapioca flour and 50 g of eggshell powder, was able to produce crackers with acceptable physical and sensory characteristics. The production process was successfully carried out through stages of mixing, boiling, cooling, slicing, drying, and two-stage frying, resulting in crackers that expanded well and exhibited a desirable crispy texture.

The organoleptic test results showed that the product was generally well accepted by the panelists. Among the evaluated attributes, taste and texture received the highest preference scores, followed by appearance, while aroma was considered acceptable but still requires further improvement. These findings indicate that the addition of eggshell powder did not negatively affect the sensory quality of the crackers. However, it is important to note that no chemical or laboratory analysis was conducted to determine the actual calcium content of the final product; therefore, the classification of this product as a functional food remains potential and requires further scientific validation.

The main contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that eggshell powder, commonly regarded as food waste, can be utilized as a value-added ingredient in a traditional snack product. This supports not only the development of innovative food products but also the application of sustainability principles through food waste utilization. Furthermore, this study shows that traditional tapioca crackers can be enhanced into a more nutritious product without compromising the sensory characteristics preferred by consumers.

From a practical perspective, panelists' feedback indicates clear opportunities for further product development, particularly in terms of flavor diversification. Several panelists suggested the introduction of flavor variants such as spicy, balado, and barbecue (BBQ), which are expected to enhance consumer appeal and market competitiveness. Therefore, future product development should focus on flavor innovation, aroma enhancement, and improvements in product form and packaging to increase consumer acceptance and commercial potential.

In conclusion, tapioca crackers with the addition of eggshell powder demonstrate promising potential as an innovative and sustainable snack product. Future studies are recommended to conduct detailed chemical analysis, particularly calcium content determination, as well as shelf-life and microbiological evaluations, in order to strengthen scientific claims and support the product's development toward commercial application.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 121-134

VISUAL ANALYSIS ON A BALINESE KAMPUNG STYLE GASTRONOMY ATTRACTION: PERCEPTIONS OF INDONESIAN AND CHINESE YOUNGSTERS

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Received: 16/02/2026

Revised: 25/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

Visual perception plays a decisive role in how consumers interpret culinary identities, especially in gastronomy destinations that rely heavily on aesthetic cues. This study examines how Nasi Tekor, a Balinese kampung-style gastronomy attraction, is perceived through visual stimuli presented to millennials and Gen Z consumers from Indonesia and China who have never visited the venue. Using a qualitative visual analysis combined with semiotic interpretation, the research assesses how individuals decode curated images sourced from field observations and social media posts. Findings show that consumers' perceptual responses are strongly shaped by key visual cues, including banana-leaf plating, bamboo utensils, rustic wooden structures, woven crafts, and traditional attire. These elements are consistently processed as indicators of authenticity, nostalgia, and cultural rootedness, forming a brand image that aligns with heritage-based gastronomy. However, modern furniture and semi-modern design features create perceptual dissonance, leading some participants to interpret the visuals as inconsistent or less authentic. The results also highlight that visual perception on digital platforms influences not only emotional reactions but also functional judgments related to hygiene, comfort, and clarity of menu offerings. Overall, this study demonstrates that visual perception is central to shaping brand meaning, moreover, a coherent visual communication is essential for reinforcing Nasi Tekor's identity across both online and offline contexts.

Keywords: Visual Analysis, Brand Image, Perception, Gastronomy

1. INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy tourism is one of the tourism sectors with promising potential. The tourists, today, seek more than just the physiological fulfilment in food. They also craved insightful and enriching explorations of the cultural heritage related to the food (Tunjungsari & Koeswiryono, 2018). This tourism sector offers more than just food consumption but also covers the entire food-related journey, including visits to local markets, joining cooking classes, engaging with local chefs and local producers. Gastronomy tourism can also play a vital role for the destination in developing sustainable tourism, as it can advocate authenticity and the use of local produce. Statistically,

Southeast Asia is among the top three most popular gastronomy destinations. The rising interest is due to the growing interest in exploring local and authentic food that have new nuances (Straits Research, 2024). The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and has also made gastronomy tourism as one of its priorities by implementing a gastro-diplomacy program to promote Indonesian tourism. Bali, as the epicentre of Indonesian tourism, is no exception. The gastronomy tourism in Bali is, among other cities, promoting Denpasar as the city with many culinary heritages.

According to Denpasar city's official website, among several gastronomy destinations that are promoted, Nasi Tekor is one the gastronomy destinations in Denpasar that offers Old Balinese "Kampung" (Village) Style. This eatery has just started its business approximately ten years ago, but in 2024, it has been regarded as a legendary culinary destination in Denpasar, together with other legendary places such as Warung Mak Beng and Warung Men Weti that have been passed down from generations. Although the "kampung" style concept has not been going through decades of journey, the owner himself has been selling Nasi Tekor for far longer than those seven years. However, not until the utilization of social media for promotion that Nasi Tekor became a brand known widely as it is at present. Nasi Tekor is one of the examples of how social media can really impact the development of a brand. The owner claims that their promotional media is only from social media. The power of social media is undoubtedly enormous in creating a brand image and influencing consumer behaviour (Artha & Piartrini, 2025; Narayana & Rahanatha, 2020). These effects are most likely influenced by the social media ability to build engagement between the brand and the consumer (Wahyu Artha Kusuma et al., 2024). Research demonstrates that a strategic use of visuals can enhance consumer engagement, trust, and emotional connection, which are essential for brand image formation (Basir Ahmad Ayoubi & Sadiqi, 2024; Karpenka et al., 2021). Moreover, the visual complexity of the images used in social media marketing can also improve the consumer perception towards the brand (Zhao, 2023).

Recognizing the significance of visual elements in shaping consumer perception of a brand, this research aims to investigate qualitatively how consumers react when exposed to different visuals from the same brand. The objectives of the study are to identify key visual signifiers embedded in the Balinese kampung-style traditional eatery and to analyse how these visual cues influence brand perception dimensions, such as authenticity, trust, attractiveness, and cultural cues. Nasi Tekor is used as a case study since this brand has experienced a positive effect of social media marketing. The brand also applies interesting and thematic visual content on its Instagram to develop a framing of classical old Balinese village vibes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Branding and Emotional Connection

Branding in the tourism industry is not merely a marketing tool. It is a strategic process of identity construction that shapes consumer expectations and emotional engagement. Branding can be defined as the act of endowing products and services with the power of a brand, enabling differentiation and consumer preference (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In a culturally rich hospitality business, branding often involves storytelling, sensory cues, and symbolic elements that can catch the audience's attention, induce empathy, and create emotional attachment (Peres, 2023). Moreover, the cultural narratives are able to eminently build trust and emotional resonance, especially in micro-entrepreneurial contexts (Arhasy & Romdoni, 2025).

2.2 Brand Image, Perception, Symbolism, and Experience

Brand image is the mental representation of a brand in the mind of the consumer that is influenced by direct experience with the brand, symbolic brand elements, and mediated brand communication. It is formed by sensory information, experiences, and symbolic association stored in memory that consumers retrieve when interacting with the brand, thus shaping the consumer perception and behavioral intentions (Gavilan & Avello, 2020). Brand image consists of associations in consumer memory that range from functional attributes to emotional and symbolic meanings (Heding et al., 2009). Study shows that brand image, brand identification, and brand love significantly influence loyalty in hospitality, especially mediated by customer value co-creation (Wu, 2025).

2.3 Visual Perception on Consumer Behaviour

Perception theory in consumer behaviour explores how individuals select, organize, and interpret sensory information to form a meaningful understanding that influences their buying decisions. This perceptual process involves three key stages. The first one is selection, where consumers focus on specific stimuli while ignoring others. The second one is organization, which entails arranging sensory input into coherent patterns. The third one is interpretation, through which consumers assign meaning based on their prior knowledge, experiences, and current needs (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019; Solomon, 2018). These stages can be seen as critical, as they shape consumer's attitudes and responses toward products and brands. It shows the importance of perception as a dynamic cognitive process deeply intertwined with personal and contextual factors impacting consumer behaviour. Visual perception plays a vital role in how consumers decode visual marketing stimuli. In social media marketing, it can influence how users process and respond to visual contents such as images and videos. Research indicates that visual aesthetics in social media, including the visual presentations strategies of influencers and micro-celebrities, significantly drive consumer engagement and commerce intention (Yang et al., 2021). Moreover, visual media marketing positively affects the consumer's purchase intentions by fostering brand engagement and shaping favourable attitudes towards products and brands (Waldi et al., 2024). These visual cues leverage the dominance of imagery over text in social networks, making them essential for capturing attention, enhancing brand perception, and motivating consumer actions on digital platforms.

2.4 Semiotics to Decode Visual Meaning

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols. It offers a powerful framework for analysing how brand image is visually and culturally constructed. Roland Barthes explained that the signs carry two levels of meaning systems, the denotative and connotative. The first level is denotative, which is the explicit meaning of signs. The second one is connotative that involves association with culturally derived meanings (Sobur, 2013). Semiotics involve in interpreting signs in relation to codes and conventions within social and cultural contexts (Chandler, 2022). In the analysis of Nasi Tekor brand image through visual cues, semiotic analysis helps to decode how consumers perceive the "kampung" style visual cues and investigate whether the visual signs communicate authenticity, nostalgia, and cultural rootedness. Applying semiotics allows the uncovering of how informants perceive the Nasi Tekor brand image, not just through functional attributes, but also through symbolic meanings embedded in its visual presentation.

2.5 The Digital Visual Representation of Traditional Gastronomy Attraction

The existing literatures shows that social media strongly shaped the brand image of food-based attractions in Indonesia. However, the studies still rarely focus on small local eateries, especially in Bali, instead exploring on national or regional gastronomy campaigns related to broader culinary narratives. Visual images of traditional food on Instagram are used by tourism bodies to promote authenticity, gastronomic tourism, and destination competitiveness, with food framed as a central attraction rather than as a supporting element (Amalia et al., 2024; Putra et al., 2023; Wan Farah Wani Wan Fakhruddin & Muhammad Arfin Muhammad Salim, 2023). Visual complexity and aesthetics on Instagram significantly influence destination and culinary attraction images for millennials and Gen Z users (Syahputra et al., 2022). It shows that rich and composed visuals can enhance perceived destination quality and choice. Nevertheless, several gaps remain for understanding local eatery brand image formation in Bali. In the highly competitive Bali's tourism-driven market, the specific branding process of local F&B MSMEs are still underexplored. Visual research has examined the impact of food photography on purchase intention, gastronomic aesthetics across digital media, and logo or visual identity strategies in coffee shops and street vendors (Pratiwi, 2021; Purnamasari & Affandi, 2025; Saqufa et al., 2022), but these visual elements evolving brand image perception of individual traditional rustic eateries in a cross-cultural context, namely between Indonesian youngsters and Chinese as an emerging market for Bali tourism.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research applied the qualitative approach by utilizing the visual analysis, which was chosen to correspond to the purpose of the research to find out what emotions from the consumer are being evoked by different visual content. The research used primary data and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the interviews and observations. The interviews were conducted to consumers from the Indonesian and Chinese millennials and gen Z, as these two age groups are most likely to engage more in social media activities. The informants are those who have never been to Nasi Tekor before, to see the perception of consumers when exposed to the visuals alone and not the live situation at the eatery. The observations were done to the activities in Nasi Tekor, from both the seller and consumer, and also observations on the emotions shown by the informants. The secondary data were other supporting documents, such as journals and media-release. The visuals that were being used for this research were a combination of photos taken by the researcher by considering different kinds of nuances and images from Nasi Tekor's Instagram post. The visual data were shown to the informants during the in-depth interview in sequences of six sections. The data were processed qualitatively with the steps of data reduction and codification according to the themes. Then, the data were analysed based on the concept of branding, brand image, and applying the semiotic analyses.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Nasi Tekor as a Culinary and Gastronomy Attraction

Nasi Tekor represents a distinctive culinary and cultural experience in Denpasar, a bustling city in the heart of Bali province. This place integrates traditional gastronomy that highlights heritage-based hospitality. Established approximately a decade ago by Pande Nyoman Darta, a 75 years old Balinese entrepreneur, the business evolved from a modest street vendor selling Nasi Campur (Balinese mixed rice dishes) into an authentic

Balinese eatery (Warung) in Denpasar that is dedicated to serving Nasi Tekor. (interviewed, November 2025).

The essential feature of this culinary concept lies in the tekor, a traditional Balinese “plate” crafted from a cone-shaped banana leaf. Within this tekor, the rice is accompanied by an assortment of Balinese side dishes that consist of chicken, vegetables, satay, crispy fried eggs, fried shredded coconut, sambal (chilli sauce), and a small bowl of soup. Nasi Tekor creating not only a gastronomic offering but also a symbolic representation of cultural philosophy. According to the founder, the tekor embodies the metaphor of the mother’s womb. This is serving as a reminder of filial respect for ibu (mother) and Ibu Pertiwi (Mother Nature). This philosophy is operationalized through the exclusive use of locally sourced ingredients, reinforcing principles of sustainability and community-based food system. (interviewed, November 2025).

The spatial design of the warung further amplifies the experiential dimension of Nasi Tekor. The dining area was intentionally arranged to resemble a traditional Balinese kitchen, surrounded by lush greenery that evokes a sense of rural authenticity. The presence of freely roaming roosters and hens contributes to the immersive atmosphere, blurring the boundaries between culinary consumption and cultural heritage. Thus, Nasi Tekor functions not merely as a site of food service but as a living embodiment of Balinese identity, memory, and ecological consciousness. Though, currently there is a development of dining area next to the original warung with a more spacious and modern vibe, the decorations that are being implemented still carry the nuance of bamboo and wood. This can be seen as an effort to provide a comfortable area yet remain a synchronous theme with the original old village vibe. (observation, November 2025).

Positioned within the broader discourse of gastronomy tourism, Nasi Tekor exemplifies how local culinary practices can be transformed into destination experiences. Its emphasis on traditional aesthetics, symbolic philosophy, and sustainable sourcing situates it as a model of heritage-based gastronomy that appeals to both domestic and international visitors seeking authenticity in culinary tourism.

4.2 The Initial Reaction to Visuals

This is the first section of the interview with one image was shown to the informants prior to the interview. The picture (Picture 1) received varied reactions from the informants. Some put their interest in the old structure first, but other saw the lush green surrounding as the focal points. The immediate recognition of kampung-style cues in the old structure and lush greenery supports Kotler & Keller (2016) view that branding is about creating distinct identity markers. Nasi Tekor’s rustic visuals act as brand signals that differentiate it from urban competitors in Denpasar. Brand image is built through association in consumer memory. The bamboo roofs, wooden huts, and greenery were not just functional features but symbolic cues of authenticity and heritage, reinforcing cultural pride and nostalgia, just as being expressed by an informant from Pematangsiantar – Indonesia that said:

“I feel kind of nostalgic, because the building is old-fashioned, I think it's built in 1960s something. I come from a city, my grandma also lives in old-fashioned house, but not like this. But it still makes me feel nostalgic”. (interviewed, November 2025).

The initial reactions reveal that the informants’ semiotic reading highlight how rustic visuals communicate cultural heritage and foster emotional bonds. This show how

the visual has potential to position Nasi Tekor as a kampung style alternative in modern food scene in Denpasar.



Figure 1. The Front Entrance of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

4.3 Further Interpretation of Visual Signs

In this second section, the informants were exposed to more images of Nasi Tekor, starts from the visual of Nasi Tekor serving style, then the dining area, and the old Balinese kitchen area (Picture 2). In this second section, the informants recognized two different themes. The first one is traditional and heritage themes from the banana leaves, bamboo, wood, and straw. These materials were read as markers of Balinese heritage, kampung vibes, local craftsmanship, and authenticity, as being expressed by the informant, “I think it represents Balinese traditional... I don't know, maybe, because some of the traditional Indonesian restaurants also use the bamboo and with the banana leaves. The bamboo gives more traditional vibes” (interview, November 2025). The informants highlighted specific objects such as bamboo, hats, mortars, anglo, and woven lamps, as cultural signs. These were interpreted as codes of authenticity, community, and tradition. The emotional resonance was strong with the visuals that evoked grandmother's kitchen, village routines, and cultural pride.

The second theme that come out from the more modern dining area is as being said by an informant from Yogyakarta - Indonesia as “Traditional with a modern touch. An eatery that sells traditional menus but presenting a homier and cozy atmosphere.” (interviewed, November 2025). The rustic serving styles paired with cozy and homey nuance were intepereted as away to make heritage dining accessible to contemporary audiences. Some other keywords that also came in this section were peaceful, warm, humble, and friendly. It shows that informants perceived the visuals as emotionally inviting, reinforcing brand's image as a kampung-style and community-oriented space. Informants' recognition of modern-traditional blends supports (Kotler & Keller, 2016) view that branding should balance differentiation with relevance. By combining kampung-style aesthetic with cozy, accessible atmosphere, Nasi Tekor can appeal to both nostalgic locals and modern urban consumers.



Figure 2. The Food Presentation and The Ambience of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

4.4 Brand Personality and Identity

The third section was aimed to study about the brand personality and identity that came to the mind of informants. The old kitchen area and the modern dining area shown to see if there any contrasts in interpreting the brand personality and identity in both settings. The findings show that there were contrasting images that appear from the two visual themes. The informants were asked to imagine that the visual from the old kitchen (picture 3) was a person, then what kind of person would it be. The keywords that came out were around laid back, peaceful, ease, someone who loves nature and slow-paced life. Just as an informant from China said “Relatively steady and calm, non-controversial, living in seclusion in the mountains, detached from worldly affairs, adhering to tradition, simple, close to nature. Many items are handmade, traditional but with a sense of life, and embracing a slow-paced lifestyle”. (interviewed, November 2025).



Figure 3. The Atmosphere of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

The second image (picture 4) was a sign with some Indonesian writings that can be roughly translated as “Rice Seller, Dishes of the Past, Taste of the Present, Culinary of the Future” accompanied with the three original menus of the warung. In the image, this signage is put behind a small traditional offering platform from wood. Some of the informants more attracted to the writing, but some others were more interested in the offering platform. This visual then interestingly interpreted by some of the informants as if the food is sacred. Just as two of the informants said:

It's like the food here was usually served for Gods...but maybe they modify it...and now we can eat it. Because I see a place for offering there. (interviewed, November 2025).

It looks like a place for a sacrificial ceremony. There is a note on the bamboo woven item, wooden utensils and table settings below, a wall clock, a wooden frame, and red brick stacked walls, suggesting a relatively simple ceremonial environment. (Interviewed, November 2025).

This shows that the selection process can be varied and that can lead to a whole different set of interpretations of the visual. While the ones who put their attention into the objects were driven to see the folk tradition as the cultural narrative, the ones who select the words were more into the heritage of Balinese food itself as something transient over generations. Either one gives emotional resonance to the brand Nasi Tekor with the emphasis on symbolic storytelling.



Figure 4. The Three Original Menu Sign of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

The third image (Picture 5) show the modern dining area with some traditional objects in it. Some informants chose to pay attention to the tables, chairs, and flooring instead of the traditional objects and said that the vibe is different from two prior images. The third image were said to have a more modern vibe, like being said by an informant “It gives the vibes of modern, even though I can see wooden things, It looks like it's only a coincidence.” (interviewed, November 2025). Another informant responded as a mix identity, just as the comment said “Mixed, some villages: because most of the tools that are seen use traditional materials and modern ones in terms of flooring.” (interviewed, November 2025). From these visuals, it is found that there is a possibility of contradictory identities that being expressed by Nasi Tekor. One is very traditional dan rural, the other on is more a modern vibe.



Figure 5. Traditional Ornaments and Dining Area Ambience of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

4.5 Brand Differentiation and Appeal

This section was designed to assess the uniqueness and consumer appeal on the brand Nasi Tekor. In this section there were three pictures. The first one is the Front Entrance of modern dining area with the signange Nasi Tekor (Picture 6). The second one is the image of the owner of Nasi Tekor (the grandpa) preparing food (Picture 7). The third one is the image of the old founders couple (Granpa and Grandma) give greeting in front of a rustic gate with the sign Nasi Tekor (Picture 8). In this section, several informants noted that while the brand emphasizes tradition, it also integrates modern comfort and aesthetic, making it accessible to younger audiences, and social media users. When being shown Picture 6, Some of them also mentioned that the one thing that can make the brand stand out is not the building but the name Nasi Tekor. For these informants the word Tekor is very interesting. As an informant emphasized that “because maybe I want to know what kind of food they are selling. If it is only the building, I would think maybe it sells Indonesian food. But with the sign I will be more interested because I'm not familiar with the word Nasi Tekor”.

The finding in this section also showed that the appeal of a “Grandpa” (Picture 9) is quite significant. As a cultural storytelling, the presence of grandparents in traditional attire while cooking or preparing food in traditional kitchen were interpreted as nostalgic, even for a foreigner. As Chinese informant expressed, “yes, because this photo reminds me of my grandparents at home, it feels close to nature, and I also want to try the food.”. Another informant also said that the food made by grandparents were usually good, so this becomes a pulling factor to try the food. However, not all foreigner see the cultural significance or the nostalgia in the picture, some felt worry about the safety and hygiene of the food, since the place looked dimmed and the appearance of the Granpa was seen as unsanitary.

The differentiation shown in the pictures of section four showed how brand image as emotional and symbolic appeal is built through association in consumer memory. If the nostalgia and cultural pride are the dominant associations, it can be an appeal across generation. On the contrary, when the audience has little or no association with any of the cultural objects in the image, the expected emotional connection will be limited, instead the audience could shift to a more functional meaning such as sanitary and hygiene.



Figure 6. The Signboard of Nasi Tekor at The Front of The Dining Area of Nasi Tekor
Source: Researchers (2025)

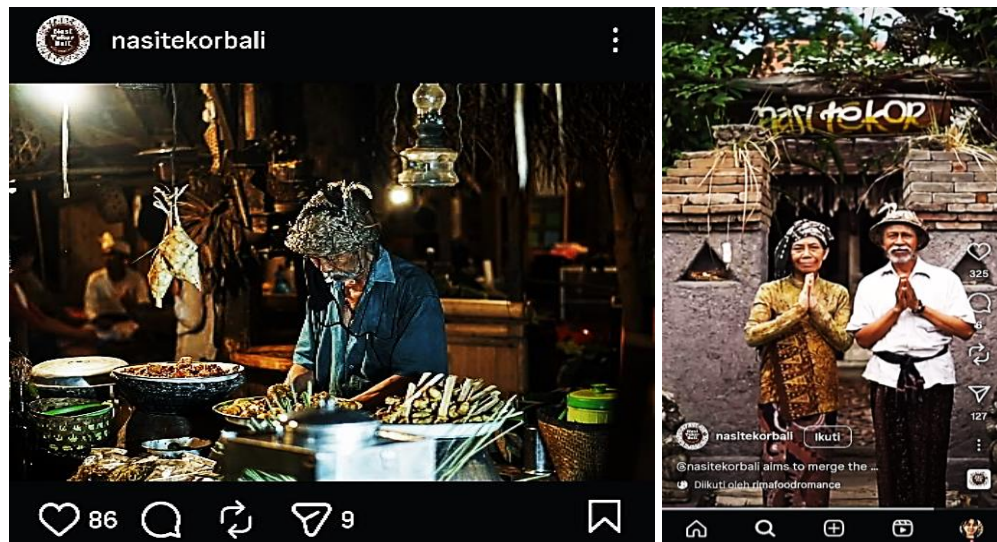


Figure 7. Owner of Nasi Tekor in a Social Media Post
Source: Nasi Tekor Instagram Account (2025)

4.6 Social Media and Digital Representation

This section showed one image of a server holding a bamboo tray with several Nasi Tekor on it (Picture 9). Once again, the reactions to the image were divided into two sides. While most informants found the visual inviting, like this quote “I want to visit, because it is interesting and unique, makes me curious.” (interviewed, November 2025), a few expressed hesitations about cleanliness, food safety, and modern comfort. This shows that traditional aesthetics may also raise concerns among certain audiences, especially when the visuals appear on social media without any proper explanations. This also suggests that the information on product functionality is very important, other than just extending emotional appeal. Some rustic aesthetics may raise questions in digital contexts, as can be seen from these quotes:

I would be somewhat resistant and would wonder if the leaves were cleaned properly, and whether this food would suit my taste. (interviewed, November 2025).

Quite special, but I wouldn't want to eat it. (interviewed, November 2025).

No. I don't really know what kind of place it is, what food they have, how comfortable it is, and there's nothing that really attracts me. (interviewed, November 2025).

As Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that branding must adapt across platforms, the brand should also realize that the audience may also be very varied. The proper use of hashtags may also be helpful for brand's visuals to find the right audiences. The informants consistently noted that Nasi Tekor's media images highlight banana leaves, bamboo trays, kebaya attire, and kampung-style serving. These visuals were interpreted as authentic and heritage-driven. Some hashtags that were recommended by the informants include, among others, #nostalgia #localfood #kulinerbali #tradisionalfood #affordablefood. The affordability is also an interesting finding. From the visual alone, some informants can interpret the value for money aspects of Nasi Tekor, which fall into the category of the functionality of the product, making it appealing to audiences who value authenticity without high cost. This section also gave an insight on how hospitality branding should balance between cultural narratives and contemporary expectations.



Figure 8. Traditional Serving of Nasi Tekor
Source: Nasi Tekor Instagram Account (2025)

4.7 Closing and Reflection

This is the last section where the informants were asked about the overall brand image of Nasi Tekor and if there were any missing or unclear messages from the visuals. There are several themes appearing from the answers, such as traditional heritage and old recipe, blend of tradition and modernity (contradiction), warmth and nostalgia, and also a need for clearer brand communication. The keyword that appeared the most was traditional heritage related to old recipes. Informants emphasize that Nasi Tekor represents traditional food prepared with old recipes. It is often linked to grandparent's cooking and generational continuity. However, some informants noted contradictions in the visual, like these quotes:

If you look at the building images above, there are building elements that combine traditional and semi-modern styles, which can make the brand message feel less consistent. If the brand's purpose is to display a traditional and nostalgic feel, then it is better to maintain consistency in the visuals and design elements used. (interviewed, November 2025).

For me, the dinning table make it looks less traditional. The banana leaves and the way they serve the food looks very old, but the dining tables and chairs, the modern ones, make it look less traditional than it supposed to be. (interviewed, November 2025).

Some informants also mentioned the needs for a clearer brand communication. Some informants felt that the menu and brand explanation were unclear. They suggested more focus on food visuals and storytelling to clarify what "Nasi Tekor" actually is. This can include the explanation about what is inside the Nasi Tekor, what the ingredients are, how the food preparation is, etc. Other informants also notice that the visual relying on rural elements without clear logo or brand marker may weaken long-term recognition. This is in line with Kotler and Keller (2016) explanation that branding must be clear and differentiated. The call from the informants for more explicit food visuals and menu explanation shows that Nasi Tekor must strengthen brand communication, ensuring audiences understand its culinary offerings alongside its heritage image.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the brand image of Nasi Tekor is constructed through a rich interplay of visual cues, semiotic meanings, and emotional associations. Informants consistently interpreted bamboo packaging, banana leaves, kampung-style architecture, and traditional attire as symbols of authenticity, nostalgia, and cultural pride. It is positioning the brand as a heritage storyteller rather than merely a dining establishment. Across all six sections of analysis, the findings reveal that the identity of Nasi Tekor is deeply tied to kampung aesthetics and generational continuity, evoking warmth, simplicity, and emotional resonance.

At the same time, the research highlights important contradictions and challenges. While rustic visuals strongly communicate tradition, the presence of modern furniture and semi-modern design elements occasionally diluted the authenticity message. Informants also noted the need for clearer communication of the menu and stronger visual consistency, including recognizable brand markers, to ensure long-term recognition in both offline and digital contexts. These insights underscore the importance of balancing heritage authenticity with modern brand clarity.

Ultimately, the differentiation for Nasi Tekor lies in its ability to blend traditional storytelling with contemporary accessibility, appealing to diverse audiences ranging from nostalgic locals to curious tourists and younger generations seeking cultural experiences. By leveraging semiotic cues and emotional resonance, the brand fosters loyalty through repeat visits, word-of-mouth advocacy, and digital engagement. It is hoped that this research contributes to the broader discourse on hospitality branding by showing how visual semiotics can be strategically employed to preserve cultural heritage while sustaining relevance in modern markets.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 135-152

THE AEROTROPOLIS DISCONNECT: AIRPORT-LED DEVELOPMENT AND COASTAL TOURISM STAGNATION IN YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

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Received: 24/02/2026

Revised: 26/04/2026

Accepted: 26/05/2026

Abstract

The coastal region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, exemplifies a critical paradox: the rapid development of the Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) megaproject has not produced integrated growth within the established Congot–Glagah–Trisik Regional Tourism Strategic Area. This research adopts a descriptive qualitative design to investigate this phenomenon, conceptualised as an “aerotropolis disconnect.” Methodological rigour is maintained through triangulation. Primary data were obtained via purposive sampling of 13 multi-scalar key informants from airport authorities, government, and local operators, and systematically cross-referenced with extensive field observations of physical infrastructure gaps and a longitudinal analysis of local revenue (PAD) data from 2019 to 2024. The interactive analysis model was employed to identify structural governance barriers. The findings reveal a condition of “infrastructure-induced stagnation,” wherein the capital-intensive gateway functions as a “transit bubble” that bypasses local ecosystems. This disconnect results from a structural “governance void,” characterised by fragmented planning and the absence of collaborative networks between the state-owned airport authority and the regency government. Consequently, the airport operates as a self-contained commercial entity rather than as a regional anchor. Theoretically, this research provides a novel extension to Butler’s (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model by conceptualising a phase of ‘Infrastructure-Induced Stagnation.’ This identifies a developmental stage in which stagnation is precipitated not by traditional market saturation but by structural velocity gaps and ‘enclave’ dynamics created by adjacent megaprojects.

Keywords: Aerotropolis Disconnect, Infrastructure-Induced Stagnation, Governance Void, TALC Model Extension, Coastal Tourism, Yogyakarta International Airport

1. INTRODUCTION

Aerotropolis development is pitched as a way to boost the economy through airport connectivity by turning it into real economic growth for the region (Kasarda, 2008). However, the truth is, those benefits do not just magically materialise, and they are definitely not shared equally across the board. The aerotropolis model, which is centred on making the most of airport-driven commercial and housing development, has

really taken off in the twenty-first century as a way to supercharge national economic growth - especially in the Asia-Pacific region (Banai, 2017; Bejrananda, 2024). The idea is that these massive projects are a key part of driving globalisation and making regions more competitive. The aetropolis projects have been achieved by basically putting in place key pieces like infrastructure, logistics, and significant business investment, and have been a recipe for widespread prosperity (Addie, 2014). However, scratch beneath the surface of all that and you find a more complicated reality. The truth is that vast, top-down projects like this can actually cause a problem, what has been called the 'aerotropolis disconnect', where the fast-rolling out and very expensive airport developments do not really connect to the existing local economy of areas right nearby (Charles et al., 2007; Ferreira & Abreu e Silva, 2021). The disconnect is fundamental because the aerotropolis becomes a gated community for the modern age. At the same time, the local economies around it keep stagnating and being pushed further and further to the edges (Rogerson, 2018). That trickle-down effect everyone was so keen on seems never to materialise in the end. Partly because there are significant differences in the way local economies work, partly because there is a mismatch between the skills on offer and what the new projects really need, and partly because the policies are skewed towards supporting the brand new developments over the existing communities (Appold & Kasarda, 2013; Kasioumi, 2015; Robbins, 2015).

The arrival of Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) in 2019 has changed the southern coast of Yogyakarta. Located in Kulon Progo Regency, YIA is managed by InJourney Airports, the operating company responsible for 37 airports spread across western, central, and eastern Indonesia. YIA was promoted as a new economic driver for the coastal area, meant to boost local development and change land use from the start (Rahajeng et al., 2023; Utami & Sugiyanto, 2025). But if you look at the nearby Congot–Glagah–Trisik Regional Tourism Strategic Area (CGT-RTSA), the promised benefits have not really appeared. Even though it is officially called a “Culinary and Traditional Coastal Tourism Area” under Yogyakarta Special Region Regulation No. 1 of 2019, the region still faces many challenges. The area has not been properly included in the airport’s development plans. It struggles with poor infrastructure and weak connections, which prevent it from attracting visitor spending. As a result, the local tourism economy, which is mostly made up of small, community-based businesses, has to compete with a large, corporate-focused airport development without enough support. Although this is happening in Yogyakarta, it reflects a wider pattern where big transport projects often push local communities aside instead of helping them.

While previous studies have focused on the economic benefits of aerotropolises, few have investigated the mechanisms through which these megaprojects actively induce stagnation in adjacent traditional tourism clusters. This study addresses this gap by conceptualising the 'aerotropolis disconnect' not merely as a lack of synergy, but as a structural byproduct of gateway development. This concept looks at how weak physical connections, uneven infrastructure investment, and uncoordinated governance among stakeholders can limit the expected benefits. By studying the experiences of stakeholders and the real infrastructure of the CGT-RTSA in Kulon Progo, this research aims to create a framework for diversification that brings these elements together. The main goal is to prevent these areas from being left behind and to help coastal tourism not just survive, but grow alongside airport-centered development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Understanding The Dynamics of Destination Development

Several conceptual frameworks help explain the challenges facing coastal tourism in Kulon Progo, especially the need to diversify tourism products. These theories shed light on both the current situation and possible future directions for the region, particularly as the Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) aerotropolis develops. Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model outlines six stages of destination development: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and either decline or rejuvenation. In this study, the TALC model is used to analyse the current situation, not to predict a fixed sequence of stages. The Kulon Progo coast is experiencing slow growth and increased vulnerability, especially when factors like access, wayfinding, and visitor management do not match the area's potential. Using the TALC model helps address the main research question: how the presence of a major infrastructure project might speed up uneven development and cause stagnation from outside pressures, unless governance and infrastructure are improved.

Destination competitiveness is about how well a place can create value and attract tourists (Enright & Newton, 2004). This includes not just main attractions like cultural and natural sites, but also supporting resources, good management, and planning (Crouch & Ritchie, 2011). Kulon Progo has many natural and cultural attractions, but it struggles with poor infrastructure, such as bad roads and limited waste management (Iban et al., 2025; Subarsono et al., 2025). The proposed diversification strategy plans to solve these problems by adding new cultural experiences and improving infrastructure, including transportation, parking, and shuttle services. These steps aim to make Kulon Progo more competitive in the tourism market.

Stakeholder Theory posits that a destination's success depends on managing and balancing the interests of different groups, such as local communities, government agencies, business investors, and tourists (Freeman, 2010; Sautter & Leisen, 1999). Tourism development moves forward through negotiation among stakeholders with different goals, not through a set or simple process. The slow growth in Kulon Progo points to disagreements among key stakeholders or a lack of community involvement. This study uses several local perspectives and historical backgrounds to show this complexity. For diversification strategies to work, all stakeholders need to work together so that new tourism products create economic value, keep cultural authenticity, and protect the environment.

2.2 The Aerotropolis Effect

YIA is more than just building runways. It lays the groundwork for a full aerotropolis, where the airport drives economic activity and shapes land use and jobs (Kasarda & Lindsay, 2011). The aerotropolis includes areas for retail, meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions (MICE), and cargo operations, aiming to become a self-sustaining economic hub. Ideally, this growth starts locally and then spreads to the wider region. In practice, however, the outcomes of such large-scale projects often diverge from initial expectations. While some proponents argue that aerotropolises stimulate economic growth, these developments frequently result in an "enclave effect." In the absence of effective coordination, the aerotropolis may become isolated, retaining visitors and their expenditures within its boundaries and disadvantaging adjacent tourism areas (Kasarda & Appold, 2014; Charles et al., 2007). For instance, at Dube TradePort in South Africa, a limited group of influential stakeholders excluded local communities from

decision-making processes. This exclusion produced an enclave disconnected from the broader region, marginalised local businesses, and exacerbated rather than alleviated inequality (Robbins, 2015; Ferreira & Abreu e Silva, 2021). Some aerotropolises, like Amsterdam Schiphol, show how strong transport links can help spread visitors throughout the region (van Wijk, 2007). But this kind of integration is rare in the Global South. Instead, these projects often create disconnected "non-places" that concentrate wealth but are separated from their social surroundings (Freestone, 2009; Franciscone et al., 2024). While problems with governance and social exclusion are known, research has not fully explained why existing tourism economies are often left out. This paper aims to fill that gap by defining the "aerotropolis disconnect" and suggesting that weak competitiveness, poor governance, and slow infrastructure development together lead to the exclusion of established tourism economies.

2.3 Enclave Tourism and Spatial Mismatch in Gateway Developments

The "aerotropolis disconnect" observed in Yogyakarta exemplifies enclave tourism, where large-scale gateway infrastructure functions as "transit bubbles" (Franciscone et al., 2024). Projects such as Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) establish economic systems prioritising the efficient movement of international capital and travellers, often at the expense of local integration (Listikarini & Harlan, 2024). Martins et al. (2026) examine that the challenges associated with airport-driven development stem not only from coordination issues but also from the substantial capital investment these projects require. The study further contends that although airports can drive regional development, they frequently exacerbate spatial inequality and land-use conflicts, preventing nearby destinations from fully benefiting from airport-driven growth due to insufficient connectivity and governance challenges.

Iban et al. (2025) report that despite the proximity of the coastal areas of Congot, Glagah, and Trisik to YIA, these communities have not experienced significant economic benefits from the airport's development and remain marginalised amid regional transformation. This research underscores the spatial gap between major infrastructure projects and local communities' capacity to participate in or benefit from such growth. While the aerotropolis is designed for rapid, global connectivity, adjacent coastal tourism areas rely on slower, community-based livelihoods. Subarsono et al. (2025) argue that this persistent gap excludes local coastal communities from the airport's value chain, resulting in stagnation.

The structural disconnect identified in Yogyakarta reflects broader trends observed throughout the Asia-Pacific region. For example, the Kertajati Aerocity in West Java demonstrates a similar investment weakness, as limited connectivity and public amenities have hindered its ability to stimulate the local economy (Pandora & Rarasati, 2025). Similarly, research in China utilises Spatial Mismatch Theory to demonstrate that while major transit hubs, such as high-speed rail stations, can transform the economic structure of urban areas, the anticipated benefits for local tourism and communities may not materialise if there is a disconnect between advanced infrastructure and the surrounding area's offerings (Guo et al., 2025). This mismatch often results in economic gains being concentrated within the infrastructure system rather than extending to nearby community-based areas. Taken together, these cases illustrate how enclave tourism and spatial mismatch persist as structural challenges in gateway developments, underscoring the need for more inclusive and integrated planning approaches.

2.4 Identifying The Research Gap

Extensive research exists on both tourism product diversification and aerotropolis development; however, these subjects are seldom examined in conjunction. Most studies on aerotropolises emphasise new master plans and anticipated economic benefits, frequently overlooking impacts on adjacent regions. Conversely, research on tourism diversification typically addresses market saturation or sustainability, often neglecting the transformative effects associated with the construction of major airports. This paper addresses this gap by investigating the constrained options available to established coastal tourism industries that are marginalised by the emergence of a new aerotropolis in a developing country. This study does not advocate diversification as an end in itself. Rather, it proposes a context-specific framework, informed by local stakeholder input, to demonstrate how existing tourism economies can adapt and persist. The research employs a triangulation approach, integrating direct field observations with 13 semi-structured interviews conducted in the Congot–Glagah–Trisik Regional Tourism Strategic Area (CGT-RTSA). This area was selected due to its strategic location, its significance as an emerging tourism destination, and the recent economic impacts of aerotropolis development, making it an exemplary case for analysis. Additionally, the study examines three years of provincial tourism revenue (Pendapatan Asli Daerah/PAD) data to determine whether stakeholder-identified challenges correspond with broader trends in local value capture.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the challenges and opportunities of diversifying tourism in Kulon Progo's coastal area. This approach helped capture local stakeholder views and the region's social and economic dynamics. The research was conducted from May to July 2025 at the CGT-RTSA. This area was chosen because it is close to Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA), making it easier to observe direct impacts, spillover effects, and differences in development between the airport area and the local tourism economy. Other reasons for selecting the CGT-RTSA included its mix of natural and cultural attractions, its growth as a tourism destination, and its similarity to other coastal regions in Indonesia facing development challenges. Its official status as a tourism zone also made it a relevant focus for the study. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews and direct non-participant observation in the CGT-RTSA coastal corridors of Congot, Glagah, and Trisik. Observations examined factors that affect the visitor experience and connectivity, including access roads, signage, vendor layout, cleanliness, and transport between sites. These observations helped confirm and add context to the interview findings. Thirteen key informants were selected through purposive sampling, representing government officials, airport stakeholders, community leaders, tourism operators, micro-businesses, cultural figures, livelihoods, youth leaders, and environmental advocates (Table 1). Informants were selected for their direct involvement in or impact on the local tourism industry, their ability to offer different perspectives, and their work in addressing development challenges. This approach aimed to include a broad range of stakeholders to strengthen the study's validity and depth.

Table 1. Demographic Profile and Selection Rationale of Research Informants

No.	Code	Age	Role / Background	Rationale for Selection (Specific Criteria)
1	GOV-1	54	Local Government Tourism Officer	To provide the official perspective on government plans, tourism policies, and strategic challenges in the region.
2	YIA-1	40	Airport Official (InJourney Airports)	To gain a direct, official perspective on the YIA aerotropolis master plan and community engagement strategies.
3	COM-1	58	Former Village Head	To provide historical context, insights into long-term community dynamics, and an overview of the evolution of local development efforts.
4	POK-1	52	Chairperson, Pokdarwis Glagah Beach (Kelompok Sadar Wisata/Tourism Awareness Group)	To capture the on-the-ground operational perspective from the most established community-managed tourism site.
5	POK-2	38	Secretary, Pokdarwis Congot Beach	To gain insights from a developing tourism area, providing a comparative view on the challenges faced by newer community enterprises.
6	BIZ-1	45	Tourism Business Operator (Glagah)	To represent established private sector interests and the operational challenges faced by businesses in the main tourist area.
7	BIZ-2	33	Food Stall Owner (Glagah)	To provide a micro-business perspective on daily economic realities, customer flow, and visitor spending trends.
8	BIZ-3	37	Homestay Owner	To offer insights into the accommodation sector, which is a critical component of the tourism value chain.
9	BIZ-4	40	Handicraft Entrepreneur	To represent the creative economy and assess the potential for developing unique cultural products.
10	CUL-1	50	Traditional Artist	To provide deep knowledge of local culture, heritage, and intangible artistic assets that could be leveraged for tourism.
11	LIV-1	42	Fisherman	To represent traditional livelihoods and provide a perspective on the coastal environment and sustainability.
12	YTH-1	29	Youth Community Leader	To articulate the perspective of the younger generation regarding future development, innovation, and employment.
13	ENV-1	31	Environmental Activist	To provide a critical perspective on sustainability and the potential environmental impacts of tourism development.

Note: Roles and Affiliations Are Provided to Show Relevance. Anonymity of Informants is Ensured
Source: Researchers (2025)

We continued conducting interviews until we reached thematic saturation, which means no new concepts or themes appeared in the data (Guest et al., 2006). After analysing 13 in-depth interviews, we found consistent themes, indicating that our sample size was sufficient to capture the main aspects of the research problem. This study acknowledges the limitations in sample size regarding high-level institutional perspectives. To address this and ensure rigour, interview data were systematically triangulated with extensive field observations of physical infrastructure (road connectivity, signage, and site conditions) and secondary data. We used the interactive model from Miles et al. (2014) for data analysis, which involves condensing data,

displaying it, and drawing and checking conclusions. After each interview and observation, we used open coding on transcripts and field notes to find first-order themes. We created initial codes by reviewing the data and then refined them through repeated comparison and discussion. Several coders worked together to provide a broad perspective, and we checked for inter-coder reliability to ensure our findings were consistent and credible. We condensed the data to highlight key findings and organised them into tables and matrices to compare responses and spot patterns. We drew preliminary conclusions from these displays and checked them by comparing with informant perspectives, existing data, and the theoretical framework.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents findings from observations and interviews regarding the current conditions and recent potential for tourism product diversification within the CGT-RTSA.

4.1 Regional Context and Development Plans

The Kulon Progo South Coastal Tourism Development (KSPD) zone sits along the Indian Ocean in Glagah village. The area has become more attractive since the Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) opened in 2019. YIA is planned to be the centre of an 83-hectare aerotropolis, with facilities for meetings, conferences, exhibitions, retail, cargo, and a theme park. The latest government spatial plan (RTRW 2023-2043) supports this idea by designating the area as a "Strategic Growth Area" for major industrial and commercial development. Still, there are big challenges. Research shows a clear gap between the airport city masterplan and the actual coastal tourism plan for KSPD. Official documents mention developing the southern coastal area, but the plans are unclear and poorly connected. Most investment goes to the new aerotropolis, which leaves KSPD communities on the sidelines. Interviews with stakeholders back this up, highlighting worries about uneven investment priorities.

This inequality is clear in the area's appearance. The YIA complex has modern infrastructure built to international standards. In contrast, Glagah Beach, less than four kilometres away, has worn-out paving, standing water from poor drainage, and a crowded entrance with informal vendors. There is no modern signage at the airport to guide passengers to the coast. There are also no transport hubs, shuttle services, or information centres to help people get from the airport to the beach. To fix this, a shuttle service could connect the airport to coastal attractions, clear signage could be added at the airport, and local stakeholders could be included in planning to make the planning process more inclusive. The gap between the airport and the coast highlights the main problem: the coast has attractions, but poor connections keep airport visitors away. Local interviews confirm this. Many community members say the airport feels like a spaceship that landed nearby, but is not part of their lives. While they see potential benefits, many worry that the aerotropolis will remain out of reach. Local business owners and leaders are unsure and concerned about being left out as modernisation continues. Table 2 below summarises these views.

Table 2. Data Matrix of Informant Interview Results

No.	Informant	Key Themes	Representative Quote
1	GOV-1	Official plans for integration exist but lack a budget and concrete action. Focus is on aerotropolis core rather than its periphery.	"Officially, the integration of the KSPD with YIA is a priority... However, candidly, the primary focus and budget on the commercial zones of airport city itself. The 'linkage' to the coast is still conceptual".
2	POK-1 and POK-2	Frustration that the high volume of airport passengers is not being channelled to the local tourism area. A need for both physical and promotional "bridges".	"We see thousands of people landing at YIA every day, but only a small fraction of them 'turn left' to visit us". "We hoped the airport would be a blessing, but right now it feels like a very close, yet very far away neighbor".
3	BIZ-3	Lack of positive economic spillover from the airport. Concern that the self-contained aerotropolis will capture all tourist spending.	"Business has not improved. We worry the new hotels in the airport city will take the few guests we might have gotten. We need a reason for people to leave the airport complex and stay here".
4	BIZ-2	Direct observation that airport operations have not increased sales. Fear of being made obsolete by modern facilities within the airport city.	"My sales have not increased... Will tourists even bother coming out here to eat traditional seafood if they can get everything inside the airport city? We feel we are being left behind".
5	COM-1	Concern that development is occurring adjacent to the community rather than with it. Fear that the area's unique cultural and natural identity is being ignored in favour of modern commercialism.	"The development is happening next to us, not with us. The true value of this land is its culture and nature, not just its proximity to a runway. Our fear is that this identity will be lost".

Source: Researchers (2025)

4.2 The Economic Reality: Stagnation in The Shadow of The Aerotropolis

Since Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) began full operations in 2019, the southern coastal area of Kulon Progo has been seen as a main driver of regional economic growth. However, there is a clear gap between the development of the aerotropolis and the local tourism economy. This gap is shown by Kulon Progo's small share of tourism revenue in the Special Region of Yogyakarta and by a three-year review of PAD from tourism. Table 3 shows the difference between Kulon Progo and the other four regencies or cities in the province.

Table 3. Realisation of Regional Original Revenue (PAD) from The Tourism Sector in The Special Region of Yogyakarta (2022–2024)

No.	Regency/City	2022 (IDR)	2023 (IDR)	2024 (IDR)
1	Kulon Progo	6,100,000,000	9,300,000,000	7,370,000,000
2	Bantul	27,100,000,000	26,280,000,000	30,600,000,000
3	Gunung Kidul	18,500,000,000	27,600,000,000	28,100,000,000
4	Sleman ¹	302,921,000,000	373,351,000,000	283,530,000,000 ¹
5	Yogyakarta City ²	211,800,000,000	299,600,000,000	352,000,000,000 ²
	Total	566,421,000,000	736,131,000,000	701,600,000,000

¹Data for Sleman Regency is as of September 2024

²Data for Yogyakarta City is as of September 2024

Source: Processed from BPS and Various Official Government Publications (2025)

Table 3 shows the revenue gap between Kulon Progo and more developed areas like Sleman, as well as differences in growth after major infrastructure projects. Even though Kulon Progo is home to the province's main airport (YIA), its tourism revenue has stayed the same since 2019, while other regencies have started to recover. This suggests the peripheral airport areas mainly serve as a 'transit bubble' for passengers rather than encouraging them to stay longer, so it has not made a big impact on the local economy. Kulon Progo remains the lowest contributor to the province's tourism revenue (PAD) from 2022 to 2024. It is important to note some limitations: Sleman's data only covers up to September 2024, and Yogyakarta City's numbers are targets for 2024. Because of this, the figures should be seen as general trends rather than exact rankings for 2024. Even with these limitations, the data support what stakeholders have observed: the coastal area is mainly a transit bubble, not a place where visitors spend much money. Interviews with key stakeholders support these findings. An airport official (YIA-1) said, "YIA is a double-edged sword - we can have the world come to us at the airport, but the tourist seems to step over our doorstep and head straight to the city or existing attractions. We are not yet realizing significant numbers of visitor traffic." A local tourism business owner (BIZ-1) pointed out that visitor numbers are unpredictable and visits are short, so spending is focused in a few places while many coastal micro-businesses see little benefit. This pattern shows that the coast acts more as a transit area than a main destination. A local youth leader (YTH-1) also noted that the coast is mostly a stopover rather than a primary destination, which shortens visits and limits local business income. Together, these views show that most people see the southern coastal area as a transit zone rather than a tourist destination. Because of this, tourism in the area remains on the economic margins.

4.3 Existing Tourism Assets and Diversification Potential

Recent government plans, such as the Kulon Progo Regency Regional Spatial Plan (2023-2043) and the 2024 tourism roadmap, indicate that officials are now focusing on diversification. The main focus is on the southern coastline, with hopes that mangrove ecotourism and the creative economy will become key drivers for the KSPD. Still, what 'diversification' means can vary a lot depending on who you ask. Policy documents offer a broad vision, but the local community's actual abilities and views often differ. As mentioned earlier, many local business owners and community leaders feel left out and worry that these big plans are moving forward without their real input.

4.3.1 Natural Tourism Products

Seeing the area firsthand makes it clear that nature is both the region's biggest strength and its most delicate resource. The mangrove forest at Congot is beautiful, with simple wooden walkways, yet it still feels incomplete. The boardwalk is only about 150 meters long, and on busy days, up to 250 people visit without any real entry controls. There are no signs to explain the area's story, and no managed entry points to guide visitors. Congot Beach is still a busy fishing spot, but its appeal for tourists is limited by a lack of facilities and a serious waste problem, with over 300 kilograms of trash piling up each week. Trisik Beach is great for bird life, but it lacks basic infrastructure, such as viewing platforms or walking trails, that would make it a good spot for birdwatching. The stakeholders we interviewed were quick to point out the gap between the "eco" label and reality. One environmental activist (ENV-1) didn't mince words. The people we spoke with quickly highlighted the difference between calling something 'eco' and actually

making it environmentally friendly. One environmental activist (ENV-1) was clear about the risks of shallow development: "Our coast is a critical habitat... All development must be 'green' development. Eco-tourism is a great idea, but it must include stringent rules. Building a path and calling it 'eco' does not mean anything if we do not manage the waste and the capacity of visitors." For the local fishing community, protecting access and cleanliness is a matter of livelihood, not just leisure. The takeaway here is that nature-based products can bridge the 'aerotropolis disconnect,' but only if they move beyond branding. Success requires strict governance paired with 'light-touch' infrastructure—signage, trails, and waste systems—that allows visitors to experience the coast without trampling the very resources they came to see.

Table 4. Findings on Natural Tourism Products

No	Existing Assets	Observed Issues / Challenges	Proposed Diversification Strategies (from informants and observation)
1	Pasir Mendit Mangrove Forest	Lack of educational/interpretive signage, unmanaged visitor flow, and potential for ecological damage.	Establish formal mangrove ecotourism trails with educational tours and community-led conservation activities.
2	Congot Beach Estuary and Fishing	Disorganised, lack of visitor amenities, and waste accumulation from fishing activities.	Establish designated fishing and river-exploration zones with appropriate facilities and waste-disposal systems.
3	Trisik Beach (Migratory Birds)	No infrastructure for observation, potential disturbance to wildlife from uncontrolled access.	Build birdwatching platforms and coastal nature trails with interpretive signage about local biodiversity.
4	Coastal Wetlands and Lagoons	Underutilised, risk of pollution from nearby settlements and tourism.	Offer guided, eco-friendly kayaking and canoeing tours in lagoons and estuaries.
5	Turtle Nesting Sites (seasonal)	Lack of formal protection, risk of disturbance.	Develop ethical nighttime turtle-conservation tours in collaboration with conservation groups.
6	Agrarian Landscapes	Not formally integrated into tourism offerings.	Initiate agro-ecotourism in coastal villages (sustainable farming, aquaculture, culinary experiences).

Source: Researchers (2025)

4.3.2 Cultural Tourism Products

The region possesses a substantial reservoir of cultural knowledge, yet these assets remain largely underutilised. For example, the Pesanggrahan Glagah is a heritage site of considerable significance, but in the absence of interpretive storytelling or visitor information, it remains inaccessible to outsiders. Similarly, the annual Hajad Dalem Labuhan ceremony holds deep sacred value, but as a singular annual event, it provides only a limited opportunity for engagement. Most tourists are unable to appreciate its significance unless they visit on the specific day it occurs. A comparable disconnect is evident in local arts and crafts; although there is considerable talent, these products are neither systematically organised nor actively promoted in high-traffic areas such as the beach. From what we have seen, the region has a lot of cultural knowledge, but it is mostly unused. For example, Pesanggrahan Glagah is an important heritage site, but without storytelling or visitor information, visitors do not learn about it. The Hajad Dalem Labuhan ceremony is very special, but since it only happens once a year, most tourists do not get to experience it. The same problem exists with local arts and crafts. There is talent,

but the products are not organised or promoted in busy areas like the beach. A traditional artist (CUL-1) articulated this missed opportunity: "We have stories, we have dances, we have batik. However, the tourists come to the beach and then leave. This Labuhan ceremony is sacred, but we can share an explanation of its meaning. We can hold smaller workshops or performances at any time. We need a stage, a place to show tourists more than the waves and seafood." A handicraft entrepreneur (BIZ-4) shared a similar view, saying the community cannot rely on occasional sales. The entrepreneur suggested holding regular cultural events to show local work, which would help create steady demand and support business growth. Solving the cultural disconnect does not mean creating new traditions. Instead, it means offering clear storytelling and setting up regular workshops and performances, rather than relying on a single annual ceremony.

Table 5. Findings on Cultural Tourism Products

No.	Existing Assets	Observed Issues / Challenges	Proposed Diversification Strategies (from informants and observation)
1	Pesanggrahan Glagah (Heritage)	Without interpretation or storytelling, the building is underutilised as a passive landmark.	Develop heritage village tours centred on the Pesanggrahan, featuring narratives of the Pakualaman era.
2	Hajad Dalem Labuhan Ceremony	A single annual event makes it inaccessible to outsiders and risks over-commercialisation.	Develop a cultural calendar and offer educational programs on the ceremony's philosophy to promote respectful viewing.
3	Local Performing Arts (e.g., jathilan)	Sporadic, not integrated into the regular tourism schedule, and a lack of a dedicated venue.	Host traditional performing arts festivals on the beachfront or at a new cultural plaza.
4	Local Handicrafts and Cuisine	Dispersed, inconsistent quality, not centrally marketed.	Offer handicraft workshops (batik, weaving) and create coastal culinary tours and seafood cooking classes.
5	Fisherfolk Livelihoods	Not accessible to tourists, it is viewed as separate from the tourism economy.	Develop immersive "Day in the Life of a Fisherman" experiences (e.g., boat building, traditional fishing).

4.3.3 Artificial Tourism Products and Infrastructure

Field observations indicate significant deterioration at the Glagah Beach tourist area. Although the lagoon and adjacent agrotourism sites remain relatively pristine, the main beachfront is experiencing severe negative impacts from unmanaged mass tourism. The area is characterised by unpleasant odours, widespread litter, and access roads that have degraded into muddy, impassable conditions. This environmental decline not only diminishes the site's visual appeal but also adversely affects the economic performance of local businesses. A food trader (BIZ-2) described the current challenges: "How can I sell good food when the area smells bad, and the road is muddy? On weekends, it is so crowded and dirty. We need a proper arrangement. A clean, organized place like the new Plaza Kuliner would help us all." This view matches the government's recent plan to build

a "Plaza Souvenir" and "Plaza Kuliner," which are meant to organise vendors and improve the area. The new plazas should give vendors cleaner, better spaces, attract more visitors, and create a more welcoming atmosphere. Visitors will enjoy the improved look and easier access, which should make their experience better. These changes are expected to help vendors increase sales and support ongoing or growing economic activity in the area. Another major problem is the lack of connection between attractions. Right now, each site operates on its own. A homestay owner (BIZ-3) shared frustration about losing business because guests cannot easily get around: "My guests ask what else they can do. I tell them about the mangroves or Trisik, but it is difficult for them to get there. A shuttle would change everything. They could stay here and easily visit three or four places in one day." The main recommendation is to focus on building infrastructure to solve the connectivity problem. Instead of adding more attractions, efforts should go into things like organised vendor areas, shuttle services, parking, and better roads. These steps would help link Congot, Glagah, and Trisik, making it easier for visitors to see all three as part of one trip instead of separate stops.

Table 6. Findings on Artificial Tourism Products and Infrastructure

No	Existing Assets	Observed Issues / Challenges	Proposed Diversification Strategies (from informants & observation)
1	Glagah Beach (Jetty, Stalls)	Severe environmental degradation (odor, litter), poor infrastructure (roads), overcrowding, and negative visitor experience.	Revitalize the area as the "Glagah Culinary Plaza" and a souvenir center, with a focus on hygiene and vendor organisation.
2	Kusumo Wanadri Agrotourism	Operates in isolation, not well-connected to other coastal attractions.	Integrate into a larger tourism circuit via new transportation links.
3	Trisik Beach Potential	Lacks any accommodation or formal facilities.	Develop eco-friendly homestays that support the area's birdwatching and nature tourism potential.
4	(Cross-Cutting Infrastructure)	No connectivity between sites. Visitors are confined to one location. Travel between beaches is difficult and unmanaged.	Establish centralised parking facilities and a tourist shuttle system to serve the entire CGT-RTSA corridor.

The results show a clear problem: YIA's modern, well-planned setting has not led to increased visitor numbers or spending along the coast. This is mainly because key supports, such as clear directions, good transport, and visitor management, are missing. While the airport runs smoothly, the coastal areas still face old infrastructure and organisational problems. Stakeholders highlight this gap, saying the airport is close by but does not help their daily work. Tourism revenue data also shows that Kulon Progo is not capturing much value. Together, these findings support the idea of an 'aerotropolis disconnect,' in which uneven development is driven by weak competitiveness and governance, not by a lack of attractions.

4.4 The Competitiveness Gap: An 'Economic Shadow' Cast by The Aerotropolis

The clearest sign of this disconnect is a strong 'competitiveness gap,' which can be explained using destination competitiveness theory (Crouch & Ritchie, 2011). This theory says success relies on both attractions and support systems, like infrastructure and access. As shown in Tables 2, 4, and 6, Kulon Progo's coast has many attractions, but the support systems are almost entirely lacking. This supports the theory: even with good

attractions, missing support creates a major obstacle. The study clearly shows what Enright & Newton (2004) described: world-class attractions can go unnoticed when serious infrastructure problems arise.

This idea goes further. Kasarda and Lindsay's (2011) aerotropolis model assumes the surrounding area is ready to connect with the new economic center. Supporters believe building an airport boosts the local economy by making it more accessible and connected globally. However, this research offers a different view. In areas already facing development problems, the aerotropolis does not automatically help nearby areas. Instead, it creates an 'economic shadow' that highlights existing weaknesses even more. For example, a confusing road sign that used to be a small problem is now, as one business owner said, "a deterrent for any independent traveler" (BIZ-1), especially compared to the smooth experience at the airport. The lack of public transport is more than just an inconvenience. According to an airport official (YIA-1), YIA has turned from a gateway into a barrier, keeping tourists away from the coast. While the aerotropolis did not create these existing problems, its large scale has made them worse. This challenges the idea that big projects always bring growth to unprepared areas. The stagnation seen in the Congot–Glagah–Trisik Regional Tourism Strategic Area (CGT-RTSA) shows what this study calls 'infrastructure-induced stagnation' within the TALC model. Instead of slowing down because of market saturation, the coastal clusters are facing a serious spatial mismatch. Franciscone et al. (2024) describe YIA as a 'transit bubble.' Our fieldwork shows that the airport's economic activity does not benefit the nearby coastal areas. This supports the findings of Iban et al. (2025) and Subarsono et al. (2025). Even though these villages are close to the aerotropolis, the fast pace of international transit does not fit with the slower, community-based style of local tourism. As a result, local people are left out of the new value chain and remain on the margins.

4.5 The Governance Void: A Failure of Networked Collaboration

The concept of a 'governance void' underscores power imbalances within the Multi-Scalar Governance framework. InJourney Airports' national mandate emphasises airport efficiency, whereas the Kulon Progo Regency Government's local mandate prioritises regional welfare. In the absence of institutional linkages, the airport remains a 'state-space' and fails to integrate with the local 'place-based' economy.

Without collaboration, existing economic and social gaps are likely to continue. Failing to create inclusive systems and partnerships can lead to long-term stagnation and missed chances for sustainable growth. If the infrastructure gap is the symptom, the 'governance void' is the root cause. This is not just about missing paperwork or policies; it shows a deeper failure to build the teamwork needed for sustainable tourism (Banai, 2017). The aerotropolis was built efficiently from the top down, but it ignored the complex communication needed to bring local groups together (Rogerson, 2018; Sautter & Leisen, 1999). The findings show that this government-led approach did not create a mechanism for shared planning, as earlier research suggests is needed for success.

This outcome aligns with the perspective of one community leader, who described it as "a development for us, but without us." Local stakeholders perceive themselves as disenfranchised bystanders of the big development" (COM-1). This feeling is real and stems from a lack of ways to get involved, such as planning meetings or forming joint marketing groups. The coast's potential for eco-tours and cultural heritage trails is still untapped because those who care for these resources have been left out. This study adds to the aerotropolis research by pointing out a key problem: the model focuses on

efficiency but ignores the social and political teamwork needed for success. By overlooking the value of local networks, the project has created a political disconnect.

The 'governance void' is more than a lack of meetings; it signals a deeper issue rooted in the master planning stage. Analysis shows that no integrated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) has the authority to coordinate the airport authority (a state-owned enterprise) and the local regency government, exemplifying friction within multi-scalar governance structures. The development of YIA by InJourney Airports, which manages 37 airports nationwide, prioritises the efficient movement of international capital over regional integration (Listikarini & Harlan, 2024). Consequently, the Kulon Progo Regency Government struggles to bridge the gap between the airport's corporate ecosystem and local livelihoods. This power imbalance reflects the dynamic described by Martins et al. (2026), where large capital requirements and top-down mandates in airport-driven development intensify spatial inequalities. The observed 'disconnect' is thus a structural conflict between national infrastructure objectives and local governance capacities. As a result, there are no binding agreements or shared KPIs to incentivise the airport to direct traffic to local coastal areas, keeping operations separate and ensuring the airport acts as a stand-alone business, disconnected from the regional tourism plan.

4.6 The Stagnation Anomaly: Infrastructure-Induced Disruption of The Tourism Life Cycle

The economic development of the Kulon Progo coast challenges the usual expectations of the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model (Butler, 1980). Normally, TALC sees stagnation as a sign of 'old age' driven by internal factors such as market saturation, declining appeal, or maturity. However, in Kulon Progo, the evidence shows a different story: early stagnation caused entirely by outside factors. The revenue data (Table 3) supports what stakeholders have reported: even with a major new gateway nearby, coastal visits and spending have not increased. We describe this as 'infrastructure-induced stagnation.' The destination has not lost its appeal; instead, poor access, unclear directions, and a lack of organised transport are limiting the economic benefits to the surrounding area.

What sets this situation apart is how it happened. The YIA project did more than change policies; it shifted the region's focus and resources toward the center. This shift is similar to the core-periphery concept in regional economics, in which a central hub draws resources away from nearby areas. The core-periphery model explains how economic disparities emerge and persist across regions, with the 'core' a dominant area that attracts investment, talent, and economic activity, often at the expense of the 'periphery,' which is left underdeveloped and resource-deprived. This structural change works in two main ways. First, it causes a shift in capital and policy. The megaproject attracts government attention and investment to the main area, which takes resources away from nearby tourism spots and leaves them without the support they need to recover. Findings from Yogyakarta show that the aerotropolis disconnect is not just a planning mistake, but a result of enclave-style gateway development. YIA's failure to boost the CGT-RTSA economy is similar to the investment and connectivity problems seen at Kertajati Aerocity in West Java (Pandora & Rarasati, 2025). In both cases, simply being close to a megaproject has not led to local wealth. Without clear institutional steps to encourage integration, major transit hubs will keep most economic benefits inside, while nearby destinations remain underdeveloped.

Second, it causes what a government planner (GOV-1) called a 'leapfrogging effect.' The size of the airport makes existing small-scale development plans outdated overnight, leading to 'speculative paralysis' as local landowners wait for big investors who may never come. Unlike a natural disaster, which eventually ends, this is a lasting structural change. It acts as a harsh form of 'creative destruction,' with immediate negative effects but positive outcomes out of reach for local people. This situation suggests an important update to the TALC model: with large state-led projects, the main risk for a destination may not be market decline, but the disruptive impact of a nearby, disconnected project. To address this, the government could introduce zoning incentives. By establishing special development zones with tax breaks or lower land costs, local investment can be encouraged without relying on large investors, helping overcome stagnation and support more balanced, sustainable growth.

5. CONCLUSION

This study identifies a major development gap in southern Kulon Progo, called the 'aerotropolis disconnect.' While Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) was expected to boost economic growth, tourism development has stalled. Coastal destinations now face uncertainty and risk of being left behind. Interviews and case studies show that poor infrastructure, unclear planning, and ongoing stakeholder conflicts are to blame. To tackle these issues, the study proposes a strategic framework that promotes tourism diversification across nature, culture, and special-interest areas, offering a clear path to revitalisation.

First, this research offers a testable critique of the standard aerotropolis model (Kasarda & Lindsay, 2011). While the theory suggests that airports naturally drive growth and connectivity, our hypothesis—'Peripheral exclusion predicts economic shadow effects'—argues that, without careful planning and the inclusion of outlying areas, large projects can cause problems rather than create economic benefits. Peripheral exclusion means neglecting the areas intended to benefit, limiting their involvement and access to resources. Economic shadow effects are the negative impacts these areas face, such as less investment and fewer opportunities. This hypothesis invites further studies of other airport megaprojects to see if they also overlook the communities they aim to help.

Second, this study provides a new perspective on Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC). Stagnation in Kulon Progo is not a result of market decline or maturity but rather a disruption caused by a major external infrastructure project. This demonstrates that developing destinations remain vulnerable when large-scale projects alter accessibility and investment patterns. To clarify the distinction between TALC stagnation driven by traditional factors such as market saturation and our identified 'external-shock' mechanism, a brief comparison table can be introduced. This table will highlight how infrastructure-triggered stagnation can warrant its own sub-category. Furthermore, by connecting these findings to destination competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 2011) and stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984), the analysis highlights that core resources, such as beaches, are insufficient if effective human collaboration is lacking. The disconnect arises when stakeholder engagement fails, thereby undermining the supporting factors necessary for destination competitiveness. By extending the TALC model, this study challenges existing theories by introducing the concept of external infrastructure shocks as pivotal disruptors. This extension suggests that regions experiencing such shocks may follow trajectories outside of traditional TALC patterns,

thereby requiring unique adaptive strategies in stakeholder management and resource allocation.

This research adds to the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) discussion by introducing a new phase called 'Infrastructure-Induced Stagnation.' Unlike 'enclave tourism,' which keeps tourists inside resorts on purpose, the aerotropolis disconnect creates an unplanned 'transit bubble' because of differences in speed and connectivity. In developing regions, this can cause 'premature stagnation,' where transport infrastructure grows faster than the local area's social and economic development, skipping the 'Development' stage in Butler's model.

To address the 'aerotropolis disconnect,' this study moves beyond general calls for collaboration and proposes two specific institutional interventions. First, establishing a Joint Management Body (JMB) is essential. This entity should hold a formal mandate to synchronise InJourney Airports' strategic planning with the spatial planning of the Kulon Progo Regency. Second, the provincial government should implement a Local Content and Linkage Requirement. This policy would mandate that airport-based retail and transit services (such as those within the YIA terminal) maintain a minimum threshold of integration with local coastal tourism products and operators, ensuring that the airport functions as a 'pump' for the local economy rather than a closed circuit.

While this study presents a detailed qualitative analysis of the 'aerotropolis disconnect,' it has certain constraints. The research examines the first five years of YIA's operation (2019–2024); thus, the long-term development of the TALC model in this region remains unknown. Although the qualitative approach reveals the intricacies of power relations, it does not quantify the precise 'leakage' of potential revenue. Future studies should use longitudinal quantitative modelling to assess the impact of the proposed Joint Management Body on Local Revenue (PAD) growth. Comparative analyses with other Asian aerotropolises could further clarify the theory of Infrastructure-Induced Stagnation developed here.

For local stakeholders, these findings offer a practical guide. For Kulon Progo Regency, the study provides a clear, evidence-based plan to focus investment on key areas such as infrastructure, marketing, and building community skills. The main advice is to break down barriers between groups and use a collaborative approach that includes local communities in decisions. This could mean creating a regional tourism council comprising government officials, community leaders, and business representatives to ensure everyone is involved. Holding regular workshops and focus groups will help gather feedback and shape development plans. By working together, the government can use resources more efficiently and support regional growth. For the community, this approach means more economic opportunities and a better quality of life. For investors, a united strategy creates a more stable and predictable environment, which can lead to higher returns. For local operators, the suggested diversification framework encourages moving beyond the usual 'sand and sea' tourism to find new sources of income. The study also warns other regions planning similar projects to have a clear integration plan from the start. While this research gives a detailed look at Kulon Progo, future studies should use quantitative methods to measure effects on revenue and jobs, and track how the airport and coastal areas interact over the next three to five years.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 153-162

HOUSEKEEPING STAFF WORK STRATEGIES IN MAINTAINING CLEANLINESS AND COMFORT IN 3-STAR HOTELS IN BALI

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Received: 02/03/2026

Revised: 27/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

The hotel industry in Bali faces relatively high occupancy rates, requiring continuous operational readiness, particularly in the housekeeping department, which plays a direct role in maintaining cleanliness and guest comfort. Increasing workloads and tight operational schedules demand adaptive work strategies to sustain service quality. This study aims to analyze the work strategies of housekeeping staff in maintaining hotel cleanliness and comfort in Bali. This study employed a qualitative approach through field observations, in-depth interviews with housekeeping staff and supervisors, and analysis of hotel operational documents. Data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, combined with a SWOT analysis. The findings indicate that housekeeping strategies include work rhythm management, flexible task allocation, team coordination, and the use of work experience in handling operational pressures. In practice, staff prioritize room cleaning based on occupancy urgency and apply cross-task assistance to ensure timely room readiness during peak periods. These strategies help maintain consistent cleanliness standards in both guest rooms and public areas. The study implies the need to strengthen housekeeping work systems and internal controls to sustain service quality amid dynamic operational conditions.

Keywords: Housekeeping, Work Strategy, Hotel Cleanliness, Guest Comfort, Bali

1. INTRODUCTION

Hospitality is a major sector in Bali's tourism industry, supporting the movement of domestic and international tourists throughout the year (Mas & Pratiwi, 2024). Data from the Bali Province Central Statistics Agency shows that the average occupancy rate for star-rated hotels in 2023 was in the range of 60–65 percent, with peak occupancy reaching over 70 percent during the mid-year and year-end holiday seasons. This figure reflects the high intensity of use of hotel facilities, particularly guest rooms, as the primary space for tourist activities. This high occupancy rate requires consistent hotel operational readiness to maintain service quality under various visiting conditions (Putra et al., 2021). Cleanliness and comfort of hotel rooms are dominant factors that influence guests' stay experience (Belinda & Rahardjo, 2024). Various hotel industry surveys show that the most common guest complaints relate to room cleanliness, linen condition, room odor, and the

tidiness of supporting facilities. Any shortcomings in these areas have the potential to impact guests' perceptions of the hotel's overall quality (Cahyani et al., 2024). Data from online review platforms such as TripAdvisor and Booking.com also indicate that cleanliness consistently appears as one of the most frequently mentioned issues in negative guest reviews of hotels in Bali, particularly during peak occupancy periods. In Bali's competitive hospitality industry, hotels that fail to maintain cleanliness standards risk receiving negative reviews that could impact future bookings (Soeswoyo & Rahardjo, 2024).

The housekeeping department plays a strategic role in maintaining hotel room cleanliness and comfort standards. Housekeeping staff duties include cleaning guest rooms, maintaining public areas, managing linens, and arranging room facilities according to hotel operational standards (Maharani et al., 2021). Each attendant is generally responsible for 10–16 rooms per shift, depending on the hotel class and occupancy rate (Noviastuti & Jati, 2023). This workload requires effective time management, task allocation, and coordination to ensure each room is prepared to standard before being reused by guests. The challenges of housekeeping staff increase with fluctuations in hotel occupancy levels. During peak periods, limited cleaning time and the pressure of check-in and check-out schedules become major obstacles (Latif & Permana, 2023). This condition has the potential to give rise to non-conformity to standards if the work strategy is not designed systematically (Parhusip et al., 2023). Hotels need to manage the housekeeping work rhythm so that the quality of cleanliness and room comfort remains consistent even though the volume of work increases significantly (Swandewi & Sinaga, 2023). The competitive hospitality industry in Bali is pushing hotels to continuously improve the quality of their internal services. Housekeeping is a key indicator of hotel quality, both through satisfaction surveys and online reviews (Pramudia & Semara, 2023). These assessments often focus on details such as room cleanliness, neatness of room layout, and the comfort of the facilities used. (Setiawan et al., 2021) This situation demonstrates that housekeeping strategies play a direct role in maintaining a hotel's reputation and competitiveness in the Balinese tourism market.

Both studies provide an empirical overview of the role of housekeeping and room cleanliness quality; however, they primarily focus on service outcomes and guest perceptions. The study by Primantara et al. (2025) emphasizes the level of room cleanliness achievement, while Suria & Febianti (2023) focus on guest satisfaction and service evaluation. Neither study explores in depth how housekeeping staff organize their work processes, manage time constraints, or develop adaptive strategies in response to operational pressures. This study differs by focusing on the internal perspective of housekeeping staff, particularly on the practical strategies they employ, such as work rhythm management, task prioritization, and team-based coordination in real-time operational contexts. This perspective is crucial, as the sustainability of hotel service quality is shaped not only by service outcomes but also by the effectiveness of daily work processes behind the scenes. This study aims to examine the work strategies of housekeeping staff in maintaining hotel cleanliness and guest comfort in Bali using a qualitative approach. The focus includes daily work patterns, task allocation, operational challenges, and adaptive solutions implemented in practice. By adopting a process-oriented perspective, this study complements existing outcome-based research and provides practical insights for strengthening housekeeping systems and maintaining consistent service quality.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach through field research. This approach was used to comprehensively explore the work strategies of housekeeping staff in maintaining hotel cleanliness and comfort. The research focused on work activities, task distribution patterns, and how housekeeping staff responded to operational challenges that arose in their daily routines.

2.2 Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted in 3-star hotels in Bali. The location was selected based on the high tourist traffic and the relatively heavy daily housekeeping operations typically found in mid-scale hotel categories. Three-star hotels were chosen as they represent a segment with high occupancy rates and operational demands, while still operating with relatively limited human resources compared to higher-class hotels. The research was conducted from October to December 2025.

2.3 Data Source

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the field through observations of housekeeping work activities and in-depth interviews with informants. The research informants included the head of housekeeping, two supervisors, and six active housekeeping staff working in 3-star hotels in Bali. Secondary data were obtained from internal hotel documents, housekeeping operational reports, and supporting literature in the form of scientific journals and hotel-related publications.

2.4 Method of Collecting Data

Data collection was carried out using several techniques as follows.

- a. Observation, carried out by directly observing the work activities of housekeeping staff, including the room cleaning process, linen management, and work coordination between staff.
- b. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with informants to obtain information regarding work strategies, division of tasks, operational constraints, and how to maintain the cleanliness and comfort of hotel rooms.
- c. Documentation is carried out by collecting data in the form of work schedules, standard operating procedures for housekeeping, and internal records relevant to operational activities.
- d. Literature studies were conducted to strengthen the analysis through previous research results and scientific references related to housekeeping and hotel management.

2.5 Data Processing and Analysis Techniques

Data processing and analysis is carried out in several stages, namely:

- a. Data collection, all data from observations, interviews and documentation are collected systematically.
- b. Data reduction, data is selected and arranged to suit the research focus related to housekeeping work strategies.
- c. Data presentation, the data that has been compiled is presented in the form of a structured narrative to make it easier to extract meaning.

- d. Drawing conclusions is done through analysis of the work strategy patterns of housekeeping officers based on field findings.

Furthermore, this research analysis used a SWOT Matrix to map the work strategies of housekeeping staff in maintaining the cleanliness and comfort of hotels in Bali. This analysis was used to identify internal and external conditions that influence housekeeping performance and then formulate alternative work strategies that can be implemented operationally. The results of the SWOT analysis led to the formulation of four types of strategies as follows.

- a. SO Strategy (Strength – Opportunity): this strategy is aimed at leveraging the internal strengths of housekeeping staff, such as work skills, field experience, and mastery of hotel operational standards, to respond to external opportunities. These opportunities include the high number of tourist visits to Bali and increasing guest demands for room cleanliness and comfort. This strategy focuses on strengthening housekeeping performance to maintain service quality during periods of high occupancy.
- b. WO Strategy (Weakness – Opportunity): this strategy focuses on mitigating internal weaknesses in housekeeping staff, such as staffing constraints, time pressures for cleaning rooms, and unequal distribution of duties. External opportunities, such as increased hotel occupancy, are being leveraged to encourage work system improvements, rescheduling of tasks, and optimization of inter-staff coordination to maintain room cleanliness and comfort.
- c. ST Strategy (Strength – Threat): this strategy focuses on leveraging internal housekeeping strengths to address external threats. These include competition between hotels in Bali's tourist areas and increasing guest expectations for cleanliness standards. The housekeeping staff's extensive work experience and consistent implementation of work procedures are used to maintain service quality despite the competitive pressures of the hotel industry.
- d. WT Strategy (Weakness – Threat): this strategy focuses on maintaining the quality of housekeeping work by reducing internal weaknesses and avoiding external threats. Limited human resources and competitive pressures require adjustments to work strategies to maintain hotel cleanliness and comfort. This strategy focuses on reorganizing workloads, improving team coordination, and continuously monitoring work quality.

To ensure data validity and trustworthiness, this study applied triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different informants, including the head of housekeeping, supervisors, and housekeeping staff. Method triangulation was applied by cross-checking data from observations, interviews, and documentation. In addition, data consistency was verified through repeated data review and comparison between field findings and relevant documents. This process was carried out to ensure the credibility and reliability of the research results.

3. RESULTS

Based on the identification of the internal operational environment of the hotel housekeeping department in Bali and the results of interviews with key informants directly involved in the implementation of housekeeping work, a number of internal factors were obtained that influence the work strategies of housekeeping officers in maintaining the cleanliness and comfort of the hotel. These internal factors are related to the officers' work skills, division of tasks, work time management, field experience, and the implementation of standard operating procedures for housekeeping. The internal

factors that influence the work strategies of housekeeping officers in Bali are further presented in Table 1. The table shows several internal factors that have a direct impact on the effectiveness of housekeeping work in maintaining the quality of cleanliness and comfort of rooms and public areas of the hotel.

Table 1. Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis

External Factors	Opportunity	Threat
	High number of domestic and foreign tourist visits to Bali throughout the year. (O1)	Competition between hotels in maintaining room cleanliness and comfort standards. (T1)
Internal Factors	Increasing guest expectations regarding hotel cleanliness and service quality. (O2)	Work time pressure during high hotel occupancy rates. (T2)
	The development of online booking platforms and digital reviews as a means of hotel promotion. (O3)	Limited number of housekeeping staff compared to workload. (T3)
Strength	SO Strategy	ST Strategy
Housekeeping officers have adequate skills and work experience. (S1)	Optimizing staff skills to maintain room cleanliness quality during high occupancy periods. (S1, O1)	Improving the consistency of cleanliness quality to face competition between hotels. (S1, T1)
Implementation of clear housekeeping standard operating procedures. (SOP) (S2)	Adapting SOPs to increasing demands for cleanliness and guest comfort. (S2, O2)	Tightening supervision of SOP implementation amidst limited working time. (S2, T2)
Teamwork and coordination between housekeeping staff is running well. (S3)	Utilize team coordination to maintain optimal cleanliness of rooms and public areas. (S3, O1)	Optimizing teamwork to overcome workforce limitations. (S3, T3)
Experience dealing with fluctuating hotel occupancy rates. (S4)	Using work experience as a basis for adjusting work strategies during peak seasons. (S4, O1)	Maintaining stability of work quality even under operational pressure. (S4, T2)
Weakness	WO Strategy	WT Strategy
The workload of housekeeping staff is relatively high in certain periods. (W1)	Adjustment of task distribution to maintain cleanliness quality. (W1, O1)	Workload reconfiguration to avoid service quality degradation. (W1, T2)
Limited number of housekeeping staff. (W2)	Optimization of work schedules and utilization of teamwork. (W2, O1)	Work quality control through supervisor supervision. (W2, T3)
Room cleaning time is limited due to check-in and check-out schedules. (W3)	Prioritizing room cleaning based on guest need level. (W3, O2)	Adjusting work strategies so that time constraints do not reduce cleanliness standards. (W3, T2)
Work pressure has the potential to reduce officer accuracy. (W4)	Improving work motivation through performance evaluation and appreciation. (W4, O3)	Strengthening quality control to minimize work errors. (W4, T1, T3)

Source: Researchers (2026)

- a. Strength – Opportunities (SO) Strategy: focuses on leveraging the internal capacity of housekeeping staff to respond to the dynamic operations of hotels in Bali, characterized by relatively high occupancy rates and diverse guest characteristics. This strategy prioritizes room cleanliness and comfort, maintained through structured work management. Internal strengths, such as work experience, procedural mastery, and team coordination, are geared toward supporting the stability of housekeeping operations, ensuring room readiness is maintained according to the hotel's service schedule. The alternative SO strategy leverages housekeeping staff's work experience

as the basis for operational decisions in the field. This experience plays a role in prioritizing room cleaning, anticipating work surges, and adjusting daily work patterns to occupancy conditions. Experience-based work management helps staff determine more efficient work steps without compromising the thoroughness of room and public area cleaning. This work pattern supports smooth hotel operations during periods of high activity. The next SO strategy emphasizes the use of standard operating procedures (SOPs) as a tool for controlling the quality of housekeeping work. SOPs serve as technical guidelines that guide staff in carrying out each stage of cleaning rooms and public areas. Consistent implementation of SOPs helps maintain uniform work results despite changing occupancy levels and service demands. SOPs also assist both new and existing staff in maintaining work quality according to hotel standards. Another SO strategy is aimed at strengthening work coordination among housekeeping staff. Effective coordination supports a more structured division of tasks and reduces workload disparities among staff. Team-based work arrangements help expedite the room preparation process and maintain overall cleanliness. Good coordination patterns also support smooth internal communication in the face of busy operational conditions.

- b. Strength – Threats (ST) Strategy: focuses on leveraging internal housekeeping strengths to address external pressures stemming from inter-hotel competition and limited operational hours. This strategy aims to maintain stable room cleanliness standards despite intense competition in the hotel industry. Room cleanliness plays a role in shaping guest perceptions of the overall quality of hotel service. The ST strategy alternative leverages housekeeping staff skills and clear procedures to control room cleanliness. Consistent implementation of work procedures helps maintain cleanliness standards despite increased operational pressures. Staff discipline plays a role in ensuring that each cleaning stage is carried out thoroughly and in accordance with hotel regulations. This work pattern supports stable service quality amidst competition between hotels. The next ST strategy is directed at strengthening the work oversight function of housekeeping supervisors. Internal supervision serves to monitor staff work implementation and ensure compliance with hotel standards. This work control helps maintain staff accuracy despite limited working hours. Structured supervision supports consistent quality of room and public area cleanliness.
- c. Weakness – Opportunities (WO) Strategy: was developed to address internal housekeeping limitations by exploiting opportunities within the hotel's operational environment. This strategy focuses on improving work systems to minimize weaknesses such as limited staff and working hours. The primary focus is on structuring the work system to maintain room cleanliness. The alternative WO strategy emphasizes restructuring the division of housekeeping duties. A more structured division of duties helps align the workload with hotel occupancy conditions. This work arrangement supports an even distribution of workload among staff, ensuring consistent room cleaning quality. Good work organization also helps improve the smoothness of housekeeping operations. The next WO strategy focuses on more planned room cleaning time management. Work priorities are aligned with guest check-in and check-out schedules. A more systematic work schedule helps maintain room readiness without compromising cleanliness standards. This work pattern supports the effectiveness of housekeeping operations in the face of schedule pressures. Another WO strategy utilizes work evaluations as a means of improving service quality. Work evaluations are used to assess room and public area cleaning

results and serve as a basis for improving housekeeping staff work patterns. Regular evaluations help maintain consistent hotel cleanliness and comfort.

- d. Weakness – Threats (WT) Strategy: aims to control the risk of declining hotel cleanliness and comfort due to internal constraints and external pressures. This strategy focuses on adjusting internal work systems to maintain service quality. The alternative WT strategy prioritizes workload restructuring as a primary control measure. Adjusting the workload helps maintain stable room cleaning quality under busy operating conditions. A more balanced workload management supports staff's thoroughness in carrying out room and public area cleaning duties. The next WT strategy is directed at strengthening work quality control by housekeeping supervisors. Quality control is carried out through regular monitoring of staff performance. This step maintains consistent hotel cleanliness standards amidst limited resources and operational pressures. Structured work controls support the ongoing quality of housekeeping services.

The work of housekeeping staff in Balinese hotels demonstrates complex and ongoing operational dynamics. Housekeeping activities extend beyond room cleaning to managing room comfort, facility readiness, and adapting work to changing guest schedules. High hotel occupancy rates in Bali create work pressures that require housekeeping staff to work in a structured and responsive manner to maintain hotel cleanliness and comfort standards. This situation places housekeeping as a work unit that plays a direct role in maintaining the overall quality of hotel service.

The adaptability of housekeeping staff is evident in how they organize their daily work rhythm. This work rhythm is managed by determining the order in which rooms are cleaned, adjusting work hours, and allocating resources according to operational needs. On days with busy check-out schedules, staff tend to focus on preparing rooms for immediate occupancy. This adaptive pattern helps reduce potential delays in room preparation while maintaining cleaning quality at the hotel's standards. A planned work rhythm also helps staff manage fatigue, ensuring consistent cleaning results.

Coordination between housekeeping staff is an integral part of the operational adaptation process. Teamwork serves as an internal mechanism to maintain smooth workflow when sudden schedule changes occur. Tasks are distributed flexibly based on field conditions, such as the number of rooms to be prepared and workforce availability. Effective coordination helps maintain an even workload among staff and supports efficient completion of tasks. This practice demonstrates that the quality of hotel cleanliness is determined by both individual abilities and the effectiveness of the collective work within the housekeeping team.

Housekeeping staff's work experience also influences their ability to adapt to operational pressures. Staff with extensive experience have a practical understanding of hotel occupancy patterns, guest characteristics, and critical points requiring increased attention during the cleaning process. This experience helps staff make quick and accurate decisions in the field. This experience-based work practice supports the stability of room and public area cleanliness despite increased workloads. Thus, work experience serves as operational capital in maintaining the quality of housekeeping services.

Interviews with informants provide a concrete picture of work adaptation practices in the field. A housekeeping officer stated that:

"If a guest's schedule is tight, we coordinate immediately. Usually, we work on the room that's moved out first to avoid disrupting the next guest's schedule".

Meanwhile, a housekeeping supervisor explained that:

"At the beginning of each shift, we always check the condition of the rooms and the schedule. If there are any sudden changes, the assignments are immediately rearranged to ensure all rooms are ready and cleanliness standards are maintained".

In addition, informal work practices were also identified as part of operational adaptation. One staff member stated:

"When it's very busy, we sometimes help finish other staff's rooms so everything can be ready faster, even if it's outside our assigned area".

Another informant added:

"We usually prioritize rooms for guests who arrive earlier, so the front office can still check them in on time".

These findings indicate that work adaptation is carried out not only through formal procedures but also through practical and experience-based strategies that are not explicitly stated in standard operating procedures.

4. DISCUSSION

Based on field findings, the adaptive workflow of housekeeping staff during high occupancy periods can be described as a structured yet flexible sequence: (1) identification of priority rooms based on check-in schedules, (2) redistribution of tasks according to staff availability, (3) implementation of cross-task assistance among staff, and (4) final inspection to ensure room readiness within limited time constraints. This workflow illustrates how housekeeping staff adjust their work rhythm dynamically in response to operational pressures.

The informant's statement indicates that work adaptation is carried out through active communication and direct adjustments to task distribution in the field. The findings of this study partially support the results of Lourdes & Hadi (2025) who emphasize the importance of maintaining service quality through standardized housekeeping procedures. However, this study reveals that beyond formal procedures, housekeeping staff rely heavily on informal and adaptive strategies, particularly during peak occupancy periods, which were not explicitly addressed in the previous study.

Similarly, Purnomo & Rahayu (2025) highlight the role of supervision in maintaining service standards. In contrast, this study indicates that operational efficiency is more strongly influenced by horizontal coordination mechanisms, such as peer collaboration and spontaneous task-sharing, rather than relying solely on supervisory control. This suggests that effective housekeeping performance is shaped not only by hierarchical structures but also by collective work dynamics among staff.

Furthermore, the SWOT findings can be interpreted within the framework of human resource management and operational management theories. The SO and ST strategies reflect the ability of housekeeping staff to utilize their skills, experience, and procedural knowledge as strategic resources in responding to high occupancy and competitive pressures. This aligns with the concept of operational flexibility, where employees adjust their work patterns to meet fluctuating service demands.

On the other hand, the WO and WT strategies highlight challenges related to workload imbalance, limited staffing, and time constraints. These conditions are closely associated with workload management theory, which emphasizes the importance of effective task distribution, coordination, and time efficiency in maintaining service

quality. Therefore, strengthening housekeeping performance requires not only adherence to procedures but also adaptive workforce management and flexible coordination systems.

Overall, the research results indicate that operational adaptation by housekeeping staff is an ongoing and dynamic process in maintaining hotel cleanliness and comfort. Managing work rhythms, coordinating teams, utilizing experiential knowledge, and applying informal adaptive strategies create a resilient work system that supports stable hotel service quality. This adaptation enables the housekeeping department to respond effectively to operational pressures and evolving guest demands, thereby sustaining service quality in the long term.

5. CONCLUSION

Practices in maintaining the cleanliness and comfort of hotel rooms and public areas indicate that operational pressures arising from high occupancy rates and limited working hours are addressed through adjustments in task allocation and work priority management. These findings show that consistent housekeeping service quality is achieved through a structured internal work system and disciplined task execution, thus contributing directly to the stability of hotel service quality in Bali. Based on these conclusions, it is recommended that hotel management strengthen the housekeeping work system through more balanced workload distribution and structured supervision. The use of real-time room status tracking systems is also recommended to support more efficient coordination between housekeeping and front office staff, particularly during peak occupancy periods. In addition, providing performance-based incentives or additional compensation for housekeeping staff during periods of excessive workload can help maintain motivation and work quality. Strengthening coordination between staff and supervisors remains essential to ensure effective work adaptation to changing operational conditions. Furthermore, regular work evaluations can serve as a basis for improving housekeeping work patterns and maintaining consistent service standards. Future research could examine aspects of job training, digital support systems, and housekeeping supervision models more comprehensively to enrich the study of hotel service quality management.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 163-170

TOURISM VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT IN SERDANG WETAN, TANGERANG: AN EVALUATION OF POTENTIALS AND CHALLENGES

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

Tourism villages constitute a form of community-based tourism development that contributes to improving local livelihoods while preserving cultural and environmental resources. Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, located in Tangerang Regency, is an emerging destination with distinctive natural and cultural potentials. Nevertheless, its development process faces several challenges, such as legal constraints of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) and shifting the community's consumptive mindset which may affect long-term sustainability. This study aims to evaluate the development of Serdang Wetan Tourism Village by identifying its key potentials and the challenges encountered in its management and development. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, utilizing data collected through field observations, in-depth interviews with Village Head, BUMDes Management Team, and Local community leaders as well as document analysis. The results reveal that strengthening the legal status and institutional governance of the Village-Owned Enterprise is a critical prerequisite for tourism village development. In addition, improving human resource capacity and supporting infrastructure is essential to ensure the sustainability of Serdang Wetan Tourism Village.

Keywords: Tourism Village Development, Serdang Wetan, Tourism Potential, Development Challenges, Community-Based Tourism

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a strategic sector in national economic development. In Indonesia, its development has expanded into rural areas through tourism villages that emphasize community empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability. This approach aligns with the growing demand for authentic and culturally immersive tourism experiences. Empirical evidence indicates that well-managed tourism villages contribute to local economic growth and improve community income and welfare (Ardiansyah et al., 2023).

Moreover, tourism villages are increasingly recognized as an alternative form of non-agricultural activity to support rural economic diversification. Given their distinct characteristics compared to urban tourism, their development should consider local

potentials, available attractions, and supporting infrastructure (Djunaid et al., 2022). Community-based and sustainable tourism development must also be aligned with local environmental, social, and cultural contexts. In this regard, preserving these elements while strengthening community empowerment is essential to enhance welfare and overall quality of life (Dewantara et al., 2023).

Research on tourism villages in Indonesia has predominantly focused on rural areas with community-based and sustainable management, such as the tourism villages of Nglanggeran and Pentingsari (Budiatiningsih & Putri, 2025). Meanwhile, Penglipuran Village emphasizes spatial patterns, uniqueness, environmental preservation, and local economic development (Dewi & Meitriana, 2024).

In contrast, research on tourism villages located in urban and industrial fringe areas remains limited, despite the fact that such regions face distinct challenges, including urbanization pressures, spatial constraints, social transformation, and more complex governance structures in tourism development.

Within this context, Serdang Wetan Village presents a relevant case study due to its location in the Greater Jakarta metropolitan buffer zone, an area strongly influenced by urban and industrial activities. Despite these conditions, the village maintains community-based tourism potential through fishing tourism and MSME initiatives managed by BUMDes Serdang Tirta Kencana. Nevertheless, its development is still constrained by several issues, including suboptimal tourism governance, limited institutional capacity of the BUMDes, infrastructure deficiencies, and concerns regarding the sustainability of the local economy.

Accordingly, this study aims to address the existing research gap in evaluating tourism village development within suburban and industrial contexts, which remains underexplored in the academic literature. It not only examines the tourism potential of Serdang Wetan Village but also investigates governance challenges, the role of BUMDes, MSME development, and sustainability dimensions in tourism village development in urban–industrial fringe areas. Ultimately, this research is expected to contribute to a more context-sensitive understanding of tourism village development in line with the dynamics of urban and industrial regions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Tourism Villages

Tourism villages are an alternative tourism model that prioritizes active community involvement in destination planning, development, and management. This model aims to deliver sustainable benefits, including economic growth, cultural preservation, and environmental protection (Reza & Murdana, 2023). Often framed as Community-Based Tourism (CBT), it emphasizes participatory governance, equitable distribution of benefits, and the empowerment of local communities, while upholding cultural and environmental sustainability (Kusumanigrum & Digdowiseiso, 2023).

2.2 Benefits of Tourism Villages for Local Communities

Community groups, such as tourism awareness groups (Pokdarwis), represent a crucial human resource for tourism villages and serve as strategic assets for sustainable development. The activities and creativity of local residents and Pokdarwis members are key factors in transforming local potentials into valuable tourist attractions. Active involvement of the local community is a determining factor for the success of tourism village development, as empowerment not only enhances economic welfare but also

strengthens local cultural identity. Participation throughout all development stages, from planning to implementation, fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the sustainability of the tourism destination (Ritonga & Halim, 2025).

2.3 Sustainable Tourism Development

The concept of sustainable tourism is grounded in the principles of sustainable development, emphasizing the fulfillment of present needs without compromising the rights of future generations. According to Rahmat (2021), sustainable development in tourism encompasses three interrelated components:

- a. Ecological Sustainability: tourism development should not cause permanent ecological changes but instead respond to the awareness of protecting natural resources from negative impacts of tourism activities.
- b. Social Adaptability: tourism must align with the community's capacity to accommodate visitors without disrupting social harmony, both between residents and tourists and among community members themselves.
- c. Cultural Sustainability: tourism should preserve local cultural practices, ensuring that the presence of visitors does not negatively affect cultural development and is maintained for future generations.

2.4 Related Studies

Previous studies have examined several successful tourism villages in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, including Nglanggeran Village in Gunung Kidul, Pentingsari Village in Sleman, and Tinalah Village in Kulon Progo. These villages have achieved notable recognition: Nglanggeran was named the World's Best Tourism Village in 2021, Pentingsari is recognized as a pioneer in tourism village development, and Tinalah excels in digital media utilization. Each village has applied the diffusion of innovation framework to establish sustainable management and marketing strategies. Key elements of innovation diffusion—innovation attributes, communication channels, time, and legitimacy—have been integrated into their development processes (Buchori et al., 2023).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Types of Research

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena occurring under natural field conditions. The approach was utilized to comprehensively examine various aspects related to the management and development of Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, Tangerang, including community involvement, local tourism potential, and the challenges encountered in the tourism village development process. Through this qualitative approach, the collected data were expected to provide a more detailed, contextual, and accurate representation of social realities and the experiences of the informants.

3.2 Research Site and Timeframe

This study was conducted in Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, located in Legok District, Tangerang Regency, Banten Province, Indonesia. The site was selected based on its continuously developing tourism potential, which aligns with the focus and objectives of this study. The research was carried out over a period of six months, from September 2025 to February 2026.

3.3 Research Subjects and Informants

The research subjects are individuals or parties directly involved in and possessing relevant information related to the research object. Informants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique, in which participants are chosen based on specific criteria and considerations aligned with the needs of the study. The table below presents the demographic characteristics of the informants.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Informants

Informant Code	Gender	Position/Role	Education
P1	Male	Village Head	Bachelor's Degree
P2	Male	BUMDes Director	Master's Degree
P3	Male	Head of Village Consultative Body	Bachelors'Degree

Source: Researchers (2026)

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data in this study were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted by directly examining the conditions of Serdang Wetan Village, including community activities, tourism facilities, and various activities taking place at the research site. Through this process, the researcher obtained a direct and realistic overview of the research object. Interviews were carried out with the Village Head, the Director of BUMDes, and the Head of the Community Empowerment Institution to obtain in-depth information. The interview techniques included both structured interviews, based on a pre-prepared interview guide, and semi-structured interviews, which allowed for more flexibility in following emerging information in the field. In addition, documentation was collected from various sources related to Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, such as activity photographs, visitor data, tourism village profiles, archives, and other supporting documents. This documentation served as supporting evidence to strengthen the research findings.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study involved three interrelated stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was conducted by selecting, summarizing, and organizing field data in accordance with the research objectives in Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, Tangerang. Interview data obtained from tourism village managers, village officials, and BUMDes representatives were directly summarized and categorized into key issues, including community participation, tourism potential, and institutional challenges such as bureaucratic fragmentation. The reduced data were then presented in narrative descriptions, tables, and figures to facilitate understanding and to systematically illustrate the management of Serdang Wetan Tourism Village, including community roles, BUMDes involvement, and development challenges. Finally, conclusion drawing was carried out based on the analyzed data. Conclusions were developed iteratively throughout the data collection and analysis process and were verified through data triangulation to ensure their validity. The findings are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of the management and development of Serdang Wetan Tourism Village and to address the research questions thoroughly.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Serdang Wetan Village is one of the villages located in Legok District, Tangerang Regency, covering an area of approximately 402 hectares with a population of 14,440

residents. Based on this population size, Serdang Wetan is the most populous village in Legok District. This demographic condition indicates significant pressure on land use and the economic needs of the local community.

“Land ownership in Serdang Wetan Village is largely controlled by the state, with only around 40% owned by residents. This condition has influenced the village’s development pattern,” stated the Village Head”. (Source: interview with participant P1).

The Director of BUMDes Serdang Tirta Kencana, explained that the limited extent of community-owned land has encouraged the village to develop a collective asset management approach. He stated:

“Because the majority of the land is state-owned, local residents do not have the same flexibility to undertake development initiatives as communities in other villages. Therefore, the village administration must identify ways to collectively utilize existing assets to support the community’s economic development”. (Source: interview with participant P2).

In 2000, the airport perimeter road was reclassified as a public road under provincial authority, improving regional accessibility and creating new economic opportunities for the village. This led to faster growth in trade, services, and local enterprises. Despite the high population density and limited land availability, the Village Head stated:

“Serdang Wetan Village has developed into a semi-urban area while still preserving agrarian values through aquaculture and productive land use”. (Source: interview with participant P1).

4.1 Tourism Development Potential of Serdang Wetan Village

One of the village government’s key strategies was utilizing 4.5 hectares of Village Treasury Land (TKD), including a 2-hectare reservoir that had previously been underutilized.

“The village head said, ‘We regret that although the reservoir was built with nearly IDR 10 billion in funding from the central government, it has yet to provide significant economic benefits to the community’. (Source: interview with participant P1).

According to the Director of BUMDes, the tourism area was developed by utilizing local potential that had previously been unproductive. He stated:

“In the past, the reservoir area was overgrown with water hyacinths and poorly maintained. After it was managed by the BUMDes, we transformed it into a tourism and cultivation area that could generate economic benefits for the local community”. (Source: interview with participant P2).

After its management was transferred to BUMDes Serdang Tirta Kencana, the area was revitalized into an environmentally based tourism destination called “Nu Desa Ecotourism”, integrating environmental conservation, education, and community economic empowerment.

4.2 The Role of BUMDes in Community Economic Empowerment

BUMDes Serdang Tirta Kencana plays an important role in the economic development of the Serdang Wetan Village community, particularly through the fisheries and educational tourism sectors. The water resources in the reservoir area have been developed into catfish and tilapia farming businesses that involve local residents through a partnership-based system. The Head of the Serdang Wetan Village Consultative Body (BPD) explained the partnership mechanism as follows:

“BUMDes provides the fish seeds and feed, while the community members are responsible for raising the fish. The profits are then shared collectively. In this way, the community does not merely receive assistance, but is directly involved in the business process”. (Source: interview with participant P3).

The partnership model is aimed not only at increasing community income, but also at fostering awareness of a productive economic mindset among local residents. Community members are encouraged to actively participate in the management of village enterprises, thereby creating a sense of ownership over the programs being implemented. Furthermore, he explained:

“What we aim to build is not merely a fishery business, but also a transformation in the community’s mindset so that people become more productive and self-reliant”. (Source: interview with participant P3).

The research findings indicate that the presence of Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) functions not only as a rural economic institution, but also as a vehicle for community social empowerment. The development of collaboration-based businesses is able to create broader opportunities for community participation in village development.

4.3 Challenges in Tourism Village Development

A key challenge in developing a sustainable tourism village is transforming the community’s mindset from being consumptive to becoming more actively productive. Interview findings show that some residents still lack the awareness and motivation to participate actively in tourism-related entrepreneurship. According to the Head Village:

“The most difficult part is actually changing the community’s mindset. Many people are still waiting or merely acting as spectators, even though the tourism village requires the active involvement of local residents”. (Source: interview with participant P1).

This condition shows that tourism village development requires not only physical infrastructure but also the strengthening of human resource capacity. The community must be encouraged to develop entrepreneurial awareness, responsibility, and active participation in managing the village’s potential. Furthermore, he explained:

“If the community’s mindset does not change, no amount of assistance will last for long. Therefore, what needs to be developed is not only the tourism destination itself, but also the people behind it”. (Source: interview with participant P1).

The next challenge is related to the administrative legality of the Village-Owned Enterprise (BUMDes). Based on the interview findings, the process of obtaining legal entity status and completing other administrative documents for the BUMDes is still ongoing, limiting the flexibility of village business management. According to the Director of BUMDes:

“Currently, the General Legal Administration (AHU) registration and several other administrative requirements are still in process. Since the legal status has not yet been fully completed, we have not been able to fully optimize business management”. (Source: interview with participant P2).

The incomplete legal status means that the BUMDes management does not yet have a strong legal basis to collect parking fees, lease land, or establish formal partnerships with third parties. This condition may hinder the optimization of Village Original Revenue (PADes) from the tourism and village enterprise sectors. Limited road infrastructure is a major challenge in developing the tourism area. Based on observations, access roads to the site are still relatively narrow and are not yet able to accommodate high vehicle mobility. As stated by the Director of BUMDes:

“The access road is still narrow, and vehicles cannot pass comfortably. If the number of visitors increases in the future, improvements to access and traffic management will certainly be needed”. (Source: interview with participant P2).

These accessibility conditions may lead to traffic congestion, particularly due to the lack of separate entry and exit routes. In addition, limited parking space is also an issue that needs to be addressed promptly to avoid disrupting the activities of the surrounding community.

5. CONCLUSION

Serdang Wetan Village has strong potential to develop an ecotourism-based tourism village through community empowerment supported by BUMDes Serdang Tirta Kencana, particularly by optimizing village assets such as a former reservoir into the “Nu Desa Ecotourism” destination. This initiative demonstrates how underutilized resources can generate economic value and increase community participation. However, its development is still constrained by a passive community mindset, incomplete BUMDes legal administration, and limited infrastructure and accessibility. Therefore, strengthening human resources, completing legal processes, and improving infrastructure are essential to ensure sustainable tourism village development. This study contributes to ecotourism and rural development literature by emphasizing the dual role of BUMDes as both an economic driver and a mechanism for community empowerment. The findings highlight that sustainable tourism village development depends not only on physical infrastructure but also on community mindset transformation and institutional capacity. It also shows how underutilized village assets can be optimized through participatory management to support community-based ecotourism development. This study is limited to a single case study, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, it relies on qualitative data from interviews and observations, which may reflect subjective perspectives. The study also does not assess long-term economic or environmental impacts. Future research is recommended to use comparative and mixed-method approaches to provide more comprehensive insights.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 171-182

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AS AN ECOTOURISM ENABLER: EVIDENCE FROM PELIATAN, BALI

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

Ecotourism development frameworks commonly treat evaluation criteria as independent, parallel entities, overlooking the dynamic interdependencies among them. This assumption carries practical consequences, when criteria are isolated as standalone units, their cascading effects on one another remain invisible to planners and policymakers. Peliatan Village in Ubud, Bali, presents a compelling empirical case in which community participation demonstrably drives outcomes across higher-weighted criteria a relationship that existing frameworks have not yet articulated. This study aims to examine whether community participation, positioned third in an AHP-derived expert hierarchy, functions as an enabling criterion that underpins the realisation of the two highest-weighted criteria: environment (0.281) and socio-culture (0.210). Two complementary datasets were integrated, an AHP-weighted ecotourism criteria hierarchy generated from assessments by 15 cross-disciplinary experts, and empirical data on community participation in Peliatan Village. Inter-criteria relational analysis was applied to trace causal patterns within the data. Findings confirm that community participation (weight: 0.168) operates as an enabling criterion in practice. In Peliatan, initiatives spanning river management across four focal points, waste programmes (PEGO, TEKI), the one-million-biopore campaign, the Puspa Aman programme, preservation of 237 hectares of rice fields across 12 subak, and revival of the meanyud-anyudan ritual collectively enabled improvements in both environmental and socio-cultural outcomes achievements culminating in Peliatan's recognition as the highest-scoring village in Indonesia's 2018 Village Development Index (IDM). These findings challenge conventional hierarchy-based planning and propose a reorientation toward enabling criteria sequencing in ecotourism development.

Keywords: Enabling Criterion, Ecotourism, Community Participation, AHP, Peliatan Village

1. INTRODUCTION

The global paradigm shift from mass tourism toward sustainable tourism has positioned ecotourism as one of the most strategically significant models of destination development, particularly for developing countries endowed with exceptional natural and cultural assets (Fennell, 2008; Western, 1995). Ecotourism, in this context, extends well beyond nature-based leisure, it constitutes an integrated system that simultaneously advances environmental conservation, local economic empowerment, and socio-cultural sustainability as inseparable dimensions of a single developmental framework (TIES,

2006; Page & Ross, 2002). In Indonesia, the urgency of this transition has intensified in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed with unprecedented clarity the fragility of mass tourism-dependent economies in the face of global crises, while at the same time revealing the comparative resilience of community-based destination models (Akis, 2011). Within this broader context, Bali confronts a challenge that is both distinctive and consequential: how to reorient its tourism development trajectory away from visitor volume and toward qualitative sustainability, without compromising the ecological and cultural values that constitute its most fundamental comparative advantage. A growing body of research has identified numerous Balinese villages as having substantial potential for ecotourism development, among them Peliatan Village in the Ubud sub-district, a settlement that has demonstrated demonstrably robust ecological, cultural, and institutional assets (Adnyana, 2020; Dewi, 2017; Sulistyawati, 2011).

A central challenge in ecotourism development planning concerns the question of how evaluation criteria should be prioritised as the basis for intervention design. Scholars have approached this question through diverse frameworks, from Cooper et al.'s (1995) 4A model to ecological sustainability criteria (Page & Ross, 2002) and community-based indicators (Jaini et al., 2019; Aziz et al., 2015). Yet most of these frameworks share a common methodological limitation, criteria are evaluated in parallel and independently of one another, with little examination of how individual criteria interact with or condition the achievement of others. The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), developed by Saaty (1993), has been widely applied as a multi-criteria decision-making instrument in ecotourism planning contexts (Suryabagavan et al., 2015; Ren, 2022). Its principal strength lies in its capacity to transform expert judgements into structured, quantitatively consistent priority weights. Drawing on this framework, Prasandya et al. (2022) produced a weighted hierarchy of six ecotourism criteria, environment (0.281), socio-culture (0.210), community participation (0.168), education (0.166), economy (0.100), and institutional (0.075) derived from the assessments of 15 cross-disciplinary experts, with an inconsistency ratio of 0.03, confirming the validity of the data. A subsequent empirical study confirmed that community participation, despite occupying the third rank in this hierarchy, manifests concretely across multiple dimensions in Peliatan Village from collective decision-making and environmental programme implementation to economic benefit-sharing and awig-awig-based evaluation mechanisms (Prasandya et al., 2022; Cohen & Uphoff, 1977).

It is at this juncture that a critical scientific gap emerges. The prevailing literature treats ecotourism criteria as independent entities, yet no study has directly addressed a more fundamental question, whether these criteria are genuinely causally independent, or whether some of them function as enabling criteria prerequisites whose absence would prevent the realisation of higher-weighted criteria, regardless of how well those criteria are targeted by intervention. This question carries practical implications that extend well beyond theoretical interest. If community participation ranked third in the expert hierarchy, in fact causally drives improvements in the environmental and socio-cultural criteria ranked first and second, then the prevailing logic of ecotourism planning interventions warrants fundamental reconsideration. Interventions that prioritise the highest-weighted criteria without first consolidating the enabling criterion that underpins them risk producing improvements that are structurally fragile and ultimately unsustainable (Wondirad et al., 2020). The present study addresses this gap by integrating two complementary datasets, the AHP-weighted ecotourism criteria hierarchy and the empirical data on community participation in Peliatan Village to examine analytically

whether community participation functions as an enabling criterion that conditions the realisation of the environmental and socio-cultural dimensions. In doing so, this study makes a dual contribution, methodologically, it demonstrates how an AHP-derived weighting framework, previously employed solely as a prioritisation instrument, can be operationalised for relational analysis between criteria; and substantively, it proposes a reorientation of ecotourism planning strategy toward an enabling criteria sequencing approach as an alternative to the parallel-hierarchy model that has dominated the field.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Ecotourism: Concepts, Dimensions and Evaluation Criteria

Ecotourism has evolved considerably beyond its early iteration as a marketing label for nature-based destinations, emerging instead as a development framework that integrates three dimensions of sustainability simultaneously, environmental conservation, local community economic empowerment, and socio-cultural continuity (Fennell, 1999; Western, 1995; TIES, 2006). A critical elaboration of this integrated conception was offered by Eplerwood (2002), who argued that these three dimensions cannot be optimised in isolation the neglect of any single dimension inevitably generates negative consequences for the others. Despite this well-established theoretical premise, however, the majority of ecotourism evaluation frameworks developed in subsequent decades have continued to treat these dimensions as parallel and independent components, amenable to separate assessment without regard to their mutual interdependence (Page & Ross, 2002; Swarbrooke, 1999).

The most influential tradition within ecotourism criteria assessment is the expert weight-based multi-criteria approach. Cooper et al. (1995) introduced the 4A framework, comprising attraction, accessibility, amenities, and ancillary services as a foundational model for destination evaluation, one that was subsequently adapted across a wide range of ecotourism studies in Southeast Asia. Later scholarship expanded and refined this framework by incorporating environmental quality, socio-cultural integrity, community participation, and institutional capacity as additional evaluative dimensions (Aziz et al., 2015; Jaini et al., 2019; Yusnikusumah & Sulystiawati, 2016). Within the Indonesian context specifically, Dalem (2004) and Choy (1997) developed more contextually grounded ecotourism principles that took into account the distinctive ecological and cultural characteristics of tropical regions, including Bali.

The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), developed by Saaty (1993), subsequently became the most widely adopted instrument for operationalising multi-criteria assessments into consistent, verifiable quantitative weights. Saaty's framework rests on four core principles, hierarchical decomposition, pairwise comparative judgement, priority synthesis, and logical consistency testing, a methodological sequence that enables experts from different disciplinary backgrounds to arrive at measurable, consensus-based priority weights. Suryabagavan et al. (2015) demonstrated, in their Ethiopian case study, how AHP can identify potential ecotourism sites through the integration of multi-criteria weights, an approach subsequently replicated in Malaysia (Aziz et al., 2015) and Indonesia (Rahayu et al., 2019). Ren (2022) further established that AHP offers a comparative advantage in ecotourism resource evaluation precisely because of its capacity to convert qualitative expert judgements into measurable priority ratios, thereby mitigating the subjective biases inherent in single-assessor evaluations.

One structural limitation of AHP-based ecotourism evaluation, however, has received remarkably little critical attention in the literature: the assumption that the

criteria under evaluation are mutually independent. As Wondirad et al. (2020) observed in their study of stakeholder collaboration in developing-country ecotourism contexts, the success or failure of ecotourism programmes is determined far more by the relational dynamics between components than by the relative weight assigned to any individual component in isolation. When a criterion such as community participation is evaluated merely as one item among many in an assessment checklist without accounting for its potential function as an enabling factor for other criteria, the planning interventions that follow are at risk of being fundamentally misdirected.

2.2 Community Participation as a Strategic Component of Ecotourism

Among all the criteria that constitute ecotourism frameworks, community participation occupies a position that is conceptually the most complex and the most extensively debated. Cohen and Uphoff (1977) defined community participation in development as active involvement across four cyclically interrelated stages: decision-making, implementation, benefit-taking, and evaluation. These four stages are not merely sequential phases, each reinforces the others in a mutually conditioning relationship. The absence of genuine participation in decision-making, for instance, tends to compromise the quality of implementation and ultimately diminishes the benefits that communities are able to derive from ecotourism programmes.

In the context of ecotourism, local community engagement is far more than an ethical requirement, it constitutes a functional prerequisite for programme sustainability (Swarbrooke, 1999; Nugroho & Negara, 2014). Wondirad et al. (2020) argued compellingly that stakeholder collaboration, with local communities at its core, is the single most consequential determinant of ecotourism success in developing countries, consistently outweighing technical factors such as infrastructure provision or site accessibility. This finding is corroborated by Sulistyawati (2011), whose Balinese case evidence demonstrated that community-based ecotourism models succeed in preserving both ecological integrity and socio-cultural continuity precisely because communities retain meaningful control over resource management rather than functioning merely as passive beneficiaries of externally directed programmes.

A parallel pattern is evident across multiple Indonesian studies. Hanum (2013) observed that facilitative capacity-building in Indonesian ecotourism development only produces durable outcomes when communities are engaged from the earliest stages of planning not after programme frameworks have already been determined by outside parties. In Bali specifically, the subak system the communally managed rice irrigation network provides centuries of evidence that institutionalised community participation in decision-making constitutes the foundational condition enabling agricultural ecosystems to remain both productive and ecologically sustainable (Dewi, 2017; Adnyana, 2020). Rahayu et al.'s (2019) study of Tenganan Pegriingsingan village further demonstrated that Balinese villages maintaining the awig-awig system as a communal evaluation instrument consistently achieve higher sustainability scores than those relying exclusively on externally imposed regulatory frameworks. Taken collectively, these findings point toward a proposition that has yet to be explicitly tested: that community participation is not simply one criterion among many in ecotourism evaluation, but rather an enabling criterion, one whose fulfilment creates the conditions under which higher-weighted criteria can be empirically realised.

2.3 Criteria Interdependence and The Concept of Enabling Criterion

The concept of an enabling criterion, a criterion whose fulfilment creates the conditions for other criteria to be realised is rooted in systems thinking traditions within development planning, which conceive of a system's components not as self-contained entities but as elements connected through causal and conditional relationships (Swarbrooke, 1999). In the destination development literature, this inter-component dependency has frequently been overlooked, largely due to the dominance of atomistic indicator-based approaches in which each criterion is measured, weighted, and interpreted in isolation from the others (Page & Ross, 2002).

Wondirad et al. (2020) argued that the failure of ecotourism programmes in developing countries is rarely attributable to poor performance on high-weighted criteria such as environmental quality or socio-cultural integrity in any direct sense. Rather, failure tends to originate in the absence of a collaborative foundation that constitutes the prerequisite for those criteria to be achieved at all. Interventions that prioritise environmental improvements without first building the community participation capacity on which those improvements depend will produce gains that are inherently temporary, vulnerable to degradation as soon as external pressures intensify.

The present study carries this argument to a more specific and empirically grounded level. By integrating the AHP-weighted ecotourism criteria hierarchy derived from 15 expert assessments with the empirical community participation data from Peliatan Village (Prasandya et al., 2022), it examines analytically whether community participation, ranked third in the expert hierarchy in fact performs a causal function as an enabling criterion with respect to the two highest-weighted dimensions: environment and socio-culture.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Approach and Data Sources

This study employs a secondary data integration with relational analysis approach, drawing on two complementary existing datasets, the AHP-weighted ecotourism criteria hierarchy and the empirical community participation data from Peliatan Village (Prasandya et al., 2022). Rather than generating new primary data, the study analytically integrates these two datasets to examine a relational question that neither dataset alone was designed to address, whether community participation functions as a causal prerequisite for the realisation of higher-weighted ecotourism criteria.

The first dataset was produced through an AHP procedure involving 15 cross-disciplinary experts spanning the fields of tourism, architecture, environmental studies, socio-culture, and economics. Each expert assessed the relative importance of six ecotourism criteria through a structured online questionnaire, and the resulting judgement data were processed using Expert Choice 11 software to generate criterion weights alongside an inconsistency ratio of 0.03, confirming the validity of the expert assessments (Saaty, 1993). The weighted hierarchy produced by this procedure ranked the criteria as follows: environment (0.281) → socio-culture (0.210) → community participation (0.168) → education (0.166) → economy (0.100) → institutional (0.075).

The second dataset derives from a qualitative field study conducted through in-depth observation and interviews with village officials and community leaders in Peliatan Village, Ubud sub-district. Data collection and analysis were structured around Cohen and Uphoff's (1977) four-dimensional framework of community participation: (1) participation in decision-making, (2) participation in implementation, (3) participation in

benefit-taking, and (4) participation in evaluation. The empirical material encompasses documented narratives of concrete community programmes, including river management at four focal points, the PEGO (Peliatan Ngogo) and TEKI (Teges Kawan Yangloni) waste management campaigns, the one-million biopore initiative, the Puspa Aman programme, the maintenance of 237 hectares of rice paddies across 12 subak networks, and the revitalisation of the meanyud-anyudan ritual procession.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedure

The integration of both datasets was carried out through three sequential analytical stages.

a. Stage One: Causal Mapping of Programmes onto Criteria

Each community participation programme documented in the second dataset was mapped against the criteria in the AHP hierarchy to identify which criteria were empirically affected by each programme. This mapping was guided by the operational definitions of each criterion as formulated through the theoretical synthesis in the first study. River management, the biopore initiative, and the Puspa Aman programme were mapped as programmes with direct impacts on the environmental criterion. The revitalisation of the meanyud-anyudan ritual procession and the maintenance of the subak networks were mapped as programmes bearing on the socio-cultural criterion. Critically, both sets of programmes were found to have materialised through and only because of a robust institutional foundation of community participation.

b. Stage Two: Conditionality Analysis

Following the causal mapping, the analysis examined whether the relationship between community participation programmes and improvements in the environmental and socio-cultural criteria is conditional in nature, that is, whether improvements in these two highest-weighted criteria could only occur if and only if community participation was already institutionally embedded. This conditionality analysis was conducted through narrative examination of the empirical evidence in the second dataset, with particular attention to the temporal patterns between the activation of community participation structures and the subsequent achievement of outcomes on the environmental and socio-cultural dimensions.

c. Stage Three: Reinterpretation of the AHP Hierarchy

Drawing on the findings from the two preceding stages, the study proceeded to reinterpret the meaning of the AHP weight hierarchy. The conventional reading of AHP weights treats them as expressions of the intrinsic importance of each criterion in isolation. The present study proposes an alternative interpretation: that weights do not solely reflect intrinsic importance, but under conditions empirically demonstrated in the field also reflect the desired sequence of outcomes to be achieved, while the mechanism through which those outcomes are realised is determined by the criterion functioning as the enabling criterion.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The AHP Hierarchy and The Empirical Conditions of Community Participation in Peliatan Village

The assumption that ecotourism evaluation criteria operate in parallel and independently of one another represents a structural limitation long embedded in the multi-criteria literature, yet rarely subjected to explicit critique. The weighted hierarchy of six ecotourism criteria: environment (0.281), socio-culture (0.210), community

participation (0.168), education (0.166), economy (0.100), and institutional (0.075), rests on an inconsistency ratio of 0.03, confirming the validity of assessments provided by 15 cross-disciplinary experts, and the resulting hierarchy is methodologically beyond question. What the weight hierarchy does not answer, however, is a more fundamental question: whether each criterion can genuinely be achieved independently, or whether certain criteria can only be realised once others have first been fulfilled. This question falls outside the scope of most multi-criteria evaluation models, including AHP, which are not methodologically designed to model causal relationships between criteria. It is this limitation that the present study takes as its point of departure.

Table 1. Pairwise Comparison Rating Scale and Hierarchy of Ecotourism Development Criteria

	Lingkungan	Tingkat Partisipasi Masyarakat	Pendidikan	Ekonomi	Sosial Budaya	Institusional
Lingkungan		2.90509	1.93424	2.72778	1.13852	2.57937
Tingkat Partisipasi Masyarakat			1.34113	1.34912	1.13207	3.09142
Pendidikan				2.35738	1.37973	2.68392
Ekonomi					1.63362	1.26747
Sosial Budaya						2.52216
Institusional	Incon: 0.03					
Priorities with respect to: Menentukan hirarki kriteria ekowisata						Combined



Source: Researchers (2022)

Treating ecotourism criteria as separate entities is not merely a methodological issue, it carries direct consequences for how planning interventions are designed and implemented in the field. As Wondirad et al. (2020) demonstrated in their study of stakeholder collaboration in developing-country contexts, ecotourism programme failures more frequently originate in the absence of the collaborative preconditions that enable other criteria to be achieved, rather than in any intrinsic weakness of the high-weighted criteria themselves. Bello et al. (2017) reinforced this finding, showing that protected area ecotourism programmes encounter their most significant obstacles precisely when local community participation is not institutionalised from the planning stage even when environmental resources are abundantly available. A DEMATEL-based study in Thailand further established that community participation functions as a causal attribute driving ecotourism potential and community support for conservation activities, rather than simply one criterion among equals (Tseng et al., 2019). Taken together, these three findings indicate that the parallelism assumption in multi-criteria ecotourism evaluation warrants considerably more rigorous empirical scrutiny.

Peliatan Village in the Ubud sub-district of Bali provides a well-suited empirical context for that scrutiny. Organised through Cohen and Uphoff's (1977) four-dimensional participation framework, the community participation conditions in Peliatan evidence a matured institutional structure across all four dimensions. In the decision-making dimension, the community collectively resolved to revitalise the meanyud-anyudan ritual procession and to preserve 237 hectares of rice paddies spanning 12 subak networks through village awig-awig and perarem instruments. In the implementation dimension,

community participation generated two clusters of programmes directly affecting the highest-weighted criteria: first, an environment-oriented cluster comprising river management at four focal points (Beji Tukad Mas Temple, Bulakan Tirta Mas, Tukad Ulun Pangkung, and Tukad Mas), the PEGO (Peliatan Ngogo) waste awareness campaign, integrated waste management through TEKI (Teges Kawan Yangloni) and the village-owned enterprise BUMDes, the one-million biopore initiative, and the Puspa Aman programme integrating riverbank revegetation along the Tukad Mas; and second, a socio-culture-oriented cluster encompassing the preservation of 12 subak networks as living heritage of the traditional irrigation system and the revitalisation of the meanyudanyudan procession as an expression of communal cultural identity. In the benefit-taking dimension, the Yangloni area previously degraded by waste from sculptors' workshops was transformed into a tourism destination supporting 105 households through homestay management, backed by hospitality and English-language training delivered through BETA Campus. In the evaluation dimension, an awig-awig-based monitoring system with financial penalty sanctions operates as a communal accountability mechanism sustaining the continuity of all these programmes.



Figure 1. Forms of Institutionalised Community Participation in Peliatan Village as Empirical Evidence of The Enabling Criterion Function
Source: Peliatan Village (2020)

The analytically significant feature of this data pattern lies not in the diversity of the programmes themselves but in their causal structure. All improvements on the environmental criterion river water quality, waste management, riverbank revegetation are the direct products of programmes that could only have materialised through collective mobilisation driven by institutionalised community participation. All improvements on the socio-cultural criterion the continuity of the subak system and the revitalisation of customary ritual are the products of communal commitments formalised through awig-awig. The Village Development Index (Indeks Desa Membangun, IDM) best-village award received in 2018, which simultaneously measures ecological, social,

and economic resilience, does not represent the parallel achievement of three separate dimensions it reflects the operation of a single mechanism that underpins all three.

4.2 Community Participation as an Enabling Criterion and Its Implications for Ecotourism Planning

The causal pattern identified in the Peliatan Village data points toward one conclusion that is difficult to set aside, improvements in the environmental and socio-cultural criteria in this village did not occur through direct intervention targeting those criteria, but because a strong institutional foundation of community participation had first taken shape and set everything else in motion. The rivers at four focal points were cleaned not through externally driven environmental rehabilitation programmes, but because village residents themselves decided, implemented, and monitored the cleaning process through the PEGO campaign and the integrated TEKI management system. The 237 hectares of rice paddies spanning 12 subak networks survived the pressure of land conversion not primarily through government regulation, but through awig-awig instruments formulated and enforced by the community itself. In both cases, community participation is not simply one criterion contributing to ecotourism sustainability it is the mechanism that makes other criteria achievable at all.

This finding resonates with Tseng et al. (2019), who demonstrated that in the Thai ecotourism context, community participation is the sole attribute that consistently functions as a cause for all other attributes including environmental conditions and attraction value while those other attributes tend to position themselves as effects. Wondirad et al. (2020) reached a parallel conclusion through qualitative analysis: ecotourism programme failures in developing countries more frequently originate in a weak communal collaboration foundation than in any deficit of environmental resources. Bello et al. (2017) went further still, showing that the presence of abundant natural resources is insufficient to secure ecotourism success when community participation has not been institutionalised from the planning stage. What happened in Peliatan, these three bodies of evidence collectively suggest, is not a local anomaly it is an expression of a broader pattern in developing-country ecotourism dynamics.

The Peliatan evidence also extends beyond confirming what is already known. Cohen and Uphoff (1977) defined community participation as a process spanning four dimensions decision-making, implementation, benefit-taking, and evaluation and emphasised that all four must operate synergistically for participation to produce sustainable outcomes. What the Peliatan data reveals is that when these four dimensions are genuinely and fully institutionalised as evidenced in river management, subak preservation, and the sanction system embedded in awig-awig the effects do not remain contained within the participation dimension itself. They cascade causally into dimensions that, within the AHP hierarchy, rank above it. The 2018 IDM (Indeks Desa Membangun) best-village award received by Peliatan, which simultaneously measures ecological, social, and economic resilience, is the most concrete confirmation of this pattern: the three dimensions were not achieved separately but grew together from the same root.

This understanding challenges the operational logic of ecotourism evaluation as it has been conventionally practiced. Within the standard AHP framework, villages being considered for ecotourism development are typically assessed on how strongly each criterion is fulfilled environment, socio-culture, community participation, education, economy, and institutional in parallel. The intervention logic that follows then prioritises

the highest-weighted criteria as the primary targets of programme investment. If the argument advanced in this study holds, that logic contains a risk that is structurally invisible: direct intervention on environmental or socio-cultural criteria without first ensuring that the community participation structures capable of sustaining those gains are sufficiently robust risks producing improvements that are inherently fragile and unlikely to endure. Investing first in strengthening communal capacity through awig-awig consolidation, BUMDes empowerment, and community deliberation platforms creates the foundation from which environmental and socio-cultural improvements can emerge organically and persist without dependence on continuous external impetus.

For ecotourism planning in Bali, these implications are both practical and pressing. In the post-pandemic tourism transformation context which is driving a shift away from visitor volume and toward qualitative sustainability the evaluation framework applied to ecotourism priority villages needs to consider not only how strongly each criterion is fulfilled, but also whether the communal mechanisms required to sustain high-weighted criteria are already in place. Peliatan Village offers a replicable model: not because its programmes are the most ambitious, but because its participatory institutional structures allowed those programmes to emerge from within the community rather than being imposed from outside. An enabling criteria-based planning orientation one that positions the strengthening of community participation as a prerequisite rather than a supplementary component is the direction toward which the empirical evidence from this village consistently points.

5. CONCLUSION

Drawing on the integration of the AHP-weighted ecotourism criteria hierarchy derived from 15 expert assessments with the empirical community participation data from Peliatan Village (Prasandya et al., 2022), this study finds that community participation ranked third in the expert hierarchy with a weight of 0.168, empirically functions as an enabling criterion: a criterion whose presence constitutes a prerequisite for the realisation of environment (0.281) and socio-culture (0.210) as the two highest-weighted dimensions. In Peliatan, all improvements on the environmental dimension and all acts of preservation on the socio-cultural dimension occurred not through direct intervention targeting those dimensions, but through participatory institutional structures that set both in motion from within. The fact that Peliatan Village received the 2018 IDM (Indeks Desa Membangun) best-village recognition an award that simultaneously measures ecological, social, and economic resilience confirms that all three dimensions grew from a single shared mechanism.

This finding gives rise to a new conceptual proposition, which the present study terms the enabling criteria principle in ecotourism planning. Not all criteria occupy an equivalent causal position, there exist criteria which, despite not consistently receiving the highest weights from expert assessments, perform the function of drivers that make it possible for higher-weighted criteria to be sustainably realised. To disregard this causal ordering in the design of planning interventions is to disregard the mechanism most consequential to the long-term success of village ecotourism programmes.

Several limitations of this study warrant acknowledgement. The findings are grounded in a single village case characterised by exceptionally strong customary institutional structures Peliatan Village with its well-established subak and awig-awig systems and the transferability of the proposition to village contexts with different institutional capacities requires further empirical testing. Future research is encouraged

to examine the enabling criteria principle using methods explicitly designed to model interdependencies, such as DEMATEL or ANP, across more diverse village samples in Bali and in other Indonesian provinces currently developing ecotourism village programmes. For planners and policymakers, this study recommends that ecotourism village readiness assessments measure not only how strongly each criterion is independently fulfilled, but also whether the community participation structures are sufficiently robust to serve as the foundation for achieving other criteria because without that foundation, the improvements attained are at risk of proving unsustainable.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 183-190

AGRO-WELLNESS TOURISM AS A SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM STRATEGY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

Agro-wellness tourism has emerged as an innovative approach in sustainable rural tourism that integrates agricultural activities, wellness experiences, and local cultural values. This study aims to explore the potential and challenges of agro-wellness tourism development in rural Bali through a systematic literature review approach. Data were collected from reputable academic databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Garuda, using keywords related to agro-wellness tourism, rural tourism, and sustainable tourism development. A total of selected literature was analyzed using qualitative content analysis with thematic synthesis to identify key patterns and insights. The findings indicate that Bali has significant potential for developing agro-wellness tourism due to its unique agricultural landscape, particularly the Subak system, as well as its strong cultural and spiritual traditions. Agro-wellness tourism contributes to rural economic diversification, job creation, and the strengthening of local micro-enterprises, while also supporting environmental conservation and cultural preservation. However, several challenges remain, including limited infrastructure, inadequate human resource capacity, weak digital promotion, and insufficient stakeholder collaboration. In addition, there are potential risks related to cultural commodification and environmental degradation if development is not properly managed. This study contributes to the literature by positioning agro-wellness tourism as an integrated rural tourism model that connects agriculture, wellness, and cultural experiences within a sustainable development framework. The findings provide implications for policymakers and tourism stakeholders in designing more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable rural tourism strategies in Bali.

Keywords: Agro-Wellness Tourism, Rural Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Bali, Systematic Literature Review

1. INTRODUCTION

Global tourism has increasingly shifted from mass tourism to personalized, sustainable experiences that emphasize physical and mental well-being, giving rise to wellness tourism, which prioritizes health, relaxation, and holistic experiences (Bhuyan

et al., 2025; Anarini et al., 2024). Concurrently, rural agricultural areas have developed agro-tourism by integrating farming activities with recreational and educational experiences. The intersection of these trends has led to agro-wellness tourism, a model combining agriculture, natural landscapes, local wisdom, and wellness activities, offering a sustainable and inclusive approach that can enhance rural community welfare.

Bali exemplifies a strategic location for agro-wellness tourism due to its rich rural landscapes, traditional agricultural practices, cultural philosophy emphasizing harmony between humans, nature, and spirituality, and its global wellness reputation (Sinaga et al., 2025). Villages such as Ubud, Tabanan, Bangli, and Jatiluwih offer opportunities for organic farming, yoga and meditation, healthy culinary experiences, and cultural immersion. The Subak system further strengthens Bali's agricultural identity, supporting sustainability-focused tourism. Post-COVID-19, growing demand for health-oriented travel has created potential for agro-wellness services such as health retreats, herbal therapies, and mindfulness programs. Beyond enriching tourist experiences, agro-wellness tourism can diversify rural incomes and strengthen local economic resilience. It also empowers MSMEs by creating opportunities for small-scale business development within rural communities. In addition, this tourism model supports community-based employment that involves local participation in tourism activities. Overall, agro-wellness tourism offers a more sustainable alternative to conventional tourism models, which often place pressure on local environments and cultural resources.

The growing global awareness of health and well-being in the post-COVID-19 era has contributed to the continued expansion of wellness tourism; however, much of the existing literature tends to discuss wellness tourism and agro-tourism as separate domains rather than as an integrated concept (Subawa et al., 2023). Modern travelers increasingly seek destinations that provide not only relaxation and outdoor experiences, but also meaningful engagement with nature, local food systems, and culturally rooted healing practices. In this context, Bali's rural tourism villages offer strong potential to develop integrated agro-wellness tourism experiences that combine agricultural activities with holistic wellness practices grounded in local wisdom. Unlike conventional wellness tourism that is often spa- or resort-centered, agro-wellness tourism in Bali emphasizes direct participation in organic farming, traditional herbal knowledge, and community-based cultural practices, creating a more immersive and place-based experience. From an academic perspective, this integration remains underexplored, particularly in terms of how agricultural systems such as Subak can be systematically positioned within wellness tourism frameworks. This study addresses this gap by conceptualizing agro-wellness tourism as a sustainability-oriented rural development strategy that integrates agriculture, wellness, and community empowerment within a single framework. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which connects rural agricultural systems with wellness tourism development as a unified model for sustainable destination competitiveness in Bali (Vipriyanti et al., 2025).

This study identifies a gap in the literature regarding the integration of agriculture and wellness tourism within a unified rural tourism framework, particularly in the context of Bali's Subak-based landscape. While previous studies have examined agro-tourism and wellness tourism separately, limited attention has been given to their synergistic relationship. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring agro-wellness tourism as an emerging concept within sustainable rural tourism development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Agro-wellness tourism is an emerging concept that integrates agricultural activities, wellness practices, and rural tourism experiences into a single holistic tourism model. This concept builds upon the theoretical foundations of sustainable tourism, which emphasizes the balance between economic development, environmental preservation, and socio-cultural integrity (Snyder, 2019). In this context, tourism is no longer viewed merely as an economic activity, but as a system that must contribute to long-term community well-being and ecological sustainability.

From the perspective of rural tourism theory, agro-wellness tourism aligns with the idea of experience-based tourism, where visitors actively participate in local agricultural and cultural practices. This approach is consistent with the concept of community-based tourism, which emphasizes local participation, empowerment, and equitable distribution of tourism benefits (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, wellness tourism theory highlights the increasing demand for travel experiences that support physical, mental, and spiritual well-being through nature-based and holistic activities.

Previous studies have shown that agro-tourism contributes to rural economic diversification and agricultural sustainability, while wellness tourism is strongly associated with health-seeking behavior and lifestyle transformation among modern travelers (Tranfield et al., 2003; Booth et al., 2016). However, most of the existing literature treats agro-tourism and wellness tourism as separate domains. Studies focusing on agro-tourism tend to emphasize agricultural education and rural economy, whereas wellness tourism research focuses on spa, relaxation, and health retreat industries.

In the context of Bali, research has highlighted the potential of Subak-based agricultural landscapes and cultural heritage as key attractions for sustainable tourism development. Nevertheless, there is still limited scholarly attention given to the integration of agriculture and wellness into a unified agro-wellness tourism framework. This indicates a clear research gap in understanding how agricultural systems, wellness practices, and rural community participation can be systematically combined to create a sustainable tourism model.

Therefore, this study positions agro-wellness tourism as an integrated conceptual framework that bridges agriculture-based tourism and wellness-oriented tourism within a sustainable rural development approach. This integration is expected to provide new insights into how rural destinations such as Bali can enhance competitiveness while maintaining environmental and cultural sustainability.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a qualitative approach using a systematic literature review (SLR) method. This method was chosen because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the development of the agro-wellness tourism concept, its potential implementation in rural Bali, and the challenges faced in its management (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A systematic literature review was applied to ensure a more structured and transparent process in selecting and analyzing relevant studies. The literature review was conducted through a search of various relevant scientific sources, such as national and international journal articles, proceedings, academic books, tourism agency reports, and policy documents related to sustainable tourism development and wellness tourism (Snyder, 2019). Data sources were obtained from scientific databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Garuda using keywords such as agro-wellness

tourism, rural tourism, sustainable tourism, wellness destination, and Bali tourism development (Tranfield et al., 2003; Booth et al., 2016).

The literature was selected based on the relevance of the theme, the credibility of the sources, and the recency of publications within the last ten years. These criteria were applied to ensure the quality and timeliness of the data analyzed. In addition, inclusion criteria consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and relevant academic publications, while non-academic or duplicate sources were excluded from the analysis.

The data analysis process involved identification, classification, evaluation, and synthesis of the collected literature using content analysis techniques. This study employed thematic grouping to interpret key findings related to the potential of agro-wellness tourism in improving the rural economy, preserving the environment, strengthening local culture, and developing health- and agriculture-based tourism experiences. Furthermore, the analysis focused on several emerging challenges, including limited infrastructure, human resource readiness, digital promotion, changing tourist preferences, and environmental sustainability issues.

The results of the literature synthesis were then used to develop a conceptual understanding of the opportunities for agro-wellness tourism in Bali as a sustainable rural tourism destination. Using a literature review method, this research is expected to provide both academic and practical contributions to the development of tourism strategies based on health and agriculture that are adaptive to the dynamics of the modern tourism industry.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Integration of Traditional Agriculture and Wellness Tourism in Bali

The integration of traditional agriculture and wellness tourism in Bali represents an increasingly relevant development within sustainable tourism transformation. Bali has long been recognized as a global destination that combines natural beauty with a strong agrarian cultural system preserved through Subak (Ardana et al., 2024). Rather than functioning solely as an irrigation system, Subak reflects a philosophical foundation based on harmony between humans, nature, and spirituality. This value system provides a strong basis for integrating agriculture with wellness tourism development.

In this context, wellness tourism is expanding beyond spa, yoga, and meditation activities toward more experiential and nature-based practices. Traditional agricultural activities such as rice farming, organic cultivation, and herbal-based practices are increasingly positioned as wellness experiences that provide physical, mental, and emotional benefits.

Empirically, literature shows that this integration offers multidimensional value; however, its implementation remains uneven across rural areas. Key constraints include limited managerial capacity, weak institutional coordination, and insufficient tourism packaging skills at the village level. Therefore, stronger governance and community empowerment are required to ensure sustainability.

4.2 Bali's Natural and Cultural Resources as an Attraction for Agro-Wellness Tourism

Bali possesses strong natural and cultural capital that supports the development of agro-wellness tourism. The island's landscapes, biodiversity, and cultural traditions create an integrated tourism experience that combines agriculture, spirituality, and wellness-based activities. Locations such as Jatiluwih, Ubud, and Kintamani illustrate

how agricultural landscapes function as both productive and experiential tourism spaces (Putra et al., 2023).

The Subak system further strengthens Bali's identity as a cultural landscape that aligns with sustainable tourism principles. Its recognition as a world heritage site emphasizes its role not only as an agricultural infrastructure but also as a cultural ecosystem. In addition, Bali's biodiversity, particularly medicinal plants and herbal resources, supports the development of wellness-oriented products such as traditional healing and herbal therapies.

However, the utilization of these resources remains fragmented. Many initiatives still focus on isolated tourism products rather than an integrated agro-wellness system. This indicates a gap in developing a holistic destination model that connects agriculture, wellness, and rural community participation.

4.3 Challenges of Digitalization and Promotion of Agro-Wellness Tourism Destinations

Digital transformation plays an essential role in enhancing the competitiveness of agro-wellness tourism destinations. However, rural tourism actors still face significant barriers in digital literacy, infrastructure, and promotional capacity (Walterová, et al: 2026).

Most destinations still rely on conventional promotional methods, which limits global visibility. Agro-wellness tourism, which is experiential and multidimensional in nature, requires more advanced digital storytelling strategies to communicate its value. The lack of such capacity reduces destination competitiveness in digital platforms.

Another issue is the imbalance between promotion and sustainability management. In several cases, tourism promotion focuses on increasing visitor numbers without considering environmental carrying capacity. This may lead to risks such as overtourism and cultural commodification. Therefore, digitalization should be aligned with sustainable tourism principles.

4.4 Novelty and Research Contribution

This study contributes to the literature by positioning agro-wellness tourism as an integrated rural tourism model that connects agriculture, wellness, and cultural experiences within a single framework. Unlike previous studies that separately discuss agro-tourism and wellness tourism, this research emphasizes their interdependent relationship in supporting sustainable rural tourism development.

The novelty of this study lies in highlighting the Subak system as not only an agricultural infrastructure but also as a foundation for wellness-oriented tourism experiences. This expands the conceptual understanding of rural tourism into a multidimensional system that integrates ecological sustainability, cultural heritage, and community-based wellness experiences.

From a practical perspective, this study provides insights for policymakers and tourism stakeholders in developing more integrated and sustainable rural tourism strategies in Bali.

5. CONCLUSION

This study shows that agro-wellness tourism in rural Bali has significant potential as a sustainable tourism model that integrates agricultural, health, cultural, and local economic dimensions. Bali's agricultural landscapes, traditional healing practices,

spiritual values, and rural cultural heritage represent key assets that offer an authentic alternative to conventional tourism. In addition, agro-wellness tourism contributes to rural economic diversification by generating employment opportunities, increasing farmers' income, and strengthening local micro-enterprises based on indigenous products. It also supports environmental conservation and cultural preservation through tourism activities grounded in sustainability principles and community participation.

Despite these opportunities, several structural and managerial challenges remain. The development of agro-wellness tourism is constrained by limited infrastructure, inadequate human resource capacity, weak digital promotion systems, and suboptimal collaboration among stakeholders. These limitations reduce the competitiveness of rural destinations and hinder optimal development.

In addition, there is a potential risk of cultural commodification and environmental degradation if tourism growth is not properly managed. Therefore, a more strategic and integrated development approach is required. This includes strengthening community empowerment, enhancing innovation based on local wisdom, improving the quality of wellness-based services, and implementing supportive policies that prioritize inclusive and sustainable tourism development. Such efforts are essential to ensure that agro-wellness tourism in Bali develops in a balanced and long-term sustainable manner.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 191-202

EXPLORING THE STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF TOUR GUIDES TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN BALI

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

This study explores the strategic contributions of tour guides to sustainable tourism in Bali. The research employed a descriptive qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with ten certified tour guides in Bali, supported by policy documents and relevant academic literature. Participants were purposively selected based on their professional certification and experience guiding tourists in major destinations such as Ubud, Penglipuran, Tanah Lot, and Nusa Penida. Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify the educational, interpretative, and advocative roles of tour guides in promoting sustainability. The findings reveal that tour guides play a significant role in enhancing tourists' environmental awareness, encouraging respect for local culture, and advocating responsible tourism practices. Guides were also found to function as cultural mediators who connect tourists with local wisdom and sustainability values through interpretative communication. However, challenges remain, including uneven sustainability competencies, limited institutional support, and economic vulnerability among guides. This study contributes by proposing a strategic framework for strengthening the role of tour guides through sustainability-oriented training, certification improvement, policy integration, and community-based tourism collaboration. The findings provide practical implications for policymakers, tourism stakeholders, and training institutions in advancing sustainable tourism development in Bali.

Keywords: Tour Guide, Sustainable Tourism, Strategic Role, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism has long been the backbone of Bali's economy. In 2019, the island welcomed over 6.3 million international visitors, with the tourism sector contributing more than 50% of the regional Gross Domestic Product (Statistics Indonesia [BPS], 2020). However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented decline, with arrivals dropping below one million in 2020 (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2021). Since 2022, the sector has shown signs of recovery, and by 2024 tourist numbers are projected to approach pre-pandemic levels (Statistics Indonesia [BPS], 2023). While this recovery provides significant economic benefits, it also

generates pressing challenges, including waste management, coastal ecosystem degradation, cultural commodification, and vulnerability of communities highly dependent on tourism (Utama & Junaedi, 2022).

Sustainable tourism has been increasingly emphasized as a strategy to balance economic growth with environmental and socio-cultural preservation. According to UNWTO (2019), sustainable tourism development must fulfill present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. Key practices include protecting natural resources, preserving cultural heritage, and ensuring equitable benefits for local communities (Suarta et al., 2019). In Bali, these principles are reflected in initiatives such as eco-friendly tourism villages, cultural revitalization programs, and government regulations promoting green tourism (Sutawa, 2020). Within this context, tour guides (*pramuwisata*) are key stakeholders who directly engage with tourists and have substantial influence on shaping sustainable behaviors. Beyond facilitating travel, guides serve as cultural interpreters, educators, and advocates of responsible tourism practices (Suarta et al., 2019). For instance, guides in Penglipuran Village consistently encourage visitors to respect local customs and minimize plastic use, illustrating their role as agents of behavioral change. Despite their potential, limited research has specifically analyzed the strategic functions of tour guides in fostering sustainability in Bali. Most studies have concentrated on policy, infrastructure, or community participation, leaving the guides' roles underexplored (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). This study seeks to address that gap by focusing on how guides' educational, interpretative, and advocative functions contribute to sustainable tourism.

The objectives of this study are to analyze the strategic roles of tour guides in supporting sustainable tourism practices in Bali and to propose strategies for enhancing their capacity to contribute to sustainability goals. Recent studies have emphasized the growing importance of sustainable tourism and community-based approaches in Bali. Suarta et al. (2019) highlighted the role of local wisdom in shaping environmentally friendly practices and identified the competencies required for tour guides to align with sustainable tourism principles. Their study also demonstrated how tour guides can serve as sustainability stewards by fostering environmental and cultural awareness among tourists. Meanwhile, Utama and Junaedi (2022) examined the sustainability challenges faced by Bali's tourism sector in the post-pandemic period. Despite these contributions, research specifically focusing on the strategic roles of tour guides in promoting sustainable tourism in Bali remains limited. Existing studies generally discuss guides within broader sustainability frameworks rather than positioning them as key actors driving sustainable change. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing tour guides not merely as service providers but as critical agents whose educational, interpretative, and advocative roles can significantly advance sustainability objectives in Bali. By combining empirical insights with theoretical frameworks, this research provides both academic contributions and practical recommendations for policymakers and training institutions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainability has become a fundamental principle in tourism development, emphasizing the need to balance economic growth with environmental protection and socio-cultural preservation. According to UNWTO (2019), tourism development should meet the needs of present tourists and host communities while safeguarding opportunities for future generations. Achieving this objective requires the integration of environmental

protection, cultural preservation, and community well-being into tourism practices (Weaver, 2021). In Bali, however, rapid tourism growth has generated significant challenges, including increasing waste production, pressure on natural and coastal ecosystems, unequal distribution of economic benefits, and the commercialization of local culture (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). These issues demonstrate that sustainability is not solely a matter of policy design but also depends on the active participation of stakeholders in implementing responsible practices. Among these stakeholders, tour guides occupy a strategic position due to their direct interaction with tourists and their potential to influence visitor behavior.

One of the key actors in tourism is the tour guide, who plays an important role in shaping tourists' experiences and behaviors. Tour guides are not merely providers of information but also cultural mediators and facilitators of meaningful interactions between visitors and host communities (Weiler & Yu, 2007). Through their direct engagement with tourists, guides are well positioned to encourage responsible behavior and foster greater appreciation of local culture and the environment. Previous studies have highlighted that tour guides contribute significantly to tourist satisfaction and heritage appreciation, particularly through interpretative communication and meaningful visitor engagement (Wu et al., 2020). Moreover, tour guides can act as agents of sustainability by communicating, interpreting, and modeling responsible tourism practices (Weiler & Kim, 2011). Hu and Wall (2012) further argue that interpretative guiding can support sustainable development by influencing tourists' understanding, attitudes, and behavior at the destination level.

Wu et al. (2020) examined the contribution of tour guides in heritage tourism settings and found that effective guiding enhances tourists' understanding of local traditions and cultural values while improving destination experiences. Similarly, Jacobs et al. (2014) demonstrated that interpretative guiding can strengthen tourists' conservation intentions and environmental awareness. Taken together, these studies suggest that tour guides perform functions that extend beyond service delivery, encompassing educational, cultural, and sustainability-oriented responsibilities. However, while existing research acknowledges the contribution of tour guides to tourism resilience and cultural preservation, it generally examines these roles separately. Limited attention has been given to how tour guides simultaneously integrate educational, interpretative, and advocacy functions to promote sustainability in Bali. This gap indicates the need for a more comprehensive understanding of tour guides as strategic actors in achieving sustainable tourism objectives.

Furthermore, recent studies emphasize the importance of integrating local knowledge and interpretative communication into sustainable tourism practices. Huang et al. (2022) highlighted that sustainability-oriented tourism interpretation can significantly influence visitors' environmental understanding and behavioral intentions. Their findings suggest that tour guides play an important role in communicating local environmental values and responsible tourism practices to visitors. This role can be understood through the perspective of interpretative tourism, which views guiding as a process of facilitating meaningful understanding rather than merely providing information (Hu & Wall, 2012). Through interpretation, tour guides can influence tourists' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward local culture and the environment. In addition, the concept of cultural mediation suggests that guides serve as intermediaries between visitors and host communities, translating local values and traditions into experiences that are understandable and meaningful for tourists (Weiler & Yu, 2007).

Therefore, tour guides play a critical role in bridging global tourism expectations with local sustainability principles and cultural preservation efforts.

Overall, the existing literature suggests that tour guides are increasingly recognized as important actors in sustainable tourism, particularly in relation to cultural preservation, local wisdom, visitor education, and destination resilience. Nevertheless, most studies examine these functions separately, focusing on specific aspects of guiding such as service quality, cultural interpretation, or crisis adaptation. As a result, limited attention has been given to how educational, interpretative, and advocative roles collectively contribute to sustainability outcomes. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by analyzing the strategic contributions of tour guides within a holistic sustainability framework in Bali.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to analyze the strategic role of tour guides in supporting sustainable tourism in Bali. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate as it provides rich, contextual insights into human interactions, behaviors, and perceptions in tourism research (Bengtsson, 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2021). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with ten certified tour guides recruited through the Indonesian Tour Guide Association (HPI) Bali. A purposive sampling technique was applied to ensure participants had: certification as professional tour guides, and direct experience guiding in major destinations such as Ubud, Penglipuran, Tanah Lot, and Nusa Penida. Each interview explored three themes: The educational role of tour guides in raising environmental and cultural awareness. The interpretative role in explaining cultural and natural heritage sites. The advocative role in encouraging sustainable behaviors among tourists. Additional data were obtained from: Policy documents issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and the Provincial Government of Bali, particularly those concerning sustainable tourism and guide certification standards. Academic literature published from accredited journals focusing on sustainable tourism and tour guiding (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). The data were analyzed using thematic content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The analysis involved three steps: Data reduction is identifying and selecting relevant interview transcripts and secondary documents. Coding and categorization is grouping information into themes related to educational, interpretative, and advocative roles. Interpretation is synthesizing findings to highlight tour guides' contributions to sustainable tourism and to identify strategies for strengthening their roles. To ensure research rigor, triangulation was applied by comparing findings from interviews, policy documents, and scholarly literature. Member checking was also conducted by sharing preliminary findings with selected interviewees for feedback. The use of peer-reviewed international journal articles further enhanced the reliability of the study (López-Sanz et al., 2021). This study was limited by its relatively small sample size (ten tour guides), which may not fully represent the diversity of guiding practices across Bali. However, the integration of primary and secondary data provides a strong foundation for conceptual analysis and offers valuable insights into the strategic roles of tour guides in fostering sustainable tourism.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of Tour Guides in Bali

Tour guides in Bali occupy a crucial position within the tourism industry as they serve as the first point of interaction between visitors and the local community. According

to data from the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Bali has more than 7,000 registered tour guides, most of whom are certified under the Indonesian Professional Certification Authority (BNSP) (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). They are formally organized under the Indonesian Tour Guide Association (HPI), which plays a significant role in providing training, certification, and advocacy for guides across the island. Bali's tour guides are diverse in specialization. Some focus on cultural and heritage guiding, particularly at major temples such as Besakih, Tanah Lot, and Uluwatu. Others are involved in eco- and nature-based guiding, such as trekking in Mount Batur, diving in Nusa Penida, or birdwatching in West Bali National Park.

A growing number of guides are also involved in community-based tourism in rural villages like Penglipuran and Tenganan, where they introduce tourists to local traditions, crafts, and conservation practices. The strategic importance of guides in Bali extends beyond their role as service providers. They are also cultural brokers, translators of local wisdom, and advocates of responsible behavior. As Bali increasingly adopts sustainable tourism principles, tour guides are positioned as frontline actors who can bridge the gap between policy aspirations and tourist practices (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). Despite their significance, tour guides in Bali face challenges such as inconsistent training quality, limited access to sustainability-focused certification, and ongoing economic vulnerability, which has been further exposed during recent global crises and fluctuations in tourist arrivals (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). These challenges underline the need to strengthen the capacity of guides through continuous training, policy support, and integration into broader sustainability frameworks. This overview provides the foundation for a deeper discussion of the specific educational, interpretative, and advocative roles of tour guides in advancing sustainable tourism in Bali.

4.2 Educational Role of Tour Guides

Tour guides in Bali play a central educational role in fostering sustainable tourism by raising tourists' awareness of environmental protection and cultural preservation. Education in this context is not limited to the transfer of factual knowledge but also involves shaping attitudes and behaviors consistent with sustainability principles (Boley et al., 2021). Recent studies emphasize that guides act as informal educators who influence tourists more effectively than brochures or signage, as their messages are delivered in real-time and within the experience of the destination (Hu & Wall, 2020). In Bali, many guides integrate sustainability education into their narratives by highlighting local practices that align with environmental conservation. For example, guides in Penglipuran Village often emphasize the community's commitment to waste segregation and its prohibition on single-use plastics. By explaining the rationale behind these practices, guides not only enrich the visitor experience but also inspire tourists to adopt similar behaviors during and after their trip. This aligns with findings who noted that local wisdom communicated by guides can significantly enhance tourists' understanding of sustainability. Another example can be found in marine-based tourism in Nusa Penida, where guides actively educate divers and snorkelers about coral reef protection and marine biodiversity. They provide instructions on avoiding contact with corals, proper waste disposal, and respecting marine life. Such educational interventions have been shown to reduce harmful tourist behavior and contribute to conservation outcomes (Smith et al., 2020).

The educational role also extends to cultural awareness. In Ubud, guides frequently explain the meanings of Hindu rituals and temple etiquette, ensuring that

visitors respect local traditions. This is consistent with the study of López-Sanz et al. (2021), which stressed the importance of cultural interpretation in preventing misbehavior and enhancing cross-cultural understanding. Despite these contributions, challenges remain. Some guides lack adequate training in sustainability communication, and their messages may vary in depth and consistency. Suarta et al. (2019) noted that not all tour guide training programs in Indonesia adequately incorporate sustainability competencies. As a result, while many guides demonstrate commitment to sustainability education, there is still a need for standardized training and certification to strengthen this role across the industry. In summary, the educational role of guides in Bali demonstrates their capacity to influence both environmental and cultural awareness among tourists. By integrating sustainability messages into guiding practices, they function not merely as information providers but as key educators in achieving long-term sustainable tourism goals.

4.3 Interpretative Role of Tour Guides

The interpretative role of tour guides is central to shaping meaningful tourist experiences while promoting sustainability. Interpretation involves more than the delivery of information; it requires guides to translate cultural and natural heritage into engaging narratives that connect visitors emotionally with the destination (Hu & Wall, 2020). In Bali, this interpretative function is particularly critical given the island's deep cultural traditions and fragile ecosystems. Guides often act as cultural intermediaries by explaining the significance of rituals, ceremonies, and sacred spaces. For instance, in Besakih Temple, guides not only provide factual details about architectural features but also interpret the temple's spiritual importance within the Balinese Hindu cosmology. This ensures that visitors understand temple etiquette and respect sacred spaces. Studies have shown that such interpretative interventions reduce incidents of cultural insensitivity and promote respectful tourist behavior (López-Sanz et al., 2021).

In natural settings, interpretation helps tourists appreciate ecological values and recognize the importance of conservation. Interview results showed that guides along the Mount Batur trekking routes commonly explained volcanic geology, local agricultural traditions, and the contribution of tourism to community livelihoods. Similarly, guides in West Bali National Park provided information regarding biodiversity conservation, endangered species, and ecosystem services during tourism activities. Several tourists acknowledged that these interpretive experiences increased their environmental awareness and understanding of conservation issues. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that interpretation in nature-based tourism enhances tourists' environmental awareness and strengthens pro-conservation attitudes (Ballantyne & Packer, 2020). The interpretative role also involves the integration of local wisdom. For example, guides in Tenganan Village explain traditional weaving techniques and cultural restrictions that protect village customs from erosion. Ballantyne & Packer, 2020 argue that embedding indigenous knowledge in interpretation is essential to ensuring that sustainable tourism in Bali is not divorced from local identity. However, challenges persist in the delivery of high-quality interpretation. Not all guides are adequately trained in communication skills, and the depth of narratives often depends on individual initiative. Furthermore, the commercialization of culture sometimes pressures guides to simplify or commodify their interpretations to meet tourist expectations (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). This tension highlights the need for continuous professional development focusing on interpretative competencies, particularly in linking sustainability principles with cultural and natural heritage. Overall, the interpretative role of guides in Bali

strengthens the sustainability agenda by transforming tourist experiences into opportunities for learning, respect, and empathy. Through effective interpretation, guides ensure that visitors not only enjoy the destination but also understand and value the underlying cultural and ecological systems.

4.4 Advocative Role of Tour Guides

Beyond their roles as educators and interpreters, tour guides in Bali also serve as advocates of sustainable behavior. Advocacy in this context refers to the active encouragement of tourists to adopt practices that minimize negative impacts and support local sustainability initiatives. This role positions guides as agents of change who influence not only what tourists learn and understand but also what they actually do during their visit. A clear example can be found in Bali's coastal areas, where guides advocate for responsible marine tourism. In Nusa Penida, dive and snorkel guides consistently remind tourists not to touch coral reefs, avoid littering, and respect marine species such as manta rays and sea turtles. Such advocative interventions have been shown to reduce destructive behavior and contribute to coral reef conservation (Smith et al., 2020).

In cultural contexts, guides often act as defenders of local customs and religious practices. For instance, in Uluwatu Temple, guides advocate for proper dress codes, appropriate behavior during sacred ceremonies, and adherence to temple regulations. By enforcing these cultural norms, guides safeguard the integrity of religious sites while ensuring that visitors experience them respectfully (López-Sanz et al., 2021). Advocacy also extends to broader sustainability practices, such as promoting eco-friendly products, supporting local businesses, and discouraging the use of single-use plastics. In several community-based tourism villages, guides encourage tourists to purchase locally produced handicrafts or join eco-activities like tree planting. These practices not only reduce environmental impacts but also generate economic benefits for local communities.

However, the advocative role is not without challenges. Some guides feel constrained by the need to satisfy tourist demands, which may conflict with sustainability principles. Others lack institutional support or standardized guidelines on how to advocate effectively. Utama and Junaedi (2022) highlight that Bali's sustainability agenda requires stronger integration of guides into policy frameworks, ensuring that their advocative efforts are recognized and supported. In sum, the advocative role of guides positions them as protectors of sustainability values. By actively encouraging responsible behavior and championing local practices, they go beyond interpretation and education, directly influencing the choices tourists make during their stay in Bali. This role underscores their strategic importance as partners in achieving the province's sustainable tourism objectives.

4.5 Challenges Faced by Tour Guides in Bali

While tour guides in Bali play vital educational, interpretative, and advocative roles, their contributions to sustainable tourism are constrained by a number of challenges. These constraints span institutional, economic, and professional dimensions, all of which affect their ability to consistently integrate sustainability into guiding practices. One of the most pressing issues concerns training and certification gaps. Although many guides are formally certified under the Indonesian Professional Certification Authority (BNSP), not all certification programs emphasize sustainability competencies. Research by Suarta et al. (2019) suggest that sustainability training is often optional rather than embedded

into the core curriculum. As a result, the knowledge and skills of guides in promoting sustainability remain uneven across the industry.

Guides also face significant economic vulnerability, particularly during periods of fluctuating tourist arrivals and seasonality. Limited job security and unstable income streams can reduce both motivation and the ability to invest in professional development, including sustainability-focused training (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). Another recurring difficulty lies in language and communication barriers, which can undermine the effectiveness of sustainability messages. Bali attracts tourists from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and not all guides possess the advanced communication skills required to convey sustainability concepts clearly. Hu and Wall (2020) argue that sustainability advocacy requires not only technical knowledge but also interpretive competencies that foster empathy and behavioral change.

In addition, there are shortcomings in institutional support and policy integration. Although Bali has introduced sustainability-related regulations, tour guides are not always systematically involved in these frameworks. Consequently, many efforts to encourage sustainable practices rely heavily on individual initiative rather than coordinated institutional backing. An additional concern is the tension between tourist satisfaction and sustainability principles. Some visitors prioritize convenience and entertainment over responsible behavior, creating dilemmas for guides. Requests for single-use plastics, restricted photo opportunities, or disruptive behavior at sacred sites illustrate situations where guides must balance client demands with sustainability values (López-Sanz et al., 2021).

4.6 Strategies for Strengthening the Role of Tour Guides

Addressing the challenges faced by tour guides in Bali requires coordinated strategies that connect directly with their educational, interpretative, and advocative roles. By aligning professional development, institutional support, and community engagement with these functions, tour guides can more effectively advance sustainable tourism.

a. **Embedding Sustainability in Training and Certification.**

Strengthening the educational role of guides requires continuous professional development that integrates sustainability as a core competency. Structured training on environmental communication, cultural interpretation, and advocacy skills will ensure consistency across the industry. Suarta et al. (2019) emphasize that embedding sustainability in certification standards can raise professional quality while equipping guides to educate tourists more effectively.

b. **Enhancing Institutional Support and Policy Integration.**

To reinforce the advocative role, the provincial government of Bali and the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism should formally recognize guides as frontline partners in sustainability implementation. This includes involving them in eco-certification schemes, heritage conservation, and destination management planning (Utama & Junaedi, 2022). Policy frameworks that legitimize guides' advocacy will strengthen their authority to encourage responsible practices among tourists.

c. **Strengthening Economic Resilience.**

Economic stability enables guides to consistently fulfill all three roles. Without financial security, their ability to act as educators, interpreters, and advocates is compromised. Access to social protection mechanisms, financial literacy training, and alternative livelihood opportunities during low seasons can reduce vulnerability

to crises. Building resilience supports both personal well-being and long-term commitment to sustainability goals.

d. Improving Communication and Digital Skills.

The interpretative role of guides can be expanded by strengthening communication competencies and adopting digital tools. Foreign language proficiency and digital literacy such as using mobile apps, virtual tours, or social media platforms allow guides to convey sustainability messages to diverse audiences in engaging ways. López-Sanz et al. (2021) highlight that digital platforms significantly enhance the reach and impact of sustainability advocacy.

e. Integrating Local Wisdom and Community-Based Tourism.

The educational and interpretative roles are further enriched when indigenous knowledge is embedded into guiding practices. Collaborating with communities in destinations such as Penglipuran and Tenganan ensures that sustainability is framed within local cultural identity. This not only deepens tourist appreciation but also empowers communities and strengthens cultural preservation.

These strategies reinforce the idea that tour guides are not merely service providers but strategic partners in realizing Bali's sustainable tourism vision. By connecting capacity-building, policy support, economic resilience, and community collaboration directly with their educational, interpretative, and advocative roles, guides can continue to safeguard cultural heritage, protect the environment, and inspire responsible behavior among both tourists and local stakeholders.

5. CONCLUSION

This study set out to analyze the strategic roles of tour guides in promoting sustainable tourism in Bali. The findings confirm that tour guides are not merely facilitators of tourist experiences, but rather strategic actors who contribute to sustainability through three main functions: (1) educational, by raising environmental and cultural awareness; (2) interpretative, by providing meaningful context to heritage and natural sites; and (3) advocative, by encouraging tourists to adopt responsible behaviors. These roles directly address the study's objective of identifying how tour guides can act as agents of sustainability at the destination level. However, the study also reveals persistent challenges, including limited sustainability-focused training, economic vulnerability, communication barriers, and weak integration of guides into formal policy frameworks. These constraints highlight gaps between policy aspirations and actual practices on the ground.

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations are proposed. First, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, together with the Provincial Government of Bali, should embed sustainability modules into mandatory certification and training programs for tour guides. Second, policies are needed to strengthen the economic resilience of guides, such as access to social protection schemes and financial support during tourism downturns. Third, guides should be systematically included in destination management planning and policy frameworks, ensuring that their on-the-ground knowledge informs decision-making. Fourth, the development of digital and language skills should be prioritized to enhance guides' capacity to communicate sustainability messages effectively across diverse markets. Finally, stronger partnerships between guides and local communities should be encouraged to integrate indigenous knowledge into sustainable tourism practices. The implications of this study extend beyond Bali. Recognizing tour guides as policy partners rather than auxiliary actors is

crucial for advancing sustainable tourism across Indonesia. By empowering guides with training, institutional backing, and economic security, policymakers can ensure that guides play a transformative role in balancing cultural preservation, environmental protection, and economic benefits. This study thus contributes not only to local debates on Bali's tourism future but also to the broader discourse on tourism governance and sustainability at the national and international levels.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 203-216

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOOD 1820 RESTAURANT ATMOSPHERE AND SERVICE QUALITY ON GUEST SATISFACTION AT HIGH SEASON YUAN GARDEN HOTEL

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how restaurant ambiance and service quality influence customer satisfaction at Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel, Pasar Baru, during peak season. The increasing number of customers during the busiest time of the year, which makes the restaurant busier and can impact customer experience, was the driving force behind this study. One hundred respondents who came during the peak season were given a questionnaire as part of the quantitative research process. IBM SPSS version 29 was used to evaluate the data using multiple linear regression, validity, reliability, classical assumptions, t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination. The results showed that customer satisfaction was positively and significantly influenced by restaurant decor and service quality. Compared to restaurant ambiance, service quality was the factor with the greatest impact. According to the coefficient of determination value, 47.8% of customer satisfaction can be explained by these two variables, with the remainder influenced by variables not included in this study. These results suggest that to maintain customer satisfaction during peak season, service management and restaurant ambiance must be considered.

Keywords: Restaurant Ambience, Service Quality, Guest Satisfaction, High Season, Hotel Restaurant

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, tourism has continued to develop as one of the sectors contributing significantly to economic growth in Indonesia. The increasing movement of tourists has encouraged the expansion of various supporting industries, including accommodation, transportation, and food and beverage services. These sectors collectively contribute to visitors' overall perceptions during their travels. According to the Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia (2026), the tourism sector contributed 4.01% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the third quarter of 2024, indicating continuous growth compared to previous years.

Among the supporting sectors in tourism, the food and beverage industry plays an important role in shaping visitors' impressions. Restaurants are not only considered places to dine, but also environments where tourists interact, relax, and spend time during

their visits. Culinary activities may enrich visitors' perceptions and increase tourist interest in a destination (Yudian & Demolingo, 2022). This condition indicates that dining activities have become part of tourism activities rather than merely fulfilling consumption needs.

The growth of tourism activities has also contributed to the development of the hospitality industry, particularly hotels that provide accommodation and supporting facilities for travelers. In addition to lodging services, hotels also offer restaurant facilities that may influence guests' comfort and perceptions during their stay. In hotel restaurants, guests evaluate not only the quality of food and beverages, but also the interactions and services provided by employees. Responsive communication, attentiveness, and service accuracy become important aspects influencing guest perceptions during dining activities (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2022). Mulyapradana et al. (2020) also explain that service quality contributes to forming positive guest perceptions in hospitality businesses.

Changes in consumer behavior have also increased visitors' attention toward restaurant atmosphere and environmental comfort. Customers tend to assess not only the products they consume, but also the conditions and interactions they encounter while visiting a restaurant. According to Bitner et al. (1992), the physical environment within a service area plays an important role in shaping customer responses and behaviors. In restaurant settings, environmental conditions such as cleanliness, crowd density, noise levels, spatial arrangement, and overall comfort may influence visitors' dining perceptions. Recent studies by Han & Hyun (2017) and Ryu & Shawn Jang (2008) also indicate that restaurant atmosphere and environmental comfort contribute to customer evaluations and satisfaction within hospitality services.

Besides environmental conditions, service quality remains one of the main factors influencing guest satisfaction in restaurant operations. In hospitality businesses, guests expect services that are responsive, reliable, and professionally delivered. Service quality becomes increasingly important because interactions between staff and guests occur directly throughout the dining process. Pratama & Dellyana (2024) that service quality in restaurant businesses is closely associated with customer perceptions during service encounters. Similarly, Tjiptono & Chandra (2007) state that service quality influences customer evaluations through the company's ability to fulfill customer expectations consistently.

In restaurant and hospitality operations, there is a period commonly known as the high season, which refers to conditions where visitor numbers increase significantly compared to normal periods. This situation generally occurs during holidays or festive seasons that encourage higher tourism activities. Previous studies have indicated that increased customer density during busy periods may create challenges in maintaining customer comfort and service quality. Ha et al. (2023) noted that perceived crowding in restaurant environments can affect customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions.

This phenomenon can also be observed at Wood 1820 Restaurant, located at Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar Baru, Jakarta. As part of the hotel's food and beverage department, the restaurant plays an important role in serving hotel guests and external visitors. Wood 1820 Restaurant has a seating capacity of 120 guests, while Yuan Garden Hotel itself provides 315 rooms that potentially contribute to high guest traffic during certain periods. Based on the restaurant's internal data, the total number of guest visits in 2025 reached 200,358 visitors, with an average of approximately 16,697 visitors per month. Several months showed a substantial increase in visitor numbers, indicating peak operational conditions.

Based on observations conducted during the internship period, Wood 1820 Restaurant experienced manpower shortages during busy operational periods. As a result, several back-office employees were assigned to assist restaurant service activities such as greeting guests, cleaning tables, and handling restaurant preparations. However, some supporting staff members did not possess specific competencies in food and beverage service operations. This condition created several operational challenges, including slower service coordination, limited product knowledge, and difficulties in responding to guest requests. In addition, crowded restaurant conditions potentially affected environmental comfort through increased noise levels, limited movement space, and decreased dining convenience.

Previous studies have widely discussed restaurant atmosphere, service quality, and guest satisfaction in hospitality businesses. However, most studies were conducted under normal operational conditions and primarily focused on general restaurant environments. Limited research has specifically examined restaurant operations during high-demand periods such as the high season, where operational intensity, crowd density, and employee workload increase significantly. In addition, studies discussing the involvement of non-service staff in restaurant operations during crowded periods remain limited, particularly in hotel restaurant settings. These conditions may create different operational challenges that potentially influence guests' perceptions and satisfaction levels. Therefore, this study offers novelty by examining the relationship between restaurant atmosphere and service quality toward guest satisfaction under high-intensity operational conditions at a hotel restaurant.

Based on these conditions, this study was conducted to analyze the relationship between restaurant atmosphere, service quality, and guest satisfaction during the high season period at Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar Baru.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Restaurant Atmosphere

Restaurant atmosphere is recognized as an important factor influencing customers' perceptions and evaluations within hospitality businesses. Customers generally assess not only the products provided by a restaurant but also the physical and social environment experienced during their visit. Environmental conditions may influence comfort, emotional responses, and overall impressions of service encounters, which subsequently contribute to customer evaluations of the restaurant (Al-Kilani & El Hedhli, 2021; Han & Hyun, 2017).

The concept of restaurant atmosphere is closely associated with the Servicescape Theory proposed by Bitner et al. (1992), which explains that customer responses can be influenced by the physical environment where services are delivered. According to this theory, servicescape consists of three main dimensions: ambient conditions, spatial layout and functionality, and signs, symbols, and artifacts. Ambient conditions include environmental elements such as lighting, temperature, cleanliness, aroma, and noise levels. Spatial layout and functionality refer to the arrangement of physical facilities, furniture placement, and the effectiveness of the environment in supporting customer activities. Meanwhile, signs, symbols, and artifacts relate to visual elements such as decoration, interior design, signage, and other physical cues that help customers interpret the service environment (Bitner et al., 1992).

Recent studies have confirmed the continued relevance of environmental conditions in shaping customer perceptions within hospitality settings. Al-Kilani & El

Hedhli (2021) found that restaurant atmospherics contribute to customers' emotional responses and evaluations during dining activities. Similarly, Batat (2022) emphasized that a well-designed physical environment enhances customer comfort and supports positive consumption experiences. Furthermore, Ryu & Shawn Jang (2008) reported that factors such as crowd density and noise levels may influence customers' perceptions during restaurant visits.

In addition to physical conditions, social interactions within the service environment also contribute to restaurant atmosphere. Increased visitor density, staff activities, and customer interactions may influence how customers perceive comfort and service conditions. Research conducted by Ramadhani, Digdowiseiso, and Demolingo (2022) showed that customer perceptions may be affected by the intensity of activities occurring within hospitality environments. Likewise, Wachyuni, Demolingo and Wiweka (2021) explained that environmental and social conditions play an important role in shaping customer experiences during service encounters.

In this study, restaurant atmosphere refers to customers' perceptions of the physical and social environment experienced during dining activities at Wood 1820 Restaurant. Based on the Servicescape Theory proposed by Bitner et al. (1992) and the restaurant atmospherics concept developed by Al-Kilani & El Hedhli (2021), restaurant atmosphere in this study is measured through indicators of visitor density, noise level, spatial comfort, layout organization, and restaurant cleanliness.

2.2 Quality of Service

Service quality is considered one of the important factors influencing customer evaluations in hospitality businesses. In restaurant operations, guests generally expect services that are responsive, reliable, and delivered professionally. Customer perceptions toward service quality are formed through direct interactions between employees and guests during the service process. Therefore, service quality plays an important role in shaping customer impressions and evaluations within hospitality services (Wirtz & Lovelock, 2022).

The concept of service quality is closely associated with the servqual theory introduced by Parasuraman et al. (1988). Servqual explains that service quality can be evaluated through the comparison between customer expectations and the actual services received. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), service quality consists of five dimensions, namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Tangibles refer to physical evidence such as employee appearance, equipment, and facility conditions supporting service activities. Reliability relates to the company's ability to provide services accurately and consistently. Responsiveness reflects employees' willingness to assist customers and provide prompt services. Assurance refers to employees' knowledge, courtesy, and ability to build customer trust. Meanwhile, empathy relates to attention, understanding, and individualized care provided to customers.

In hospitality businesses, service quality becomes increasingly important because customers interact directly with employees during service encounters. Wirtz & Lovelock (2022) explain that service quality contributes to customer evaluations because guests tend to assess not only service outcomes, but also the service delivery process. Similarly, Pratama & Dellyana (2024) emphasize that service quality in restaurant operations can be evaluated through servqual dimensions, including reliability and responsiveness, which represent important aspects of customers' assessments of service performance.

Several previous studies have also demonstrated that service quality contributes to customer satisfaction in hospitality businesses. Tjiptono & Chandra (2007) explain that customers generally evaluate service quality through consistency, responsiveness, and the company's ability to fulfill expectations. In addition, Mbulu et al. (2023) found that positive interactions between guests and service providers enhance customer satisfaction, which subsequently encourages favorable behavioral responses in hospitality settings.

In this study, service quality refers to customers' evaluations regarding the services provided by employees during dining activities at Wood 1820 Restaurant. The indicators used in this study consist of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy during high-intensity operational periods (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

2.3 Guest Satisfaction

Guest satisfaction is considered one of the important indicators in evaluating service performance within hospitality businesses. Customer satisfaction generally arises when the services and conditions received meet or exceed customer expectations. In restaurant operations, guest satisfaction may influence customer perceptions, revisit intentions, and recommendations toward hospitality services. Therefore, guest satisfaction becomes an important aspect in maintaining operational performance and long-term customer relationships within hospitality businesses (Kotler, Keller and Chernev, 2022).

The concept of customer satisfaction is closely related to the Expectation Confirmation Theory (ECT) introduced by Oliver (2014). This theory explains that satisfaction is formed through a comparison between customer expectations before receiving services and the actual performance perceived after the service process. Customers tend to feel satisfied when the services received are consistent with or exceed their expectations, while dissatisfaction may occur when perceived performance is lower than expected Oliver (2014).

In hospitality businesses, customer satisfaction may be influenced by various operational factors, including environmental comfort and service quality. Wirtz & Lovelock (2022) explain that customer satisfaction is associated with customers' evaluations toward the overall service process within hospitality services. Similarly, Kotler, Keller and Chernev (2022) state that customer satisfaction reflects customers' feelings after comparing expectations with the performance received from products or services.

Several previous studies have also demonstrated that restaurant atmosphere and service quality contribute to customer satisfaction in hospitality businesses. Han & Hyun (2017) explain that environmental comfort and dining conditions may influence customer evaluations during hospitality service activities. In addition, Amat Manal et al. (2024) found that high-quality service significantly enhances customer satisfaction and strengthens customers' intentions to revisit hospitality establishments.

In this study, guest satisfaction refers to customers' evaluations regarding their dining experiences at Wood 1820 Restaurant during the high season period. The indicators used in this study include expectation conformity, overall satisfaction, revisit intention, and willingness to recommend the restaurant to others (Indrasari, 2019).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of restaurant atmosphere and service quality on guest satisfaction at Wood 1820 Restaurant,

Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar Baru. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because the study focused on measuring relationships among variables using numerical data and statistical analysis. Data were collected during periods of high visitor intensity, when restaurant operations experienced increased customer traffic and service activities.

The population of this study consisted of all guests who dined at Wood 1820 Restaurant during the research period. Because the exact number of restaurant visitors could not be determined and continuously changed throughout the observation period, the sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error. The use of a 10% error tolerance was considered acceptable for exploratory studies conducted in operational service environments where population characteristics are dynamic and difficult to identify precisely. Based on the calculation results, a total of 100 respondents were selected as research participants.

Respondents were selected using incidental sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate when encountered by the researcher. This technique was considered suitable because restaurant guests arrived at different times and the researcher did not have prior access to a complete sampling frame. Similar approaches have frequently been applied in hospitality and service-related studies where customer populations are mobile and difficult to predict. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of statements related to restaurant atmosphere, service quality, and guest satisfaction. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The use of the Likert scale enabled respondents to express their perceptions and evaluations systematically while facilitating quantitative analysis.

The restaurant atmosphere variable was measured using indicators of visitor density, noise level, spatial comfort, layout organization, and restaurant cleanliness. Service quality was measured based on the servqual dimensions proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988), including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Guest satisfaction was measured through indicators reflecting customers' evaluations of their dining experience, service performance, and overall satisfaction after receiving the restaurant services.

Prior to hypothesis testing, the research instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability tests. Validity testing was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation analysis to determine whether each questionnaire item accurately measured the intended construct. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with values above 0.70 indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Furthermore, classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure that the regression model met statistical requirements. The normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Multicollinearity was assessed through tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values to identify potential correlations among independent variables. Heteroscedasticity testing was also conducted to examine whether the variance of residuals remained constant across observations. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29. The analytical procedures included descriptive statistics, validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption testing, multiple linear regression analysis, coefficient of determination analysis, t-tests, and F-tests. These analyses were conducted to evaluate both the individual and simultaneous effects of restaurant atmosphere and service quality on guest satisfaction.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

One hundred respondents who visited Wood 1820 Restaurant at Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar Baru during the busiest time of the year participated in this survey. Restaurant atmosphere (variable X1), service quality (variable X2), and customer satisfaction (variable Y) are the variables used in this study.

4.1 Validity Test

To ensure that each statement accurately reflects the research variables, validity testing was conducted. The following table displays the validity testing findings for the variables restaurant atmosphere, service quality, and guest satisfaction.

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Variables	Number of Items	R Range Count	R Table	Sig.	Information
Restaurant Atmosphere	12	0.450–0.678	0.196	< 0.001	Valid
Quality of Service	10	0.497–0.637	0.196	< 0.001	Valid
Guest Satisfaction	4	0.744–0.816	0.196	< 0.001	Valid

Source: Researchers (2026)

Based on the test results, each statement item has a calculated r value above the table r value of 0.196 with a significance level below 0.05. According to these findings, each item in the restaurant atmosphere, service quality, and guest satisfaction variables met the validity criteria and therefore can be used as a research tool.

4.2 Reliability Test

Reliability testing is the next step after the instrument is deemed valid to determine how consistently respondents answer the statement items in each research variable.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Standard	Number of Items	Information
Restaurant Atmosphere	0.799	0.70	12	Reliable
Quality of Service	0.766	0.70	10	Reliable
Guest Satisfaction	0.775	0.70	4	Reliable

Source: Researchers (2026)

The reliability test results indicate that all variables achieved Cronbach's Alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.70. Therefore, all constructs demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and were considered reliable for further analysis.

4.3 Classical Assumption Test

a. Normality Test

Table 3. Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		100
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Standard Deviation	2.12005997
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.075
	Positive	.045
	Negative	-.075
Test Statistics		.075

Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) c		.187
Sig.		.181
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) d	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound .171
		Upper Bound .191

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 299883525.

Source: Researchers (2026)

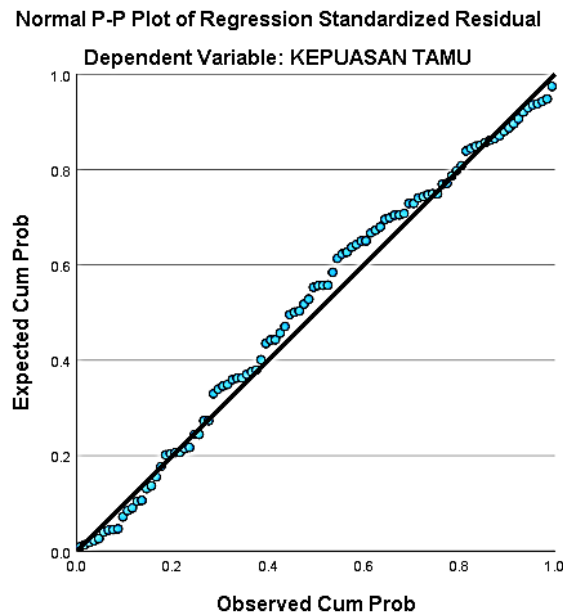


Figure 1. Normal P–P Plot Normality Test Graph

Source: Researchers (2026)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a significance level of approximately 0.187, which is higher than 0.05. This indicates that the residual is normally distributed. This condition indicates that the multiple linear regression model can use data collected from respondents at the Wood 1820 Restaurant during the high season of the year. Furthermore, the Normal PP Plot graph shows that the residual points are spread along the diagonal line, meeting the normality assumption of the study.

b. Multicollinearity Test

To determine whether the independent variables in the research model are too strongly related, a multicollinearity test is performed. The following table displays the results of the multicollinearity test.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	.548	1,662		.330	.742		
Restaurant Atmosphere	.096	.035	.231	2,740	.007	.760	1,316
Quality Of Service	.270	.041	.548	6,514	<.001	.760	1,316

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

Source: Researchers (2026)

According to the research findings, the restaurant quality and service factors have a tolerance of 0.760 and a VIF of 1.316. Tolerance values exceeded 0.10 and VIF values were below 10, here is no indication of multicollinearity between the two independent variables in question.

These findings indicate that restaurant atmosphere and service quality have distinct measurement characteristics in explaining customer satisfaction at Wood 1820 Restaurant. Therefore, the research regression model can combine both variables.

c. Heteroscedasticity Test

The stability of residual variance in the research regression model was evaluated using a heteroscedasticity test. The Glejser test was used for this test, and the accompanying table displays the results.

Table 5. Glejser Heteroscedasticity Test
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	4,369	.914		4,781	<.001
Restaurant Atmosphere	-.028	.019	-.162	-1,446	.151
Quality Of Service	-.034	.023	-.167	-1,498	.138

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_Res

Source: Researchers (2026)

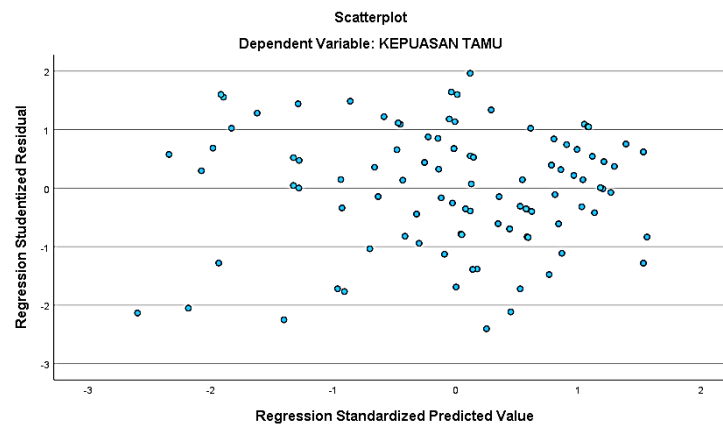


Figure 2. Scatterplot Graph of Heteroscedasticity Test

Source: Researchers (2026)

The significance values for the restaurant environment and service quality variables were 0.151 and 0.138, respectively. These values indicate that the residual variance in the research model tends to be stable, thus no indication of heteroscedasticity was found.

These findings indicate that the residual variance of the regression model is generally stable. The residuals in the research model can be considered randomly distributed because the distribution of points on the scatterplot graph does not appear to be clustered or develop a specific pattern. Therefore, the regression model used is considered appropriate to investigate the impact of service quality and restaurant atmosphere on customer satisfaction at the Wood 1820 Restaurant during the high season period.

4.4 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

In a study at the Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel, Pasar Baru, multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the extent to which restaurant atmosphere and service quality contribute to customer satisfaction during the high season. After all research data met the classical assumptions, this test was conducted to allow the research model to be used for further analysis. The following table regression analysis findings.

Table 6. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	.548	1,662		.330	.742
Restaurant Atmosphere	.096	.035	.231	2,740	.007
Quality Of Service	.270	.041	.548	6,514	<,001

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

Source: Researchers (2026)

The regression analysis indicates that both restaurant atmosphere and service quality positively contribute to guest satisfaction. However, service quality demonstrates a stronger influence, as reflected by its higher standardized coefficient value compared with restaurant atmosphere. This finding suggests that during periods of increased customer volume, guests place greater emphasis on how services are delivered than on environmental conditions alone.

This result is consistent with the servqual framework proposed by A. Parasuraman and colleagues, which emphasizes that reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible aspects of service play a crucial role in shaping customer evaluations. In high-demand service settings, customers continue to expect prompt, accurate, and courteous service despite operational pressures. Therefore, maintaining service consistency becomes essential for sustaining positive perceptions.

The positive influence of restaurant atmosphere also supports the Servicescape Theory proposed by Mary Jo Bitner. A comfortable dining environment, appropriate spatial arrangement, manageable noise levels, and cleanliness contribute to customers' evaluations of their dining experience. This finding further supports recent studies by Al-Kilani & El Hedhli (2021), which suggest that environmental and social conditions influence customer perceptions during restaurant visits.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

a. T-Test

In the test, a t-test was used to determine the partial impact of each independent variable on customer satisfaction during the high season at Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar. The following table results of the test.

Table 7. T-Test Results
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	.548	1,662		.330	.742
Restaurant Atmosphere	.096	.035	.231	2,740	.007
Quality Of Service	.270	.041	.548	6,514	<,001

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

Source: Researchers (2026)

The t-test results revealed that both restaurant atmosphere and service quality had a positive and significant effect on guest satisfaction. Restaurant atmosphere obtained a t-value of 2.740 with a significance level of 0.007, while service quality produced a t-value of 6.514 with a significance level below 0.001. These findings indicate that both variables contribute to guest satisfaction, although service quality exerts a stronger influence.

The significance of restaurant atmosphere suggests that dining experiences are shaped not only by food and service delivery but also by the environment in which consumption takes place. Elements such as cleanliness, spatial comfort, crowd density, and restaurant layout can affect how guests evaluate their overall experience. This outcome supports the Servicescape Theory proposed by Bitner et al. (1992), which emphasizes the role of the physical environment in shaping customer perceptions and behavioral responses. A similar conclusion was reported by Al-Kilani & El Hedhli (2021), who found that restaurant atmospherics play an important role in enhancing customer experiences and overall evaluations.

Service quality demonstrated a greater influence than restaurant atmosphere. This finding implies that interactions between employees and guests remain a critical factor in determining satisfaction levels. Prompt assistance, professional conduct, and reliable service delivery help create favorable impressions and strengthen customer evaluations of the restaurant. The result is consistent with the servqual model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) and supports the findings of Zygiaris et al. (2022), who highlighted service quality as a key determinant of customer satisfaction.

b. F-Test

This study used an f-test to determine the simultaneous effect of service quality and restaurant atmosphere on customer satisfaction. The following table displays the test findings.

Table 8. F-Test Results

Model	Sum of Squares	Anova		F	Sig.
		df	Mean Square		
1 Regression	407,219	2	203,610	44,385	<,001b
Residual	444,971	97	4,587		
Total	852,190	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Guest Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Service Quality, Restaurant Atmosphere

Source: Researchers (2026)

The f-test generated an f-value of 44.385 with a significance level below 0.001, confirming that restaurant atmosphere and service quality jointly influence guest satisfaction.

This result indicates that customer evaluations are formed through the combined effects of environmental and service-related factors. A comfortable dining environment can enhance the overall experience, while high-quality service helps ensure that customer expectations are fulfilled. Therefore, achieving higher levels of satisfaction requires not only an attractive atmosphere but also consistent and professional service delivery. These findings are in line with the study conducted by (Adato Goeltom et al., 2024), which reported that dining atmosphere and service quality simultaneously contribute to customer satisfaction within the restaurant.

c. Coefficient of Determination

In this study, the influence of restaurant atmosphere characteristics and service quality on customer satisfaction was assessed using the coefficient of determination. The magnitude of the research variables' contribution to guest satisfaction is shown in the coefficient of determination results in the following table.

Table 9. Results of The Determination Coefficient Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.548	1,662		.330	.742
Restaurant Atmosphere	.096	.035	.231	2,740	.007
Quality Of Service	.270	.041	.548	6,514	<.001

Source: Researchers (2026)

The coefficient of determination analysis produced an R^2 value of 0.478. This result indicates that 47.8% of the variation in guest satisfaction can be explained by restaurant atmosphere and service quality, while the remaining 52.2% is attributable to factors outside the research model.

The proportion explained by the model suggests that both variables play a substantial role in shaping guests' evaluations of their dining experience. Nevertheless, satisfaction in the hospitality industry is often influenced by a wider range of factors. Food and beverage quality, price perceptions, menu variety, supporting facilities, and pre-visit expectations may also contribute to how guests assess the services they receive. This interpretation is consistent with Wirtz & Lovelock (2022), who argue that customer satisfaction reflects a comprehensive evaluation of the overall service experience rather than a response to only one or two service attributes.

4.6 Descriptive Statistics

During the peak season at Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel, Pasar Baru, respondents' evaluations of research variables—such as restaurant ambiance, service quality, and guest satisfaction—were summarized using descriptive statistics. The following table displays the findings from these descriptive statistics.

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics Results

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Restaurant Atmosphere	100	23.00	58.00	47,0700	7,05141
Quality of Service	100	23.00	49.00	39,0200	5,96451
Guest Satisfaction	100	6.00	20.00	15,5900	2.93394

Source: Researchers (2026)

The results of descriptive data processing show that the restaurant atmosphere variable obtained an average score of 47.0700 with a standard deviation value of 7.05141. This score indicates that most guests gave a relatively good assessment of the condition of the Wood 1820 Restaurant during the high season period. Although restaurant activity increased due to the high number of visitors, respondents still considered the restaurant area quite comfortable, well-organized, and supportive of dining activities.

For the service quality variable, the average score was 39.0200 with a standard deviation of 5.96451. This value indicates that the service provided to guests during the high season period was still considered quite optimal. Even in busier restaurant conditions compared to normal days, the staff's ability to maintain responsive service, accuracy of presentation, and interaction with customers remained important factors for guests when assessing their experience at the restaurant.

The guest satisfaction variable obtained an average score of 15.5900 with a standard deviation of 2.93394. These results indicate that the majority of respondents felt their experience during their visit to Wood 1820 Restaurant was satisfactory. This assessment was influenced not only by the service received but also by the restaurant's environmental conditions during the high season.

Overall, the study findings indicate that the ambiance and service quality of Wood 1820 Restaurant influence customer satisfaction. Restaurant operations become more dynamic during peak season due to increased customer numbers, making customer perceptions more sensitive to the quality of service interactions and the ambiance of the establishment. In this study, restaurant ambiance appears to have a smaller impact on customer satisfaction than service quality. As long as service remains smooth and meets customer expectations, this suggests that customers are generally able to tolerate a busy restaurant atmosphere.

5. CONCLUSION

This study shows that restaurant ambiance and service quality have a positive and significant influence on guest satisfaction during the high season at Wood 1820 Restaurant, Yuan Garden Hotel Pasar Baru. A comfortable, organized, clean, and manageable restaurant atmosphere under busy conditions can support a positive dining experience for guests. Service quality is the most dominant variable in influencing guest satisfaction. This indicates that staff friendliness, speed of service, accuracy in meeting guest needs, and staff ability to respond to requests are important aspects that need to be maintained, especially when the number of guests increases during the high season. Together, restaurant atmosphere and service quality accounted for 47.8% of guest satisfaction, with the remainder influenced by factors outside of this study. Therefore, Wood 1820 Restaurant needs to maintain service quality while managing the restaurant's atmosphere to ensure guest satisfaction, even when the restaurant is busy.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 217-224

FOOD SAFETY TEMPERATURE MONITORING AT THE MONTAGE BIG SKY HOTEL IN THE UNITED STATES

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Received: 09/04/2026

Revised: 20/05/2026

Accepted: 20/06/2026

Abstract

This study aims to determine the influence of temperature control in the pizza-making process and to understand the storage management mechanisms for raw materials and cooked materials in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel, United States. Temperature control is a crucial factor in modern food safety systems as one of the Critical Control Points (CCP) based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) to prevent the growth of pathogenic microorganisms and cross-contamination. Using a descriptive qualitative approach through participatory observation during an internship period, the researcher directly observed daily kitchen operational procedures. Data collection was also supported by semi-structured interviews with the Chef de Cuisine, Sous Chef, and kitchen staff, alongside temperature log documentation. The results indicate that the Montage Big Sky kitchen has implemented a structured and sustainable temperature control system. Daily temperature monitoring is consistently conducted for chiller and freezer facilities utilizing temperature log sheets. In the pizza-making process, dough fermentation temperature is strictly controlled to maintain yeast activity stability, while baking is performed at an adequate high temperature to ensure the destruction of pathogenic microorganisms. Furthermore, the storage of raw and cooked materials is separated using closed containers and systematic shelf arrangements. Overall, the field implementation aligns with standard operating procedures (SOP) and HACCP principles, though staff discipline and consistent managerial supervision remain essential to maintain service quality and food safety for hotel guests.

Keywords: Food Safety, Temperature Control, Food Storage Management, HACCP, Pizza

1. INTRODUCTION

The international hospitality industry is currently developing at a rapid pace, bringing ever-higher demands for quality of service, not only in terms of facilities and comfort, but also in the aspects of health and consumer safety. One of the most crucial parameters in hotel operations, particularly within the Food and Beverage Product department, is the assurance of food safety. International-scale hotels, such as the Montage Big Sky Hotel in the United States, which serve global guests with premium service standards, are obligated to implement strict food processing and storage procedures to maintain their reputation and avoid legal risks due to food contamination.

In a professional kitchen environment, food is produced in large volumes with complex variations; therefore, the potential for biological, chemical, or physical hazards becomes significantly high if not managed systematically.

Among the various food products served in hotels, yeast-dough-based products like pizza possess their own critical characteristics within their production chain. The pizza-making process involves stages that are highly sensitive to environmental parameters, ranging from the storage of fresh raw materials, the dough fermentation process (proofing), to the final stage of baking. Operational discrepancies at any of these stages can have a fatal impact on the sensory quality of the product and, most importantly, on the food safety aspect itself. Consequently, science-based supervision that references measurable parameters is absolutely necessary in the daily operations of hospitality kitchen production.

In modern food safety management systems recognized globally, temperature control is identified as one of the primary factors to prevent, inhibit, or eliminate the growth of pathogenic microorganisms. Spoilage or disease-causing bacteria, molds, and yeasts (foodborne illness) have specific temperature zones known as the danger zone, where they can multiply very rapidly. Failure to maintain proper storage or processing temperatures outside of this danger zone will accelerate the degradation of food quality and increase the risk of poisoning for consumers. According to Irawan (2023), based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Control Points (HACCP), the control of this temperature parameter is categorized as a Critical Control Point (CCP). Through proper CCP identification, kitchen management can establish safe critical temperature limits, conduct regular monitoring, and execute rapid corrective actions whenever parameter deviations occur (Narada, 2021).

In the daily kitchen operations at the Montage Big Sky Hotel in the United States, temperature monitoring is implemented continuously across the entire flow of food materials. The main challenge in the field frequently arises within raw material storage management. Hotel kitchens manage two broad categories of materials: raw materials, which are vulnerable to carrying natural biological contaminants, and cooked materials or ready-to-consume products. If these two categories of ingredients are not managed separately through adequate storage systems—such as dividing them into chiller, freezer, and dry storage facilities—the risk of cross-contamination will increase significantly (Arisandi et al., 2019). Rack arrangements, the use of tightly closed storage containers, and the implementation of clear labeling systems serve as crucial supporting instruments to separate these two types of ingredients in the storage area.

Beyond the storage area, the specific process of pizza making at the Montage Big Sky Hotel becomes an important point of observation because it involves controlling temperature during the biochemical and physical phases of the dough. During the fermentation stage (proofing), room temperature and time duration must be controlled precisely so that the yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) can activity optimally to produce carbon dioxide gas. If the environmental temperature is too high, the dough will undergo over-fermentation, which triggers a dominant sour taste and destroys the elasticity of the dough's gluten (Irmawati et al., 2025). Conversely, if the temperature is too low, the metabolic activity of the yeast will be inhibited, causing the dough to fail to rise perfectly. After the fermentation phase is complete, the next critical step is the baking process inside a high-temperature oven. Baking not only serves to cook the dough and bring out the desired color, aroma, and texture characteristics, but it also acts as a destruction step

(killing step) to eliminate any pathogenic microorganisms that might have been carried over during the dough preparation process.

Although modern technological devices such as digital temperature readers and daily temperature log sheets are fully available at the Montage Big Sky Hotel, the real effectiveness of this food safety system ultimately relies heavily on the human factor. Kitchen staff discipline in conducting regular checks, data entry accuracy, and consistency of supervision by management are the primary determinants of successful standard operating procedure (SOP) implementation in the field (Kusumawardhani, 2019). Even the slightest fluctuation in behavior or negligence from the kitchen crew has the potential to create a hazardous gap that undermines overall hotel operational standards.

Based on this background, an empirical analysis of how temperature control and food material arrangement are conducted in an international-scale hotel kitchen becomes highly essential to study. This research aims to comprehensively examine the influence of temperature parameter variations on the pizza production process, evaluate the mechanism for separating the storage of raw and cooked food materials, and analyze the compliance of daily operational practices in the field with the universally applicable HACCP standards in the global tourism and hospitality industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Food safety is a fundamental pillar in the operations of the international hospitality and modern culinary industries to ensure that food consumed by guests does not cause illness or health disorders. According to Sucher, K. P., & Halpern (2014), assuring food safety in star-rated hotels involves strict supervision at every stage of the culinary supply chain, ranging from receiving raw materials, storage, and processing, to final service to consumers. Food contamination can originate from biological hazards (bacteria, viruses, parasites), chemical hazards (toxins, cleaning residues), or physical hazards (foreign objects). Failure to mitigate these contamination risks not only has fatal consequences for consumer health in the form of foodborne illness outbreaks, but can also destroy the reputation and legal operational status of the hotel business.

As a preventive measure against contamination risks, the international hospitality industry implements food safety management systems based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). Irawan (2023) explains that HACCP aims to shift the focus of traditional supervision, which relies on end-product testing, toward a preventive approach at every stage of production. One of the primary pillars of HACCP is the determination of Critical Control Points (CCP), which are operational steps that can be control in a measurable manner to eliminate or minimize food safety hazards to a safe limit. Narada (2021) emphasizes that each identified CCP must have explicit critical limits, a regular monitoring system, and responsive corrective action documentation in the event of operational parameter deviations.

Controlling temperature parameters is the most effective control instrument to stop the multiplication rate of pathogenic microorganisms in professional kitchen areas. Bacteria, molds, and yeasts experience a highly exponential growth phase when they are within the danger zone temperature range. According to the Food and Drug Administration (2022), uncontrolled temperature fluctuations in the kitchen area will accelerate the degradation of the organoleptic quality of food ingredients and multiply the population of disease-causing bacteria. Therefore, monitoring and maintaining daily temperature logs (temperature log sheets) in cold storage facilities (chillers and freezers)

are crucial documentation instruments that must be disciplined executed by the kitchen crew.

Unstructured storage of food ingredients in the kitchen area is a primary stimulant for cross-contamination, which is the transfer of harmful microorganisms from raw food materials to cooked food or ready-to-consumer products. Based on an empirical study by Arisandi et al. (2019), cross-contamination can be significantly reduced through the physical separation of storage spaces between raw materials and cooked materials. Systematic shelf arrangement (such as placing raw materials at the bottom and cooked materials at the top), utilizing airtight containers that are tightly closed, and implementing a day-dot labeling system are indicators of successful storage management in hospitality kitchens.

The culinary manufacturing process based on yeast dough, such as pizza, features dual critical control points that are highly sensitive to environmental temperatures. The first stage is dough fermentation (proofing), where the metabolic activity of yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) converts carbohydrates into carbon dioxide gas. Irmawati et al. (2025) explain that the temperature of the proofing room must be precisely controlled; excessively high temperatures trigger over-fermentation, which damages gluten stability and makes the dough too sour, while excessively low temperatures inhibit yeast performance, causing the dough to fail to rise. The second critical stage is baking in a high-temperature oven. Besides aiming to cook the dough and bring out optimal visual characteristics and crust texture, the baking process acts as a killing step (biological destruction step) to ensure the total eradication of pathogenic bacterial cells that may have been carried over during the dough preparation process.

Although kitchen infrastructure has been equipped with modern technological devices such as smart digital thermometers and automated monitoring systems, the actual effectiveness of the HACCP system ultimately relies on human behavior factors. Kusumawardhani (2019) states that operational staff discipline, data reporting accuracy, and consistency of supervision by management are the primary determinants of successful food safety standard operating procedure (SOP) implementation. Minor negligence or low food safety awareness among the kitchen crew can create biological hazard gaps that threaten the overall service quality standards of the hotel.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was designed using a descriptive qualitative approach with an empirical case study method. The qualitative approach was intentionally selected to describe, evaluate, and comprehensively understand the field phenomena regarding how the food safety temperature monitoring system and the storage mechanisms for raw materials and cooked materials are implemented in daily professional kitchen operations. The entire series of data collection, observation, and field assessment in this study was conducted at the Food and Beverage Product Department, specifically within the production kitchen area of the Montage Big Sky Hotel located in Montana, United States. This research activity was carried out during the industrial internship period which ran from 2025 to early 2026. The selection of this location was based on the relevance of the hotel as an international luxury accommodation that implements very strict global food safety standards by referencing local regulations and the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

The core object examined deeply in this study includes temperature monitoring procedures as one of the Critical Control Points (CCP) in the process of dough making

through pizza baking, as well as the mechanisms for managing, separating, and arranging the storage space for raw food materials and cooked food materials. Meanwhile, the research subjects or informants were determined using a purposive sampling technique, which is the selection of samples based on eligibility criteria and a profound understanding of the research topic. The primary informants involved in this study included the Chef de Cuisine, the Sous Chef, and several senior kitchen staff who are directly responsible for quality control and food safety assurance in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel.

To ensure data trustworthiness through technical triangulation, data in this study were collected through three primary methods simultaneously. The first method was participant observation, in which the researcher engaged directly and actively in daily operational activities in the kitchen, focusing on the discipline of temperature checks, document completion, pizza proofing and baking processes, as well as the physical separation of food placement inside the chillers and freezers. The second method was conducted through semi-structured interviews, where the researcher carried out in-depth question-and-answer sessions with key informants using a flexible interview guide to gather information regarding the hotel's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) policies, constraints faced by staff in the field, and corrective actions taken if temperature parameter deviations occurred. The third method was documentation, involving the collection of secondary data such as official hotel documents, SOP forms, photographic documentation of kitchen facilities, and daily temperature log sheets used to monitor the performance of cooling units.

Furthermore, the data analysis process was conducted interactively and continuously by referencing the qualitative data analysis model which comprises three main stages. The first stage was data reduction, performed by sorting, focusing, simplifying, and abstracting raw data from field notes of observations, interview transcripts, and temperature log documentation into information relevant to the research focus. The second stage was data display, where the reduced data were organized into structured narrative texts, monitoring tables, or operational flowcharts so that relationship patterns and actual conditions in the field could be logically understood. The final stage was conclusion drawing and verification, where the researcher formulated final conclusions based on the presented data patterns, and then performed a deep verification by comparing them against the established theories of food safety, HACCP principles, and applicable SOPs to assess the success rate of the temperature monitoring system at the Montage Big Sky Hotel.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and daily operational evaluations in the production kitchen area of the Montage Big Sky Hotel, United States, food safety temperature monitoring has been implemented in a structured manner as a manifestation of the commitment to international-scale quality service assurance. This implementation encompasses three crucial domains of culinary operations, namely cold storage facility management, biochemical-physical parameter control in the pizza manufacturing process, and storage space arrangement mechanisms to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

4.1 Analysis of Temperature Control in Cold Storage Facilities

As an essential preventive measure to mitigate the growth of pathogenic microorganisms, the kitchen at the Montage Big Sky Hotel operates two primary types of cooling devices: chillers and freezers. Field observations indicate that the use of chillers is specifically intended to maintain the freshness of highly perishable fresh ingredients, while freezers are utilized to secure the stock of frozen food materials.

Temperature monitoring activities are conducted periodically and documented in writing through daily temperature log sheets, which are directly validated by the kitchen supervisor. This administrative and practical procedure aligns with the fundamental principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), where low-temperature storage facilities are categorized as a Critical Control Point (CCP). Through consistent daily recording, temperature fluctuations that could cause food ingredients to enter the danger zone range (the temperature zone for bacterial growth) can be responsively detected and handled before any degradation of organoleptic quality or physical spoilage occurs.

4.2 Parameter Control of Temperature in The Pizza Production Process

The pizza production process in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel serves as an important point of observation because it involves biochemical and physical transformations of the dough that are highly sensitive to environmental temperature changes. Observations during the fermentation stage (proofing) indicate that room temperature stability and duration are the primary determinants of the final pizza dough quality. Precise temperature control during this stage successfully maintains the metabolic activity of the yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) at a constant rate. Field conditions demonstrate that strict temperature oversight eliminates the risk of over-fermentation, which potentially destroys the elasticity of the gluten network and triggers a dominant sour taste due to excess organic acid production. It also prevents dough rising failures caused by excessively low room temperatures.

After the fermentation phase is completed, the next critical step is the baking process inside a specialized high-temperature oven (wood stone oven). The constant high-temperature settings applied in daily operations have proven effective in thoroughly cooking the dough and bringing out optimal visual characteristics, such as a golden-brown color and an ideal crust texture. From a food safety science perspective, the exposure to high thermal energy during this baking process acts as a biological destruction step (killing step) that eradicates all pathogenic microorganisms, molds, or yeasts that might have been introduced via cross-contamination during the dough preparation process. The technical parameters of the digital oven temperature control instrument and the actual pizza baking process in the field are presented in Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2.



Figure 1. Temperature Settings for Baking Pizza
Source: Researchers (2026)



Figure 2. Pizza Baking Process in the Kitchen
Source: Researchers (2026)

4.3 Storage Management and Cross-Contamination Prevention

In addition to monitoring thermal temperature parameters, research findings show that the layout of the food storage space in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel implements a clear physical zoning concept to suppress the risk of cross-contamination. Kitchen management applies a strict separation between the storage area for raw materials, which are vulnerable to carrying bacterial loads or natural external contaminants, and the categories of semi-finished foods as well as cooked materials that are ready for guest consumption.

Technically in the field, the success of this spatial management is supported by three operational pillars: the use of tightly sealed storage containers to prevent exposure to droplets or aerosols between ingredients, a vertically structured shelf arrangement system (placing cooked food on the upper shelves and raw materials on the lower shelves), and disciplined application of a labeling system. This hygienic arrangement practice has proven effective in minimizing indirect contamination and completely aligns with the HACCP-based operational guidelines universally applicable in the global hospitality industry.

Although comprehensive digital monitoring technology is available, the actual effectiveness of food quality assurance in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel ultimately relies heavily on human behavior factors. The discipline of the kitchen crew in performing periodic checks, the accuracy of log data reporting, and the consistency of managerial supervision by the Chef de Cuisine and Sous Chef are vital determinants that transform the monitoring system from a mere administrative formality into a living operational culture implemented for consumer safety.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion regarding food safety temperature monitoring in the production kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel, United States, it can be concluded that the implementation of the food safety system at this international luxury hotel operates in a highly structured and effective manner. Consistent temperature control applied to cold storage facilities (chillers and freezers) has proven capable of maintaining the stability of physical food quality and suppressing the multiplication rate of pathogenic microorganisms outside the danger zone. In the pizza manufacturing process, strict oversight of room temperature and time duration during the dough fermentation phase (proofing) successfully maintains optimal yeast (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) activity, preventing gluten structure failures and the emergence of a dominant sour taste. Furthermore, the exposure to constant high thermal energy during the baking process is proven effective as a biological destruction step (killing step) to ensure the complete eradication of contaminants. Spatial management through clear physical separation between raw materials and cooked materials, reinforced by the use of sealed containers and disciplined labeling, has also proven reliable in mitigating cross-contamination risks in the field. Overall, the entire operational sequence of food safety assurance in the kitchen of the Montage Big Sky Hotel aligns with international hospitality Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and the fundamental principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

As suggestions for future operational development and sustainability, the kitchen management is advised to maintain and enhance the consistency of managerial supervision by both the Chef de Cuisine and Sous Chef regarding staff discipline in conducting periodic checks. Even though the available digital monitoring technological

infrastructure is comprehensive, continuous education and periodic refreshment training on the importance of food safety awareness for all kitchen crew remain absolutely necessary. This is crucial to anticipate any behavioral fluctuations or minor negligences by operational staff, ensuring that food quality and safety assurance does not merely become an administrative formality on temperature log sheets, but remains deeply embedded as a consistent work culture to safeguard consumer safety and maintain the hotel's premium reputation.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 225-238

BETAWI LAKSA AS A CULTURAL CULINARY TOURIST ATTRACTION IN JAKARTA: THE ROLE OF PRODUCT QUALITY AND CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS

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Received: 10/03/2026

Revised: 27/04/2026

Accepted: 27/05/2026

Abstract

This study aims to analyse the role of product quality and consumer perception in sustaining Betawi Laksa as a cultural culinary tourism attraction in Jakarta. A qualitative approach with a case study method was employed, involving seven informants consisting of consumers and culinary practitioners. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and documentation, and analysed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The findings reveal that product quality, particularly authentic taste, is the main strength of Betawi Laksa, while consumer perception tends to be positive but not yet translated into consistent consumption behaviour. This indicates a gap between perception and actual consumption. Furthermore, external factors such as modern culinary trends, visual appeal, and limited promotion influence consumer preferences. The study highlights the importance of balancing intrinsic values (authenticity and cultural meaning) with extrinsic values (presentation, accessibility, and promotion). This research contributes to culinary tourism studies by proposing an integrative perspective between cultural preservation and adaptive innovation in traditional food development.

Keywords: Product Quality, Consumer Perception, Betawi Laksa, Tourist Attraction

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with a rich and diverse traditional culinary heritage and holds great potential as a tourist attraction. Culinary tourism serves not only to satisfy consumption needs but also as a means of preserving local culture and identity (Idris & Modjo, 2025). In this context, traditional cuisine holds high historical and cultural value as it reflects local wisdom and the cultural acculturation processes occurring within society. Therefore, the preservation and development of traditional cuisine are crucial as part of the tourism industry (Gozali & Wijoyo, 2022).

However, in its development, the existence of traditional cuisine has begun to decline. Changes in people's lifestyles which tend toward practicality and increasing competition with modern foods have led to a decrease in interest in traditional dishes (Dewantara, 2021). This situation poses a serious challenge, particularly in efforts to

ensure the sustainability of traditional cuisine amid the increasingly competitive dynamics of the culinary industry (Imaniar et al., 2023).

One traditional dish with high cultural value is Laksa Betawi, a signature dish of Jakarta that forms part of the Betawi community's culinary identity. Laksa Betawi reflects cultural acculturation through the fusion of local flavors and influences from other cultures, giving it a unique character distinct from other traditional dishes (Ismail et al., 2024). However, Laksa Betawi is now increasingly rare and less known among younger generations. This situation indicates challenges in both the preservation and development of traditional cuisine as a tourist attraction (Joanda & Ritonga, 2024).

From a consumer behavior perspective, product quality is one of the primary factors influencing purchasing decisions. Product quality can be defined as a product's ability to meet consumer expectations, encompassing aspects of taste, authenticity, cleanliness, and presentation (Kristiana et al., 2023). Previous research indicates that product quality, particularly taste and authenticity, significantly influences consumer preferences when selecting traditional foods (Hendradewi et al., 2026). Additionally, consumer perception plays a crucial role in determining the appeal of a culinary offering. Consumer perception relates to how individuals evaluate and interpret a product based on experience, knowledge, and information obtained (Ardiansyah & Silmi, 2022).

In the context of tourism, a positive perception of traditional cuisine can enhance a region's tourist appeal. This is evident in the Betawi cultural area, which has successfully attracted tourists through the uniqueness of its cuisine and the cultural values it embodies (Nurannastasya & Yulianti, 2025). Nevertheless, managing product quality and fostering positive public perception remain major challenges in the development of traditional-based culinary tourism (Resmayasari et al., 2025). Taste quality, authenticity of ingredients, hygiene, and presentation must be maintained so that traditional cuisine is not merely viewed as a cultural heritage but can also compete with modern cuisine, which is more readily accepted by today's consumers (Untung et al., 2021).

Previously, while various studies have addressed culinary tourism and consumer behavior, research specifically integrating product quality and consumer perceptions to explain the sustainability of traditional culinary products as tourist attractions remains limited. Most studies tend to address traditional cuisine from the perspectives of cultural preservation, tourism promotion, or general consumer satisfaction, without deeply examining how product quality and consumer perceptions can shape the appeal and sustainability of a traditional dish. Furthermore, research focusing on Laksa Betawi remains scarce, despite this dish possessing strong cultural value and tourism potential as part of Jakarta's culinary identity.

Given this gap, this study offers a novel approach by examining Betawi Laksa through the integration of product quality and consumer perception within the context of cultural culinary tourism. The uniqueness of this study lies in its effort to understand Betawi Laksa not only as a traditional food product but also as a tourist attraction influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic values. Intrinsic values include taste, authenticity, ingredients, and presentation quality, while extrinsic values relate to perceptions, cultural image, consumer experience, and its appeal as a regional specialty. Thus, this study seeks to explain the gap between consumer perceptions of Betawi Laksa and actual consumption behavior amid the declining popularity of this traditional dish.

Therefore, research is needed to examine in greater depth the relationship between product quality and consumer perceptions of the appeal of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism attraction in Jakarta. This study aims to analyze the influence of product quality

and consumer perceptions on the sustainability of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism attraction, with the hope of contributing to efforts to preserve traditional cuisine while enhancing its competitiveness within the tourism industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Culinary Tourism Attractions

Tourism attractions are elements that possess uniqueness, value, and appeal capable of encouraging tourists to visit a destination. In the tourism industry, attractions play a central role in influencing tourists' travel decisions and overall destination competitiveness. Within the context of culinary tourism, attractions are not limited to food consumption but also encompass cultural, historical, and experiential values that allow tourist to engage with local traditions and lifestyles (Miranti & Murdana, 2025).

Traditional cuisine has become an increasingly important component of destination attractiveness because it reflects local identity, heritage, and authenticity. Culinary experiences enable tourists to gain a deeper understanding of a destination through its food culture, making gastronomy an essential element of cultural tourism. Chendraningrum & Suryana (2025) found that culturally rooted cuisine contributes significantly to tourist engagement, satisfaction, and destination attractiveness by creating meaningful cultural experiences and emotional connections between tourist and destinations.

Furthermore, Thio et al. (2024) revealed that tourists' behavioral intentions toward local food are influenced by the perceived value of culinary products and their attitudes toward food experiences. Their findings indicate that authentic and high quality local cuisine can encourage positive behavioral responses, including destination visitation and recommendation intentions.

Recent studies also emphasize that the attractiveness of culinary tourism is strengthened by the uniqueness of local cuisine and the storytelling embedded within gastronomic experiences. Culinary products that communicate cultural narratives and local heritage are more likely to create memorable experiences and differentiate destinations from competitors (Nurwitasari et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of research on culinary tourism, many studies primarily focus on destination development, marketing strategies, and tourist experiences. Research specifically examining how internal product attributes, such as taste quality, authenticity, and consumer perceptions, contribute to culinary tourism attractiveness remains relatively limited. Therefore, further investigation is needed to understand how these factors influence tourists' perceptions and enhance the attractiveness of traditional culinary products as tourism attractions.

2.2 Taste Quality

Taste quality is one of the key dimensions of food product quality that plays a crucial role in shaping consumer satisfaction and preferences. Taste quality encompasses sensory attributes such as palatability, aroma, texture, the authenticity of seasonings, and flavor consistency. In the context of traditional cuisine, taste quality serves as a primary indicator reflecting the authenticity and identity of a dish (Aria & Hidayanti, 2024).

Research by Saragih (2020) indicates that taste quality has a significant influence on customer satisfaction. The better the taste perceived by consumers, the higher the level of satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat purchases. This finding is reinforced by

Hendradewi et al. (2023), who state that taste quality is the dominant factor in consumers' decisions to choose traditional food compared to other factors such as price or location.

Nevertheless, most previous studies have primarily treated taste quality as a factor influencing customer satisfaction and have not extensively examined its role in directly enhancing the appeal of culinary tourism, particularly for regional specialties like Laksa Betawi. In the context of regional specialties such as Laksa Betawi, taste quality is a crucial aspect because it relates to distinctive characteristics, such as the use of spiced coconut milk, the aroma of spices, and traditional flavor profiles. If taste quality is not maintained, the dish's authentic value may diminish, potentially reducing its appeal as a culinary tourism destination.

2.3 Consumer Perceptions

Consumer perception refers to the cognitive process through which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to evaluate a product. In the culinary context, consumer perception is influenced by various factors, such as direct experience, information from the media, social recommendations, and the cultural image associated with the food (Syahrul et al., 2025).

Research by Fernanda & Dewantara (2025) indicates that consumer perception has a significant influence on visitation interest and consumption decisions in culinary tourism. Additionally, Gayatri & Widhiyani (2025) found that positive perceptions of local food can enhance a more meaningful travel experience and encourage tourists to recommend it to others.

Nevertheless, most studies still discuss consumer perceptions within the context of general purchasing behavior, and few have directly linked them to the appeal of culinary tourism based on local culture. In fact, consumer perceptions of traditional cuisine are crucial in determining how such foods are viewed, accepted, and sought after by both the local community and tourists.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of product quality and consumer perceptions of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism attraction. Qualitative methods allow researchers to explore informants' experiences, perspectives, and subjective interpretations more comprehensively, particularly within the context of traditional cuisine, which possesses diverse cultural and historical values as well as varied consumption preferences.

The research was conducted in the Jakarta area, specifically in the Condet district, which is known as one of the Betawi cultural hubs and is closely associated with traditional Betawi cuisine, including Laksa Betawi. This location was chosen based on Condet's relevance as a social and cultural space for the Betawi community, as well as the presence of culinary practitioners who still preserve traditional foods as part of local identity. Informants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, a technique that intentionally selects informants based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives. Informant criteria included individuals who had consumed Betawi Laksa, had experience with traditional Betawi cuisine, or possessed knowledge of Betawi Laksa as part of local culinary tourism. The study involved seven respondents, comprising consumers and relevant stakeholders deemed capable of providing relevant, in-depth information aligned with the research focus.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were used to ensure the data collection process followed interview guidelines while still allowing informants to express their opinions, experiences, and perspectives more broadly. Interview questions covered aspects of consumer perception, product quality including taste, authenticity, cleanliness, and presentation as well as informants' views on the potential of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism attraction. Meanwhile, documentation was used as supporting data in the form of location photos, field notes, and references relevant to the research subject.

The data obtained was then analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis techniques through three main stages: data reduction, which involved selecting, simplifying, and grouping data relevant to the research focus. Data presentation was conducted in the form of descriptive narratives to facilitate the researcher's understanding of the patterns emerging from the interview and documentation results. Subsequently, conclusions were drawn by interpreting the data to identify meanings, relationships, and trends related to product quality and consumer perceptions of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism attraction.

Data validity in this study is ensured through source triangulation and cross-verification among informants. Source triangulation involves comparing information obtained from various informants, including both consumers and relevant stakeholders, ensuring the data is not derived from a single perspective. Additionally, cross-verification was conducted to assess the consistency of information across informants' responses, particularly regarding aspects of taste, authenticity, presentation, and the appeal of Laksa Betawi as a traditional dish.

To enhance the precision of the research, this study also employed the member checking method, which involves re-checking the findings with informants to ensure the researcher's interpretations align with the participants' perspectives. Through this method, the researcher can minimize misinterpretations and ensure that the data presented truly reflects the informants' experiences and views. Thus, the research results are expected to have a high level of validity and provide an accurate picture of the product's quality as well as consumer perceptions of Betawi Laksa as a potential culinary tourism attraction in Jakarta.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of Laksa Betawi

In general, laksa is known as one of Southeast Asia's signature dishes, with diverse variations across various regions, such as Malaysia, Singapore, and several areas in Indonesia. Each region has its own distinct characteristics whether in terms of ingredients, spices, broth types, garnishes, or cooking techniques resulting in a wide range of flavors. Generally, laksa is synonymous with a spicy, broth-based dish that uses rice vermicelli or noodles as its base, combined with protein sources such as chicken, seafood, or eggs. The broths used are also diverse, ranging from coconut milk-based broths to fresher, tangy broths, along with various toppings. These variations demonstrate that laksa is a culinary product that has evolved through a process of adaptation to local cultures and regional contexts.

In Indonesia, laksa has also evolved into various regional variations, one of which is Betawi laksa. In the Indonesian context, Betawi laksa stands as one such adaptation with distinctive characteristics. Betawi laksa is known for its thick coconut milk broth, a dominant savory flavor, and a robust blend of spices. Additionally, the use of

accompaniments such as rice vermicelli, eggs, and basil leaves and occasionally raw bean sprouts serves as a distinctive feature setting it apart from other types of laksa. The combination of coconut milk broth, spices, and these accompaniments creates a unique flavor profile and reinforces Betawi Laksa's identity as a traditional dish of the Betawi community.

Betawi Laksa is not merely a dish but also a cultural representation of the Betawi people. This dish reflects the process of cultural acculturation occurring within Jakarta society. The use of spices, coconut milk, and local ingredients mirrors the richness of the archipelago's culinary traditions. Meanwhile, the form of the Laksa dish also reveals cross-cultural influences that have been adapted to suit the tastes of the Betawi people. Thus, Betawi Laksa holds greater value because it not only offers flavor but also preserves cultural stories, history, and local identity deeply rooted in the Betawi community. Compared to other more popular variations of laksa, Betawi Laksa tends to be less well-known, particularly among younger generations. Based on the research findings, Betawi Laksa is viewed as a unique dish with cultural value. Despite its advantages in terms of taste and cultural significance, its appeal remains underutilized. This is attributed to several factors, such as a lack of innovation in presentation, limited promotion, and the perception that the strong coconut milk flavor may be too heavy for some modern consumers.

In this context, this study offers a novel perspective by presenting a more comprehensive view of Betawi laksa, not merely as a culinary product but also as a component of culinary tourism appeal. The first novelty lies in the effort to integrate product quality, consumer perception, and culinary tourism appeal into a single analytical framework. This approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the sustainability of Betawi laksa.

The second novelty is the discovery of a gap between perception and consumption behavior. This study shows that although consumers have a positive perception of Betawi laksa, this does not directly drive high consumption. This finding indicates that external factors, such as modern culinary trends and visual appeal, play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior.

Furthermore, the novelty of this research also lies in the identification of intrinsic and extrinsic value concepts in Betawi laksa. Intrinsic value encompasses the authenticity of flavor, the uniqueness of spices, and inherent cultural value, while extrinsic value includes aspects of presentation, promotion, and accessibility. The imbalance between these two values is the primary factor causing Betawi laksa to be less widely popular, despite its high-quality flavor.

Finally, this study emphasizes the importance of an adaptive approach in the preservation of traditional cuisine. Betawi laksa must not only be preserved in its original form but also developed through innovations aligned with modern consumer preferences, such as more appealing presentation and digital-based promotional strategies. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its effort to bridge the gap between cultural preservation and the need for adaptation within the ever-evolving culinary industry.

4.2 The Identity and Authenticity of Betawi Laksa

Interview findings show that respondents consistently associate Betawi Laksa with its distinctive coconut milk broth and strong spice aroma. All respondents described the dish as having a unique flavor that sets it apart from other traditional foods. Several respondents specifically highlighted the savory taste of the broth, while others

emphasized the combination of spices and complementary ingredient as important characteristics of the dish.

The result indicates that Betawi Laksa possesses a clear culinary identity that is easily recognized by consumers who have previously tried it. Respondent 2 described it as a unique regional dish with a flavor different from other laksa varieties, while respondent 4 considered it one of the culinary products that represents Betawi heritage. These responses suggest that consumers associate Betawi Laksa not only with taste but also with its regional origin.

However, the interviews also revealed differing reactions toward some ingredients. Respondent 3 stated that the use of raw bean sprouts was interesting because it was something unfamiliar, while at the same time suggesting that the dish would be more appealing without raw vegetables. Similarly, several respondents considered the coconut milk broth flavorful but relatively heavy. These findings demonstrate that while the original characteristics of Betawi Laksa are appreciated, certain elements may not fully align with contemporary consumer preferences.

This finding supports Andih et al. (2025), who argue that local food experiences are strongly influenced by product uniqueness and cultural meaning. In the case of Betawi Laksa, its distinctive ingredient and preparation style contribute to its identity, making it recognizable among consumers despite its limited popularity.

4.3 Product Quality and The Flavor Profile of Betawi Laksa

Product quality emerged as one of the strongest themes during the interviews. Most respondents evaluated Betawi Laksa positively, particularly in relation to its taste. Five respondents described the dish as savory, flavorful, and rich in spices. The coconut milk broth was repeatedly mentioned as the main component contributing to the overall dining experience.

Respondents 1 explained that the savory broth stimulates appetite, while respondent 4 highlighted the creamy texture and strong spice profile. Similarly, respondent 5 emphasized that the broth and spices represent the primary attraction of the dish. These responses indicate that sensory attributes, particularly flavor and aroma, play a major role in shaping consumer evaluations.

Although respondents generally appreciated the taste, several weaknesses were also identified. Three respondents noted that the broth could feel too heavy because of its coconut milk content, while others suggested that the visual appearance of the dish remains relatively simple. Four respondents stated that the presentation is ordinary and less attractive compared to contemporary food products promoted through social media.

These findings suggest that the main challenge is not the quality of the flavor itself but the overall product experience. While consumers value the taste, visual presentation appears less capable of attracting first time consumers. This observation supports Burhanuddin & Romadhan (2025), who found that visual perception contributes significantly to the attractiveness of culinary products in tourism settings.

Therefore, maintaining flavor consistency should remain a priority while improvements can be directed toward presentation aspects, including plating techniques, serving equipment, and visual branding. Such improvements may increase consumer interest without altering the original recipe.

4.4 Consumer Perceptions and The Consumption Behavior Gap

The interview revealed an interesting discrepancy between positive evaluations and actual consumption behavior. Although respondents generally described Betawi Laksa positively, all of the respondents admitted that they only eat that dish occasionally. Most stated that they eat it only once or twice a year, during culinary festivals, visits to cultural areas, or special occasions.

Several respondents expressed interest in the dish because of its unique taste and traditional character. However, this interest does not necessarily translate into frequent consumption. Respondent 5 explained that although the dish is appealing, the availability of alternative culinary options reduces the likelihood of choosing Betawi Laksa regularly. Similarly, respondent 4 stated that Betawi Laksa is interesting but rarely becomes a primary food choice.

Another consistent finding concerns popularity among younger consumers. Five respondents believed that Betawi Laksa is less popular among younger generations because modern and viral food receive greater exposure through digital media. Respondents also highlighted limited promotion and low public awareness as factors contributing to its reduced visibility.

The findings indicate that favorable perceptions alone are insufficient to encourage regular consumption. Accessibility, visibility, and social influence appear to play an important role in shaping consumer behavior. This supports Harsana (2021), who argues that positive perceptions do not automatically generate consumption interest when external supporting factors are lacking.

Overall, the results demonstrate that Betawi Laksa is generally viewed positively by consumers. However, the dish faces challenges related to market exposure and accessibility. Increasing public awareness, improving product visibility, and strengthening promotional efforts may help transform positive evaluations into more consistent consumption behavior.

4.5 Betawi Laksa as a Culinary Tourism Attraction

The interview findings indicate that Betawi Laksa has considerable potential to be developed as a culinary tourism attraction. Four respondents explicitly stated that the dish is worthy of being promoted as part of Jakarta's culinary tourism offerings. Respondents highlighted its distinctive flavor, regional identity, and uniqueness compared to other traditional foods.

Respondent 1 considered Betawi Laksa suitable for consumers from various backgrounds because of its enjoyable taste. Respondent 2 emphasized that the dish represents a unique regional specialty that can attract visitors seeking local culinary experiences. Similarly, respondent 4 stated that Betawi Laksa possesses characteristics that distinguish it from other foods and therefore deserves greater recognition among tourist.

Several respondents also mentioned that Betawi Laksa provides more than a dining experience. The dish introduces consumers to local ingredients, cooking traditions, and culinary practices that have developed within the Betawi community. These elements contribute to the attractiveness of the product as part of Jakarta's culinary landscape.

Despite this potential, respondents identified several factors limiting its appeal. Limited promotion, restricted availability, and relatively simple presentation were repeatedly mentioned during the interviews. Respondent 5 stated that Betawi Laksa remains difficult to find compared to other popular local foods, while respondent 3 noted

that many consumers may perceive it as similar to lontong sayur and therefore overlook its uniqueness.

These findings suggest that the attractiveness of Betawi Laksa depends not only on the quality of the product itself but also on how effectively it is introduced and communicated to consumers. This observation is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of visitor experience, product differentiation, and promotional activities in culinary tourism development.

Therefore, efforts to strengthen the position of Betawi Laksa as a tourism product should focus on increasing visibility through festivals, tourism events, culinary centers, and digital platforms. Greater exposure may help consumers better understand the uniqueness of the dish and encourage trial among potential visitors.

4.6 Challenges in Preserving and Revitalizing Betawi Laksa

One of the most prominent findings from the interviews concerns the declining visibility of Betawi Laksa among younger generations. Five respondents believed that the dish is less popular than modern culinary products currently promoted through social media and digital platforms.

Respondent 4 explained that contemporary consumers are often attracted to foods that are visually appealing and widely shared online. Similarly, respondent 2 observed that younger consumers tend to prefer modern or fast food options that are more accessible and heavily marketed. These responses indicate that changing consumption patterns present a significant challenge for traditional culinary products.

Another issue identified by respondents relates to availability. Respondent 3 mentioned that Betawi Laksa is rarely encountered in everyday settings, while respondent 5 noted that the limited number of vendors reduces opportunities for consumers to experience the dish. This lack of accessibility contributes to low public familiarity and reduces repeat consumption.

The interviews also highlighted concerns regarding generational continuity. Several respondents emphasized the importance of involving younger people in preserving and promoting Betawi Laksa. Respondent 6 suggested introducing the dish to younger audiences through broader public exposure, while respondent 4 recommended using social media as a tool for increasing awareness.

These findings indicate that preservation efforts should extend beyond maintaining recipes and cooking techniques. Long term sustainability also depends on the ability to attract new consumers, encourage business continuity, and maintain relevance within a rapidly changing culinary environment.

Consequently, revitalization initiatives should focus on strengthening public awareness, encouraging youth participation, and increasing opportunities for consumers to access the product. Such efforts may contribute to preserving Betawi Laksa as an active component of contemporary culinary culture rather than solely as a historical food heritage.

4.7 Development Strategies for Betawi Laksa

Based on the interview findings, several strategic priorities can be identified for the development of Betawi Laksa. The first priority is maintaining flavor quality. Most respondents regarded taste as the primary strength of the dish, particularly the savory coconut milk broth and rice spice composition. Therefore, preserving flavor consistency should remain a central objective for producers.

The second priority is improving visual presentation. Four respondents commented that the current appearance of Betawi Laksa is relatively simple and less attractive compared to modern culinary products. While respondents did not suggest altering the recipe, many believed that improved plating, serving methods, and food presentation could increase consumer interest.

The third priority is strengthening promotional activities. Almost all respondents identified limited promotion as one of the main reasons for the dish's low popularity. Respondents repeatedly suggested the use of social media, digital content, culinary influencers, and food reviews to increase public awareness. These findings indicate that promotion represents one of the most immediate opportunities for expanding market reach.

The fourth priority is improving accessibility. Several respondents noted that Betawi Laksa is not widely available outside specific cultural areas or culinary events. Expanding distribution through restaurants, culinary centers, food delivery applications, and tourism destinations may increase consumer exposure and encourage more frequent consumption.

The fifth priority is strengthening connections with tourism activities. Respondents believed that Betawi Laksa has the potential to become part of a broader tourism experience. Integrating the dish into cultural festivals, heritage tours, and culinary tourism programs could enhance its visibility while introducing visitors to aspects of Betawi culture.

Finally, youth involvement emerged as a crucial factor for future development. Respondents emphasized that younger generations can contribute through content creation, digital promotion, entrepreneurship, and innovation. Their participation may help ensure that Betawi Laksa remains relevant to contemporary consumers while preserving its distinctive characteristics.

Overall, the findings suggest that successful development requires balancing product preservation with market adaptation. Maintaining the original flavor remains important, but improvements in presentation, promotion, accessibility, and youth engagement are equally necessary to support long term growth.

4.8 Scientific Contributions

This study contributes to the literature on traditional culinary tourism by providing empirical evidence regarding consumer evaluations of Betawi Laksa. The findings demonstrate that consumers generally appreciate the dish for its distinctive taste and regional identity, indicating that product quality remains an important factor in shaping positive evaluations.

Another contribution of this study is the identification of a discrepancy between consumer evaluations and consumption behavior. Although respondents expressed favorable opinions regarding Betawi Laksa, all participants reported consuming it only occasionally. This finding suggests that positive attitudes alone are insufficient to encourage regular consumption when accessibility, visibility, and promotion remain limited.

The study also highlights the interaction between internal and external factors influencing the sustainability of traditional culinary products. Internal factors involve presentation, accessibility, and promotional exposure. The findings indicate that strong product attributes may not achieve optimal outcomes without adequate market support.

Furthermore, this research provides practical insights for culinary tourism development. The interview results consistently emphasize the importance of digital promotion, visual presentation, and youth participation in enhancing public awareness. These findings offer useful guidance for culinary entrepreneurs, tourism stakeholders, and policymakers seeking to strengthen the competitiveness of local food products.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the sustainability of Betawi Laksa depends not only on preserving its traditional characteristics but also on improving its ability to respond to contemporary consumer preferences and market conditions. The findings therefore contribute to a broader understanding of how traditional culinary products can remain relevant within modern tourism and food industries.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the attractiveness of Betawi Laksa as a culinary tourism product through the perspectives of product quality and consumer perceptions. Based on the interview findings, Betawi Laksa is generally perceived positively by consumers due to its distinctive taste, savory coconut milk broth, and rich spice composition. These characteristics are considered the main strengths that differentiate Betawi Laksa from other traditional dishes and contribute to its uniqueness as a local culinary product.

The findings also indicate that product quality, particularly taste, plays an important role in shaping positive consumer evaluations. Most respondents highlighted the flavor of the broth and spices as the most appealing aspects of the dish. However, several respondents noted that the rich coconut milk content can be perceived as too heavy for some consumers. In addition, the relatively simple presentation was identified as a weakness that may reduce its attractiveness, especially among younger consumers who are strongly influenced by visual aspects of food.

Regarding consumer perceptions, the study found that respondents generally recognize Betawi Laksa as a unique and valuable culinary product. Nevertheless, positive perceptions do not necessarily lead to frequent consumption. All respondents reported consuming Betawi Laksa only occasionally. This finding reveals a gap between consumer appreciation and actual consumption behavior. Limited accessibility, low promotional exposure, and competition from modern culinary products were identified as the main factors contributing to this situation.

The study further demonstrates that Betawi Laksa has significant potential to be developed as a culinary tourism attraction in Jakarta. Respondents considered the dish worthy of being promoted to visitors because of its distinctive flavor and regional identity. However, this potential has not yet been fully optimized due to limited public awareness, restricted availability, and insufficient promotional activities.

Several challenges were identified in preserving and revitalizing Betawi Laksa. These include the declining familiarity of younger generations with traditional foods, the dominance of modern culinary trends, and the limited number of vendors offering the dish. Therefore, preservation efforts require not only maintaining the original recipe and flavor but also adapting to changing consumer preferences and market conditions.

Based on the findings, several development strategies are recommended. These include maintaining flavor consistency, improving visual presentation, strengthening digital promotion, expanding accessibility, integrating Betawi Laksa into culinary tourism programs, and encouraging greater involvement of younger generations in promotional

and entrepreneurial activities. Through these efforts, Betawi Laksa can strengthen its position as both a traditional culinary product and a culinary tourism attraction.

In conclusion, Betawi Laksa possesses strong potential as a representative culinary product of Jakarta due to its distinctive flavor and local identity. However, its long-term sustainability depends on the ability of stakeholders to balance preservation with innovation, ensuring that the dish remains relevant and appealing to contemporary consumers while retaining its original characteristics.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 239-248

THE IMPACT OF BRAND IMAGE AND SERVICE QUALITY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT H.E.M.A RESTO KEMANG PRATAMA BEKASI

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Received: 09/03/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

Along with rising customer demands, Indonesia's culinary industry continues to grow quickly. These days, customers consider a company's reputation and service quality in addition to the cuisine it serves. In the restaurant business, where competition is getting more intense, customer happiness is heavily influenced by brand image and service quality. The aim of this research is to investigate how customer satisfaction at H.E.M.A. Resto Kemang Pratama, Bekasi, is impacted by brand image and service quality. This study employs an associative strategy in conjunction with a quantitative approach. One hundred respondents who have been or are presently attending H.E.M.A. Resto Kemang Pratama were given questionnaires to complete in order to gather data. Purposive sampling was the method employed. After that, SPSS was used to examine the data in a number of ways, using statistical analyses such as validity, reliability, normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, multiple regression, t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination tests determination analysis. It is anticipated that The study is expected to prove that customer satisfaction is positively associated with both brand image and service quality. Additionally, it is anticipated that this research will advance marketing science and service management and serve as a guide for restaurant business players looking to enhance service quality and improve their brand image.

Keywords: Brand Image, Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Restaurant

1. INTRODUCTION

In according to (Demolingo and Rahmadian, 2026) claim that Indonesia's tourist sector is still expanding quickly and has fueled the expansion of other auxiliary industries, such as the food industry. Restaurants are now seen as more than just places to eat; they are also seen as a component of the travel experience, which includes the atmosphere, quality of the goods, level of service, and brand image provided (Prasetyo & Wibowo, 2022). Businesses in the restaurant industry must sustain client loyalty and happiness to survive and compete under intensifying competition. (Fandy Tjiptono and Gregorius Chandra, 2016) define customer satisfaction as the degree to which the experience and services received satisfy the needs of the client. Customer satisfaction increases the likelihood that they would return and refer others to the restaurant (Rahmawati & Nugraha, 2023).

Customer happiness is significantly influenced by brand image (Demolingo, 2015). (Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, 2016) define brand image as a representation of customer impressions, perceptions, as well as beliefs about a brand that are shaped by facts and individual experiences. In the restaurant industry, brand image is associated with the company's reputation, restaurant idea, food quality, and patron experience (Wulandari & Pratama, 2022). In the culinary industry, a strong and many studies have demonstrated that customer satisfaction is positively influenced by a favorable brand image (Satia & Budiarta, 2025). Additionally, a favorable brand image can boost consumer trust, which eventually results in higher restaurant satisfaction (Siregar & Putri, 2023).

A number of elements, such as service quality and company image, affect customer happiness. Fandy Tjiptono (2019) defines service quality as a business's capacity to continuously deliver services that either match or beyond client expectations. Servqual includes five dimensions, namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy was created by (A. Parasuraman, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry, 1988) and is often used to gauge service quality. In the restaurant industry, providing prompt, amiable, and attentive service is essential to fostering patron comfort and pleasure (Rahman & Yusuf, 2024). However, in reality, restaurants frequently encounter a variety of service issues, particularly during peak hours. Issues including sluggish staff response times and food service delays continue to be prevalent (Hidayat & Ramadhan, 2023). Customers' expectations and the services they obtain may diverge as a result of this circumstance (Suryani & Putra, 2024).

H.E.M.A. Resto must consistently uphold service quality while enhancing its brand image in order to sustain customer satisfaction as a restaurant despite fierce competition in the culinary industry (Demolingo & Remilenita, 2023). This situation prompted an investigation into the impact of service quality and brand image on customer satisfaction at H.E.M.A. Resto.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand Image

Customers' opinions of a business, good, or service are frequently shaped by a number of variables, including the information they are given, marketing materials, and individual experiences. Brand image is important in the restaurant industry as it may affect consumer choices. The restaurant's identity, reputation, culinary quality, business model, and patron experience are all reflected in its brand image (Saputra & Handayani, 2022). Positive consumer views, improved trust, and ultimately higher customer satisfaction may all result from a good brand image (Putra & Lestari, 2023). Numerous factors, including product attributes, advantages provided, attitudes toward the brand, customer perceptions, and interactions with the company, all contribute to the development of this brand image. Rahma and Prasetyo (2024) state that a company that is readily recognized and remembered, has a favorable reputation, is able to establish customer confidence, makes a good impression, and piques customers' interest in choosing the restaurant are some indicators of a great brand image.

2.2 Service Quality

Because it directly affects patron happiness and the entire eating experience, service quality is vital to the restaurant industry. A restaurant's cleanliness, speed of service, staff friendliness, accuracy in serving orders, and staff preparedness to help customers are all indicators of good service (Pramudya & Akbar, 2023). To measure

service quality, five dimensions of servqual are typically used: tangibles, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and reliability. These five aspects describe how customers assess the service they receive (Hidayat & Ramadhan, 2024). Good service not only satisfies customers but also enhances a restaurant's reputation and encourages. The servqual model encompasses five dimensions such as tangibles, assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and dependability are commonly employed to gauge service quality. Customers evaluate the services they receive based on these five factors (Hidayat & Ramadhan, 2024). In addition to satisfying patrons, excellent service improves a restaurant's reputation and promotes return business (Rahman & Yusuf, 2023). repeat visits (Rahman & Yusuf, 2023).

2.3 Customer Satisfaction

Because it shows how well the service and experience satisfy the requirements and expectations of the patrons, customer satisfaction is an important metric for evaluating a restaurant's performance. Customer satisfaction increases the likelihood that they would return and refer others to the restaurant (Rahmawati & Nugraha, 2023). The quality of the cuisine is not the only aspect that affects customer satisfaction; other variables include the level of service, the ambiance of the restaurant, the comfort of the patrons, and the restaurant's capacity to satisfy their expectations (Putri & Setiawan, 2022). Hidayat and Prakoso (2024) state that indications of customer satisfaction include overall contentment, willingness to suggest the restaurant, want to return, and the degree to which the client's expectations and the service they received are in line. In order to maximize customer satisfaction, restaurants must take into account elements including comfort, price, service, product quality, and the customers' emotional experience.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study examines how customer satisfaction at H.E.M.A. Resto is impacted by service quality and brand image using a quantitative methodology and survey method. The participants in this study were selected via 100 intentional sampling. In this study, service quality (X2) and brand image (X1) are the independent factors, while customer happiness is the dependent variable (Y). This survey utilizing a Likert scale of 1 to 5 was used to collect the information, which were then supplemented by secondary data from literature reviews and documents. The data was then processed and assessed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Among the studies used are validity test, reliability test, classical assumption test, multiple linear regression analysis, t-test, F-test, and coefficient of determination (R^2) analysis. The purpose of all these investigations was to determine the relative and combined customer happiness in relation to service quality and brand image.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Validity Test

To make sure the research tool could really measure the variables under study with accuracy, validity testing was carried out. IBM SPSS version 29 was employed in the validity test of this study. If the computed value of r was higher than the r value in the table and the significance value was less than 0.05, the questionnaire item was considered legitimate.

Table 1. Results of The Validity Test

Source: Researchers (2026)

Based on the validity test findings, every questionnaire item satisfied the validity standards and could be utilized to gauge the study's variables. The brand image variable describes how customers assess the restaurant's reputation, credibility, and positive impression. Meanwhile, the service quality variable assesses factors such as employee friendliness, speed of response, and accuracy in providing service. Furthermore, the customer satisfaction variable was also successfully used to measure customers' level of satisfaction with the service and their overall experience at H.E.M.A Resto Kemang Pratama, Bekasi.

4.2 Reliability Test

To find out how consistently respondents answered each statement in the research variables, reliability testing was carried out. The purpose of this test was to ascertain how well the research tool could measure the variables under study and produce reliable and consistent results. When the Cronbach's Alpha value of an instrument exceeds 0.60, it is deemed dependable. The following table displays The study's reliability test findings.

Table 2. Results of the Reliability Test

Reliabilitas Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,964	31

Source: Researchers (2026)

The 0.964 Cronbach's Alpha value for 31 statements in the reliability test findings demonstrated that this research instrument had a very high degree of consistency. All of the questionnaire's items were considered dependable and appropriate for use in data collection since the Cronbach's Alpha score was higher than 0.60.

4.3 Normality Test

To ascertain if the study data was disseminated on a regular basis, a normality test was performed. The One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality was employed in this study. If the significance value was more than 0.05, the data were considered to satisfy the normalcy assumption.

Table 3. Kolmogorov – Smirnov Normality Test Results
One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

			Unstandardized Residual
N			100
Normal Parameters, b	Red		,0000000
	Std. Deviation		3,61711050
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		,084
	Positive		,058
	Negative		-,084
Test Statistic			,084
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c			,077
Sig.			,080
Monte Carlo Sig. (2 tailed) ^d	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	,073
		Upper Bound	,087

Source: Researchers (2026)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test's significance value is 0.073, according to the normalcy test findings. It may be inferred that the study data is consistently distributed because this figure is more than 0.05. Consequently, the regression model employed in this investigation satisfies the normalcy assumption and is suitable for additional examination.

4.4 Multicollinearity Test

The results of the normality test indicate that the multicollinearity test between the independent variables in the regression model was carried out to determine if there is an excessively strong association. Multicollinearity issues shouldn't arise in a good model of regression. The variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance value are examined in this test. The regression model is considered multicollinearity-free when the tolerance value is more than 0.10 and the VIF value is less than 10. Olmogorov-Smirnov is 0.073. The research data can be inferred to be regularly distributed as this number is higher than 0.05. Therefore, this study's regression model is suitable for use and satisfies the normality assumption. As a result, the study's regression model satisfies the normalcy assumption and can be used for additional research.

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	9,577	2,637		3,632	<,001		
	v1	,652	,067	,870	9,671	<,001	,452	2,213
	v2	-,079	,077	-,093	-1,035	,303	,452	2,213

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Researchers (2026)

The multicollinearity test results show that each of the brand image and service quality variables has a tolerance value of 0.877 and a VIF value of 1.141. These figures demonstrate that the tolerance is higher than 0.10 and the VIF is less than 10. Thus, it can be concluded that the regression model used in this study does not have multicollinearity problems.

4.5 Heteroscedasticity Test

The multicollinearity test findings show that the brand image and service quality variables each have a VIF of 1.141 with a tolerance value of 0.877. These numbers show that the VIF is less than 10, and the tolerance is higher than 0.10. Thus, it can be claimed that multicollinearity issues are not present in the regression model that was applied in this investigation.

Table 5. Glejser Heteroscedasticity Test Results
Coefficients^a

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4,349	1,491		2,916	,004		
	X1	-,025	,035	-,077	-,715	,476	,877	1,141
	X2	,049	,033	,159	1,487	,140	,877	1,141

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_Res

Source: Researchers (2026)

Based on the results of the heteroscedasticity test, the significance value of the service quality variable is 0.140 and the significance value of the brand image variable is 0.476. It may be inferred that this regression model study does not exhibit heteroscedasticity symptoms since both values are more than 0.05. Consequently, additional study of the regression model is appropriate.

4.6 Multiple Linear Regression Test

The data analysis that was done produced the multiple linear regression analysis equation that follows, which includes:

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results
Coefficients^a

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2,875	2,440		1,179	,241		
	X1	,272	,058	,354	4,718	,000	,877	1,141
	X2	,370	,054	,516	6,871	,000	,877	1,141

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Researchers (2026)

The equation for multiple linear regression equation that follows was derived from the data analysis results:

$$Y = 2.875 + 0.272 (X_1) + 0.370 (X_2)$$

Description:

Y = Customer Satisfaction X₁ = Brand Image X₂ = Quality of Service

This multiple linear regression study was conducted to look into how Customer happiness is influenced by brand image and service excellence. The results show a constant value of 2.875, indicating that customer satisfaction will remain at that level if

the brand image and service quality variables remain unchanged. The regression coefficients for brand image (0.272) and service quality (0.370) both show a favorable correlation with client satisfaction. Between the two variables, service quality has a higher coefficient value, thus significantly influencing customer satisfaction. These findings suggest that customer happiness increases with a restaurant's brand image and service quality.

4.7 T-Test

Customer happiness is greatly and favorably influenced by brand image, according to the t-test results. The t-value of 4.718 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, makes this clear. This implies that a restaurant's brand image that is, its reputation, ease of recognition, and favorable customer perceptions will increase customer satisfaction and boost customer confidence in the services offered. These findings also support other studies that discovered a positive correlation between brand image and consumer happiness.

Table 7. T-Test Results
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIVID
1 (Constant)	2,875	2,440		1,179	,241		
X1	,272	,058	,354	4,718	,000	,877	1,141
X2	,370	,054	,516	6,871	,000	,877	1,141

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Researchers (2026)

a. The Influence of Brand Image on Customer Satisfaction

Customer happiness is greatly and favorably influenced by brand image, according to the t-test results. The relevance of the t-value of 4.718 value of 0.000, which is below 0.05, makes this clear. Thus, it means that a restaurant's brand image, such as its reputation, ease of recognition, and favorable consumer perceptions, can boost customer happiness while also bolstering customer confidence in the establishment's offerings. These results are also consistent with recent research showing a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand perception.

b. The Impact of Service Quality on Customer Contentment

The t-test findings show that customer satisfaction is positively and significantly impacted by customer service quality. The significance value of 0.000 and the t-value of 6.871 prompt, amiable, and attentive service might boost patron satisfaction and encourage them to visit the restaurant again. Additionally, brand image is not as important as service quality. This suggests that the most important element affecting customer happiness is service quality.

4.8 F-Test

The f-test was used at H.E.M.A. Resto Kemang Pratama Bekasi to assess customer satisfaction in relation to service quality and brand image. The f-test recommendations state that if the computed f-value is more than the f table, the independent variable is deemed to have an impact on the dependent variable. However, if the computed f value is less than the f table, the independent variable is considered to have no significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 8. F-Test Results

Models	Sum of Squares	New Era		Mean Square	F	Sig.
		df				
1	Regression	4776,268	2	2388,134	52,592	,000
	Residual	4404,642	97	45,409		
	Total	9180,910	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1

Source: Researchers (2026)

Both service quality and brand image have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. This is evident from the f-test findings, which show a calculated f-value of 52.592 with a significance level of less than 0.05. This implies that a restaurant's overall customer satisfaction may be raised by combining excellent service with a favorable brand image.

4.9 Coefficient Determination Test

Researchers use the coefficient of determination test to determine how much the independent factors may describe the dependent variable. This figure is derived from the R2 value in the Model Summary table of the SPSS analysis results. factors not included in this study account for half of the R2 value, which shows how much the independent factors affect the dependent variable.

Table 9. Determination Coefficient Test Results

Models	R	R Square	Model Summary		Std. Error of the Estimate
			Adjusted R Square		
1	,721a	,520	,510		6,73860

a. Predictors: (Constant Value), X2, X1

b. Dependent Variable: Y

Source: Researchers (2026)

The study findings show that consumer satisfaction at H.E.M.A. Resto Kemang Pratama Bekasi is positively and significantly impacted by both brand perception and level of service. The quality of services is the most important of these two aspects, particularly when it comes to how quickly, amiably, and accurately employees respond to consumers. 52.0% of the difference in customer satisfaction can be clarified by brand image and service quality combined, with additional factors outside of this research influencing the remaining 48.0%. In order to sustain client pleasure and long-term loyalty, it is crucial to uphold high service quality and cultivate a great brand image.

5. CONCLUSION

The study's findings show that customer satisfaction at H.E.M.A. Resto is positively and significantly impacted by both individual and combined brand image and service quality. While prompt, amiable, and responsive service is one of the key elements in raising customer satisfaction, a good brand image may create favorable perceptions and boost consumer trust. Overall, these two factors account for 52.0% of customer satisfaction; additional factors not covered in this study have an influence on the remaining percentage. Within order to keep customers happy and loyal, restaurants must continue to uphold a positive brand image and offer high-quality service.

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Volume 9 Issue 1, June 2026, pages: 249-256

INNOVATION OF PRALINE WITH KACANG KAPRI DAUN JERUK: A BALINESE DISTINCTIVE CULINARY SOUVENIR

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Received: 27/01/2026

Revised: 22/04/2026

Accepted: 25/05/2026

Abstract

This study aims to develop a praline innovation by utilizing “kacang kapri daun jeruk”, a distinctive Balinese culinary Souvenir, as a filling, and to evaluate consumer acceptance of the product. The research employed a research and development (R&D) method which included the stages of identifying potentials and problems, data collection, product planning, initial product development, product testing, product revision, field testing, and final product revision of pralines using three types of chocolate which are white chocolate, milk chocolate, and dark chocolate, which in this study were also compared to determine their suitability and level of consumer acceptance. A hedonic test was conducted involving five expert panelists and twenty-five general panelists, assessing color, aroma, texture, taste, and overall acceptability. The milk chocolate variant achieved the highest overall score and received positive responses from the panelists, while the dark chocolate variant obtained the lowest overall score. In conclusion, milk chocolate pralines filled with “kacang kapri daun jeruk”, a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir, have the potential to become an innovative value-added gift that strengthens Bali’s culinary identity with further opportunities to improve product quality.

Keywords: Praline, Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, Chocolate, Culinary Innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

The global chocolate market has expanded significantly and continues to grow. According to Singh (2025), the market was valued at USD 122.51 billion in 2024, reflecting consistent growth in previous years. This increasing trend drives innovation and the development of high-value chocolate products, one of which is praline.

According to Chef Oky Bagus (personal communication, 2025), praline is a type of chocolate filled with various kinds of nuts, such as almonds, cashews, peanuts, pistachios, and others. This is different from chocolate bonbons, which typically contain a wider variety of fillings including fruits, caramel, marshmallows, and more as long as they do not contain nuts. Pralines are widely developed in European countries as premium products and popular souvenirs.

As consumer demand for innovative products with local value continues to rise, praline innovation is increasingly directed toward the use of unique ingredients that

represent regional identity. However, in Indonesia, praline innovation remains limited, especially in terms of utilizing local ingredients that reflect the richness of the archipelago's flavors. Most praline products available in the market still adopt Western flavors, such as hazelnut, almond, and caramel, while the potential of local agricultural products remains underutilized. If explored, pralines infused with local flavors could become distinctive souvenirs that are well-received internationally.

In Bali, as one of Indonesia's leading tourist destinations, there is a vast opportunity to develop souvenirs and foods that highlight local uniqueness. This aligns with Anggriawan, Wijaya, & Dewi (2020), who state that souvenir centers in Bali are already diverse and widespread, ranging from traditional outlets to modern shopping centers. Shopping has also become one of the most popular activities for domestic tourists visiting Bali. After sightseeing, which ranks first at 50.5%, shopping including the purchase of souvenirs and local foods holds the second position at 43.5%.

Considering the wide availability of souvenir centers and the strong demand for shopping in Bali (including the purchase of local foods and souvenirs), the development of praline using local ingredients such as kacang kapri daun jeruk (which in the context of Bali and in this study, refers to a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir and does not refer to snow peas or not to legumes such green peas) can serve as an innovative strategy to enrich the variety of souvenirs and culinary products in Bali. The savory and slightly spicy taste of kacang kapri daun jeruk offers a distinctive character that is rarely found in praline products currently available in the market. To optimize the overall flavor, this study also compares the use of three types of chocolate, namely white chocolate, milk chocolate, and dark chocolate, to determine which type best complements the kacang kapri daun jeruk filling as a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir. This innovation not only broadens the choices for tourists and food enthusiasts seeking products with strong regional identity and high quality, but also supports the empowerment of Bali's local food products.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is an overview of previous studies that serve as a guide in this research. The use of references is important as a relevant basis to obtain comparisons and appropriate directions in addressing the challenges encountered. Previous studies play a role as a reference for understanding the results achieved by earlier researchers and for comparing them with the research to be conducted. Based on these references, all information related to the challenges discussed will be explored. The following are several sources used in this study.

The first study, conducted by Alfi Nur Rochmah et al. (2022), examined several plantation commodities in Madiun Regency, including cocoa, coffee, sugarcane, and porang. Madiun Regency produces 526 tons of dried cocoa, making it one of the main cocoa producers in East Java. Local residents, particularly those living near cocoa plantations, showed interest in developing the cocoa industry, especially in Bodag Village, Kare. In this context, a community service team from UNS collaborated with a partner, Rumah Cokelat Bodag, to implement a program that included: (1) socialization and training on the potential development of couverture chocolate with the addition of moringa leaves and stevia leaves, and (2) the development of couverture chocolate branding and packaging. The aim of this program was to develop couverture chocolate processing technology by incorporating moringa leaves and natural sweeteners from stevia leaves, so that it could become a flagship product for Rumah Cokelat Bodag in

Madiun Regency. The program included training on functional food, the production of couverture chocolate with moringa and stevia, and monitoring and evaluation activities. The results of the socialization indicated an increased understanding among partners of the training materials, particularly regarding the potential of functional food and its application in couverture chocolate production. The training covered stages such as cocoa bean roasting, shell removal, grinding, ball milling, conching, tempering, molding, and packaging. The team also provided training on packaging techniques in accordance with government regulations.

The second study, by Sopwan Zuhdi et al. (2023), focused on the development of nutritious chocolate-based snacks with the addition of moringa leaves as the main ingredient in Berok Village. This study applied an experimental method in the production and testing of product quality, including organoleptic tests to assess consumer preferences for taste and overall quality. The study aimed to create food options that are not only delicious but also healthy, thus benefiting public health. The level of chocolate consumption in Indonesia is approximately 0.3 kg per person per year, which indicates that chocolate products with moringa leaves have potential market opportunities in Berok Village, Koba City, Central Bangka Regency. This product uses moringa leaf powder, which is rich in nutrients and can be fermented to produce a distinctive aroma. The main focus of the study was to improve the quality of locally produced moringa chocolate. In this experiment, the researchers tested three different concentrations of moringa leaf powder, namely 0.01%, 0.02%, and 0.03%. The results showed that chocolate with 0.01% moringa leaf powder contained nutrients per gram of product, including 2.14 grams of protein, 35.80 grams of fat, and 60.56 grams of carbohydrates, using three tablespoons of moringa leaf powder.

The third study, by Ni Made Ayumita Dewanti et al. (2024), explored praline innovation by combining chocolate and wine, aiming to evaluate aspects of taste, texture, and product form, as well as to identify shortcomings. This research employed a qualitative descriptive analysis method designed to describe weaknesses and feedback obtained from the praline product. The approach involved observing and recording experimental results along with conducting interviews with relevant informants. The findings showed that the praline product achieved a balance of taste, texture, and form in line with the experiments conducted. However, interviews provided several suggestions for improving the taste, texture, and overall quality of the product.

The fourth study, by Yesica Marcelina Romauli Sinaga et al. (2024), examined Pakuan Village in Lombok, which plays an important role in supporting the local economy through tourism and the utilization of natural resources, particularly forest products such as cocoa and coffee, which are vital for the community. The tourism potential and agricultural products of Pakuan Village can be maximized by creating unique regional products. Culinary products are now an integral part of the tourism experience, and one popular processed product is chocolate praline. This community service initiative aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills of local residents in producing chocolate and coffee-based products through training in chocolate coffee praline making. Participants included members of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis) of Pakuan Village. The training was conducted in several stages, namely preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The success of this activity was measured by improvements in knowledge, skills, and active participation of the participants, who were able to understand the material and directly produce chocolate coffee praline.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach aimed at producing an innovative praline filled with kacang kapri daun jeruk, a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir. The research stages included identifying potentials and problems, collecting data, product planning, initial product development, a product trial, revisions, a field test, and final revisions. The research was conducted in Badung Regency, Bali, utilizing a household kitchen facility that was adapted to meet the needs of the study, ensuring the process was carried out in a controlled manner.

The research data were descriptive qualitative. Primary data were obtained through a hedonic test involving 5 expert panelists and 25 general panelists, while secondary data were derived from literature, scientific publications, and related documents. The research instrument consisted of a semi-open questionnaire that had been validated. Data collection techniques included documentation and questionnaire distribution. This study employs a qualitative data analysis technique that focuses on qualitative aspects, requiring the resulting descriptions to possess clear quality and be consistent with the findings obtained in the field. The results of the analysis were presented formally in the form of tables and figures, as well as informally through narrative descriptions.

Table 1. Hedonic Test

UJI HEDONIK					
Menu: <i>Praline</i> Dengan Isian Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk Oleh-Oleh Khas Bali					
Nama Panelis:					
Jenis Kelamin:					
Tanggal					
Perintah	Cicipilah makanan yang diberikan dan nyatakan tingkat kesukaan anda terhadap karakteristik organoleptiknya dengan angka yang sesuai				
SKALA HEDONIK	Tidak suka: 1	Kurang suka: 2	Agak suka: 3	Suka: 4	Sangat suka: 5
DENGAN WHITE CHOCOLATE					
NILAI	Warna	Aroma	Tekstur	Rasa	Keseluruhan
CATATAN:					
DENGAN MILK CHOCOLATE					
NILAI	Warna	Aroma	Tekstur	Rasa	Keseluruhan
CATATAN:					
DENGAN DARK CHOCOLATE					
NILAI	Warna	Aroma	Tekstur	Rasa	Keseluruhan
CATATAN:					
Jenis coklat apa yang menurut anda paling cocok dengan isian kacang kapri daun jeruk khas Bali? Jelaskan alasannya.					

Source: Researchers (2025)

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This praline uses “kacang kapri daun jeruk”, a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir from Bali, as its filling. The praline shell is made of three types of chocolate, which is white chocolate, milk chocolate, and dark chocolate. In the production process, tempering and cocoa butter coloring are carried out as part of product control. These processes provide benefits such as producing glossy chocolate and cocoa butter coloring, preventing easy melting, avoiding white spots (fat bloom), and ensuring easy release from polycarbonate molds. Additionally, the process results in a chocolate texture that produces a crisp ‘snap’ when broken.

According to Chef Oky Bagus, praline is chocolate filled with nut-based fillings. The distinctive characteristic of praline lies in its appealing appearance and its filling, which is made from processed nuts and sugar. The essential process of making praline includes melting chocolate, tempering chocolate, molding the praline shell, filling the praline shell, and covering the praline shell that has been filled with the filling with chocolate.



Figure 1. Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Souvenir (White Chocolate)
Source: Researchers (2025)



Figure 2. Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Souvenir (Milk Chocolate)
Source: Researchers (2025)



Figure 3. Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Souvenir (Dark Chocolate)
Source: Researchers (2025)

Kacang Kapri, in the context of Bali and in this study, refers to a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir and does not refer to snow peas or not to legumes such green peas. Kacang kapri is a type of peanut cooked with garlic, generally characterized by a savory and slightly spicy flavor. In this research, the author used kacang kapri with kaffir lime leaves, which is also commonly found in the market. Balinese kacang kapri daun jeruk is well known for its savory and mildly spicy taste, its crunchy texture, and the aromatic sensation of kaffir lime leaves. This snack is often found in various local Balinese dishes, such as mixed into sambal or main dishes, thereby playing an important role in Balinese traditional cuisine. The distinctive characteristic of kacang kapri daun jeruk, a Balinese culinary souvenir, is its yellowish color, as it is cooked with garlic and kaffir lime leaves.



Figure 4. Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk
Source: Researchers (2025)

The hedonic test was conducted by expert panelists and general panelists on three praline variants made with kacang kapri daun jeruk from Bali, using different types of chocolate, namely white chocolate, milk chocolate, and dark chocolate. The evaluation covered aspects of color, aroma, texture, taste, and overall impression.

Table 2. Recapitulation Of Scores By Expert Panelists

No	Product Name	Average Score Based on Evaluation Characteristics					Overall Average Score by Expert Panelists
		Color	Aroma	Texture	Taste	Overall Impression	
1	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with White Chocolate)	4.6	3.8	4.6	4.3	4.4	4.34
2	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with Milk Chocolate)	4.4	4	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.52
3	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with Dark Chocolate)	4.4	3.8	4.2	3.4	4	3.96
Average Score		4.47	3.87	4.47	4.17	4.4	
Highest Score				Lowest Score			
Highest Overall Average Score from Expert Panelists				Lowest Overall Average Score from Expert Panelists			

Source: Researchers (2025)

Table 3. Recapitulation Of Scores By General Panelists

No	Product Name	Average Score Based on Evaluation Characteristics					Overall Average Score by General Panelists
		Color	Aroma	Texture	Taste	Overall Impression	
1	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with White Chocolate)	4.36	3.8	4.44	3.72	4	4.06
2	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with Milk Chocolate)	4.04	4	4.48	4.6	4.4	4.30
3	Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk: A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with Dark Chocolate)	4.24	3.8	4.36	3.64	3.92	3.99
Average Score		4.21	3.87	4.43	3.99	4.11	
Highest Score				Lowest Score			
Highest Overall Average Score from Expert Panelists				Lowest Overall Average Score from Expert Panelists			

Source: Researchers (2025)

The hedonic test conducted by both expert panelists and general panelists indicated variations in the highest and lowest scores based on the evaluation characteristics of each type of product. The detailed explanation is presented as follows:

- Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (With White Chocolate):
 - From the expert panelists, this product received the highest scores in terms of color (4.6) and texture (4.6), and the lowest score in terms of aroma (3.8).
 - From the general panelists, it received the highest score in terms of color (4.36) and the lowest in aroma (3.8).
- Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (With Milk Chocolate):
 - From the expert panelists, this product obtained the highest scores in aroma (4.0), texture (4.6), taste (4.8), and overall acceptance (4.8), while the lowest score was in color (4.4).
 - From the general panelists, it received the highest scores in aroma (4.0), texture (4.48), taste (4.6), and overall acceptance (4.4), with the lowest in color (4.04).
- Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (With Dark Chocolate):
 - From the expert panelists, this product received the lowest scores across color (4.4), aroma (3.8), texture (4.2), taste (3.4), and overall acceptance (4.0).
 - From the general panelists, it obtained the lowest scores in aroma (3.8), texture (4.36), taste (3.64), and overall acceptance (3.92).

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the innovation of praline with kacang kapri daun jeruk filling from Bali can be produced through a systematic process, in which the essential process of making praline includes melting chocolate, tempering chocolate, molding the praline shell, filling the praline shell, and covering the praline shell that has been filled with the filling with chocolate. Based on the three research products, it can be

concluded that the product called “Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (with Milk Chocolate)”, obtained the highest overall mean score, 4.52 from expert panelists and 4.30 from general panelists. Product demonstrated a fairly good balance of taste, aroma, and texture. However, in terms of color, particularly the composition between the chocolate and the filling, which becomes visible when cut, it needs improvement, as the chocolate and the filling colors appear relatively similar.

Meanwhile, the product called “Praline With Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Culinary Souvenir (With White Chocolate)”, received an overall mean score of 4.34 from expert panelists and 4.06 from general panelists. This product showed a fairly good color quality, especially when cut, as the contrast between the chocolate and the filling looked appealing. Nevertheless, the combination of white chocolate and the filling made the praline overly sweet, with the spiciness slightly dominant. In addition, the aroma of this product needs to be improved. In contrast, the product called “Praline with Kacang Kapri Daun Jeruk, A Distinctive Balinese Souvenir (With Dark Chocolate)”, obtained the lowest overall mean score, 3.96 from expert panelists and 3.99 from general panelists. This was due to its less balanced taste, as well as aroma and texture, which require further improvement. These results demonstrate consistency between the expert panelists and the general panelists, both of whom placed the praline with milk chocolate as the most superior variant, as it paired well with the filling from kacang kapri daun jeruk, a distinctive Balinese culinary souvenir. The panelists noted that the taste of milk chocolate balanced well with the savory and mildly spicy character of the kacang kapri daun jeruk.

Overall, this study shows that the choice of chocolate type greatly influences consumer preference for innovative praline products using local Balinese ingredients. The results of the organoleptic test support the hedonic test theory, which identifies color, aroma, texture, and taste as the main factors in consumer acceptance. Finally, kacang kapri daun jeruk can be used as a praline filling, providing a unique flavor identity and offering the potential to position praline as a distinctive Balinese souvenir product with high added value. Study suggests to developing based on local ingredients can strengthen the culinary image of a region and enhance the appeal of Balinese culinary tourism.

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JOURNEY

Journal of Tourismpreneurship, Culinary, Hospitality, Convention, and Event Management

POLITEKNIK INTERNASIONAL BALI



PIB Press

Publisher & Printing: PIB Press

Email: pibpress@pib.ac.id

lppm@pib.ac.id

Website: <https://jurnal.pib.ac.id>

E-ISSN 2654-9999



9 772654 999009

P-ISSN 2774-1923



9 772774 192007