



Applying the model of experience economy and intimacy to the sustainable development of culinary tourism of Majapahit Indigenous Food in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Indigenous food can be seen as a catalyst for the goal of developing sustainable tourism. Indigenous food is increasingly being used as an integral part of visitor attraction to enrich their tourism experience, one of which is Majapahit indigenous food. Thus, correlating Majapahit indigenous food can create sustainable culinary tourism in Indonesia. This study aimed to explore the role of Majapahit indigenous food as culinary tourism in Indonesia by integrating two theories of consumer behavior, namely the Experience Economy and Intimacy Model. The data collection was carried out through a series of interviews with five informants involving historians, culinary entrepreneurs, tour and travel industry players, academician and tourists. The results showed that Majapahit indigenous food did not yet have strong competitiveness. As a result, the contribution made by Majapahit indigenous food to the development of sustainable culinary tourism seemed insignificant. Various suggestions and recommendations were also presented so that Majapahit indigenous food can be strongly integrated into the tourist experience.

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INTRODUCTION

Geographically, Indonesia is a large country with a vast area of 1.9 million m². The largest archipelago in the world has various ethnic groups and cultural heritages that have a background of various kingdoms that existed in ancient times (Asfina, 2016). One of the very popular kingdoms is the Majapahit Kingdom which has Hindu and Buddhist religious bases (Munandar, 2020; Munandar et al., 2021). The popularity of the Majapahit Kingdom has the potential to become a cultural tourism attraction for local and foreign tourists (Defi & Hadi, 2019). There are many cultural heritages from

the Majapahit Kingdom, one of which is culinary (Wijaya, 2019). Descriptions of food at the time of the Majapahit Kingdom are generally found in inscriptions, ancient texts and relief panels that tell the various dishes of kings or eating together as a series of certain ceremonies (Putri, 2017).

The variety of food during the Majapahit Kingdom was not much different from the food during the Ancient Mataram period because both had cultural similarities that were influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism (Revianur, 2021). In the current Indonesian culinary scene, the position of Majapahit indigenous food is not as popular as other types of food such as rendang, soto, satay, gado-gado or fried rice (Anggraeni, 2018). Therefore, this study considers that the right approach is needed to commercialize culinary tourism based on Indonesian indigenous food, especially Majapahit indigenous food.

The term indigenous food refer to types of food that contain raw materials from local (native) resources in a certain geographical place (Kuhnlein et al., 2006), for instance Etlingera Elatior or commonly known as Kecombrang. Kecombrang is a bush plant that can be found in almost all parts of Indonesia (Nuryanti et al., 2021). Kecombrang is widely used as a spice for a number of Indonesian cuisine menus or processed into chili sauce, curry, pecel, and so forth (CNN Indonesia, 2021). Indigenous food is often assumed to be traditional food because it is associated with certain regional customs or culture (Kuhnlein et al., 2006). Indigenous food that contains sociocultural meanings generally appears due to the influence of certain local cultures so that it can also be accepted as traditional food (Kennedy et al., n.d.). This indicates that indigenous food is highly correlated with the local context and is considered as one of the important elements of the culture and identity of a nation, along with its history, symbols, myths and discourses (Mnguni & Giampiccoli, 2015). Indigenous food can be seen as a catalyst for the goal of developing sustainable tourism (Serra et al., 2021). Culinary tourism of indigenous food that develops from cultural tourism can improve the image of the destination because the indigenous food originates and at the same time can strengthen the cultural identity of the area (Timothy, 2013). Indigenous food is also used as a means for socio-economic development through tourism (Boniface, 2017).

In general, quite a lot of research on indigenous food associated with tourism has been carried out, including by Indonesian researchers. For instance, Zahrulianingdyah (2018) conducted research on the tourism industry based on local wisdom, especially culinary. Zahrulianingdyah (2018) had the view that, as a vehicle for elements of culture and local wisdom, local culinary can be used as a tourist attraction. Culinary that elevates local food has the potential to be a special attraction when someone decides to visit the tourist area. Culinary based on local wisdom is in great demand by tourists (Zahrulianingdyah, 2018). Sutaguna et al. (2018) conducted research on local food in the Mengwi Tourism Village, Bali. According to Sutaguna et al. (2018), apart from taste, processing method and presentation process, indigenous food can become an attractive tourist attraction. Based on the results of his study, Sutaguna et al. (2018) suggested that the Mengwi Tourism Village develop a special food business as a medium for interaction between the public and tourists apart from serving as a culinary tour.

The potential for Indonesian indigenous food that can be developed to support tourism is also highlighted in the study of Suteja (2019). He conducted research in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Lombok. The results of his research show that local culinary has potential as a product that is able to describe the culture of the people of Lombok. That of course requires a strategy to develop local culinary potential in supporting tourism activities in the area.

From some of the previous research examples above, it can be assumed that there has not been much research highlighting the sustainability of authentic Indonesian food originating from the history of the Majapahit Kingdom to be developed as a culinary tour that has selling power among tourists. This indicates a research gap. In the view of this study, the Majapahit indigenous food is an honor because it represents the unique cultural identity of the Indonesian people. In order to be more widely known both among domestic and foreign tourists, it is necessary to have efforts from all stakeholders using the right approach. Therefore, this study tries to use an approach from a

combination of theories, namely the Experience Economy theory and the Intimacy model. This approach was initiated by Sidali et al. (2013) considering that there are still gaps in the two theories which are often used as references in existing studies when used separately (Sidali et al., 2013).

The Experience Economy Theory was developed by Pine & Gilmore (1998) and The Intimacy Model was created by Sternberg (1986) which was further developed by Trauer & Ryan (2005). Compared to the theory of Experience Economy, the Intimacy Model approach in the travel literature is still in its development stage (Cederholm & Hultman, 2010). In the tourism context, these two models have been widely used as theoretical frameworks for tourism studies (Bügel et al., 2011; Cederholm & Hultman, 2010; Charters et al., 2009; Sidali et al., 2013). In fact, the Experience Economy theory used by Pine & Gilmore (1998) has become a commonly used approach to designing memorable tourism experiences including in the context of culinary tourism (Santini et al., 2011). Nonetheless, Pine & Gilmore (1998) approach has received criticism from several authors. Experience Economic Theory which is supported by a simple stimulus-response mechanism is considered manipulative and ethically problematic (Biehl-Missal & Saren, 2012), does not contribute to increasing scientific knowledge and is not in-depth about tourism, especially regarding the perception of extraordinary experiences (Popp, 2012).

Sidali et al. (2013) combine that two theories and assume that the Experience and Intimacy Economy approach is a more integrative alternative model in studying food tourism or culinary tourism. Sidali et al. (2013) conceptualize the theory of Experience Economy and the Intimacy model as independent theoretical frameworks rather than integrative theories. This approach is still rarely used in the context of tourism research, especially food tourism or culinary tourism. Sidali et al. (2013) claimed that the Experience Economy theory and the Intimacy model can be combined in the right features to bring food products into the culinary niche. The more features attached to food specialization, the more likely a culinary niche is seen as attractive (Sidali et al., 2013).

The features in the Experience and Intimacy Economy approach are rituals (group consumption practices consisting of intimately sharing tangible and intangible symbols around iconic foods); coherence (whenever a place's territorial identity focuses on iconic food, it is important to create alliances with other stakeholders in the region to promote tangible and intangible product quality); anti-capitalistic attitude (local communities or local food producers, who openly show opposition to the principle of homo economicus, are considered more attractive to tourists than indigenous food); struggle against extinction (the rarer a food is, the more it is sought after by culinary connoisseurs or food tourists); personal signatures (the handmade character of local food, both in composition and in the way it is served, can create a strong emotional bond for culinary tourists); sustainability (established practices are inseparable from paradigms related to sustainability, including in terms of food); mutual learning (the explicit goal of the tourist encounter is the manifestation of the ancestral and life traditions of the indigenous people that have survived into the era of globalization); empowerment (empowerment of indigenous peoples is often used as a provider of tourism services, for example in food preparation or visits in the forest); regulated access to intellectual property (a special concern for confidential information shared by indigenous peoples with tourists); and community-based legislation (achieving the goal of learning from each other while empowering local residents needs to be balanced with the application of community-based rules).

Therefore, departing from the thought of Sidali et al. (2013), this study uses a combination of the Experience Economy theory approach and the Intimacy model as an approach that is seen as suitable for promoting Majapahit native food as an alternative product from sustainable Indonesian culinary tourism. This study tries to explore in depth the culinary potential of Majapahit which can provide a positive experience for domestic and foreign tourists. Thus, besides being able to preserve Majapahit indigenous food, it also has a selling value in the eyes of tourists which in turn can provide economic benefits (Hendra et al., 2021). To support the sustainability of Majapahit indigenous food culinary tourism, tourists need to get a pleasant experience when they do this culinary tour by paying attention to environmental, economic and socio-cultural elements.

Based on the description above, this study has several implications that reflect novelty. First, this study tries to raise the potential of Majapahit's original food to be used as an alternative to Indonesian culinary tourism. This has not been done by many existing studies which did not specifically highlight certain types of native food. Second, the existing studies on food tourism mostly use one of the approaches from Experience Economy theory or the Intimacy model only (Trauer & Ryan, 2005). Meanwhile, this study used a more comprehensive approach, namely a combination of the two theories which had been initiated in the research of Sidali et al. (2013) as an effort to provide a new perspective in designing strategies for creating positive tourist experiences in the culinary tour of Majapahit native food.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is included in the type of qualitative research and employs the constructivism paradigm. This paradigm states that to explain life, social and human events through a positivistic science approach is inappropriate because it is in the sense of common sense. The research design used in this study is a case study. Given that this study has a research context in terms of real food, the case study technique is relevant to use as presented by Doyle et al. (2017). In recent years, qualitative analysis using the case study technique has become more relevant both in food research and industrial applications, to observe the traceability of food and its development.

The unit of analysis in this study is stakeholders who have links with Majapahit indigenous food culinary tourism. Qualitative case study research almost always involves selective or purposive sampling because the number of cases is so small that there is no possibility of a random selection process for the sites include (McNabb, 2020). The research data were obtained from five participants or informants consisting of one historian, one cultural tour guide, one tour and travel entrepreneur, one academic in the field of tourism, and one cultural tourist.

This study uses a combination of both data mining techniques, namely non-interactive and interactive. Non-interactive data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires, recording documents or archives, and observation did not play a role. Meanwhile, interactive data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and role observation. Data mining was carried out for approximately eight months (March-October 2022). For data collection by means of in-depth interviews, the researcher visited each participant who would be interviewed at their residence or office. It is estimated that the interview process for each participant will take approximately one hour. A series of open-ended questions were asked to each participant. The researcher has developed an interview guide that contains questions that must be answered by the participants. Specifically, the interview questions were derived from features in the Experience and Intimacy Economy Approach.

The validity of the collected data will be tested through a series of tests, namely the internal credibility/validity test, the transfer value/external validity test (transferability), the auditability or reliability test (dependability) and the objectivity test (confirmability). In this study, all tests were carried out to ensure the data obtained was valid, reliable and objective. The internal credibility/validity test was carried out by triangulating sources where researchers did not only dig up information from one source but involved several participants as sources of information. Checking is also carried out with different techniques such as making observations to ensure the results of the interviews conducted. To ensure that the interview results can be recorded properly, researchers use supporting tools such as recordings and photographs. Furthermore, the transfer value/external validity test is carried out by making a report that is detailed, clear, systematic and reliable so that the reader of the research report gets a clear picture. Auditability or reliability testing is carried out by means of an audit of the entire research process. The audit process includes all research activities starting from determining research problems, entering the field, determining data sources, conducting data analysis, conducting data validity tests to making conclusions. The objectivity test is carried out if all processes have been carried out properly and the research results

have been audited. The objectivity test is carried out in each stage of the exam that will be followed because the exam is carried out in order to test the research results associated with the process being carried out.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the data analysis show that the Majapahit indigenous food has a strong connection with ritual activities. These ritual activities are generally related to the worship of gods or divine beings in which offerings are always offered. The food offerings should not be just any food. In other words, food that is specifically for rituals in various forms and types as required. However, related to the form and type of food, all participants did not know the exact reference source. Apart from the form of food, the completeness of the food variants also plays an important role in a ritual. This determines whether or not the ritual is valid. If the food variant is not complete, then the ritual will be imperfect. In Javanese, the completeness of this food variant is called uborampe. Unfortunately, not all people understand this. The limited public understanding of the use of native Majapahit food seems to be motivated by the history of the development of the Majapahit kingdom itself. Despite the lack of public knowledge about the Majapahit indigenous food as an offering in ritual activities, the ritual tradition itself is still being maintained today.

Furthermore, the participants who were interviewed gave similar views in answering research questions related to the existence of the Majapahit indigenous food. The participants also gave unified opinions regarding the role of stakeholders in preserving and promoting Majapahit indigenous food as a culinary tourism attraction. The existence and promotion of the Majapahit indigenous food as offerings in ritual activities cannot be separated from the role of the relevant stakeholders. These stakeholders are the community, government, private sector and tourists.

The results of the data analysis also highlight the attitude of local communities against cultural capitalism. All participants gave their views that some people still show irrational or anti-capitalistic attitudes in the context of the Majapahit indigenous food. People who have this kind of attitude assume that culture that is still original can actually have more selling value in the eyes of tourists. In the context of the Majapahit indigenous food, the interest of tourists is not only in the food product, but also in the sensation aspect. Even so, it was acknowledged by other participants that the irrational or anti-capitalist attitudes were also starting to fade. In addition to the knowledge factor that is still weak, another factor that makes anti-capitalistic attitudes begin to fade is the availability of Majapahit indigenous food raw materials.

All participants also seem to realize that the Majapahit indigenous food is starting to be threatened. According to the participants, the current generation's indifference to native foods is due to several factors. First, there is a lack of information. The second factor is the inclusion of foreign cultural influences, especially in terms of food. Many types of contemporary food are more inviting to the public in general. Contemporary foods are starting to overshadow real foods' opportunities to thrive. Actually, the Majapahit indigenous food has its own characteristics. This characteristic can be related to the composition and the way of presentation which is expected to create a strong emotional bond for culinary tourists.

Regarding the sustainability of the Majapahit indigenous food which is expected to be raised in culinary tourism competition, all participants agreed that the original Majapahit food has not very good competitiveness as a culinary tourism product. The number of tourists who have an interest in the Majapahit indigenous food is not so much. Consequently, the contribution made by the Majapahit indigenous food to the development of sustainable culinary tourism is also not very significant. The participants agreed that this was due to the low flow of information about the Majapahit indigenous food. Lack of socialization makes people's knowledge also very low. As a result, the Majapahit indigenous food has not been touched enough to be developed into a culinary tourism product that is worth selling.

The presence of the Majapahit indigenous food to be developed into culinary tourism products can actually create aspects of mutual learning, especially between local/indigenous people and tourists. All participants supported the idea that through Majapahit indigenous food a mutually beneficial learning process could be created between local/indigenous people and tourists. This learning needs to be packaged in such a way that it can provide a memorable experience, especially for tourists.

When a cultural product begins to be disclosed to the public, the consequence is that information related to that culture can be accessed by many people. The context is the same as the Majapahit indigenous food which will be developed as a culinary tourism product. Local people must be aware of the consequences of disclosing knowledge about the Majapahit indigenous food to tourists. All participants support if the Majapahit indigenous food is protected in the form of Communal Intellectual Property. Considering that the Majapahit indigenous food is a cultural heritage from the Majapahit Kingdom, it is seen as a national asset that must be maintained and preserved. To get the protection of communal intellectual property, it must be registered because it is a form of concern for the protection of local or national culture. Awareness of recording is important, without recording, there is no massive protection.

Achieving the goal of learning from each other while empowering local communities needs to be balanced with the application of community-based rules. In this section, participants provide their views regarding community-based rules that can elevate Majapahit indigenous food as a product of culinary tourism. Society or community is the front guard to preserve Majapahit culinary. They must have a clear vision and mission. The initiative has to come from the community and they have to do that. If the vision and mission are clear, accompanied by strong commitment and consistency, then community-based rules will automatically be created.

Referring to the previous result regarding competitiveness, it seems that Majapahit indigenous food has an insignificant contribution to the development of sustainable culinary tourism. The very exotic taste of Majapahit indigenous food should be able to provide a separate place for enthusiasts of culinary tourism which is growing very rapidly. If culinary has only been a complement to tourism travel activities, culinary tourism has now become one of the tourist activities which is the main attraction for tourists to travel. The very distinctive and exotic taste of Majapahit indigenous food is influenced by the use of natural and fresh ingredients, herbs, spices and concoctions so that traditional culinary is also healthier compared to fast food culinary which is sold by many international restaurants. Traditional culinary is a people's cultural identity that is very thick with processing and serving at certain times and needs such as connection with cultural rituals and beliefs and holding them at certain times as well as thanksgiving and wedding parties. Thus, the approach to traditional culinary cannot be separated from the culture of the local community.

Therefore, the culinary potential of Majapahit indigenous food should have a very large opportunity to develop, especially if it is associated with tourism which can not only trigger interest in visits, regional and community income, job opportunities and business opportunities, but also as a medium in preserving community culture, forming a healthier and smarter society, as well as a promotional medium for the Indonesian nation in attracting tourist visits.

Appreciation for Majapahit indigenous food which is still low tends to be caused by a lack of information for local people, standardization of products, eating and serving procedures that tend to be conventional with their basic arrangements, as well as promotion and marketing which are still very limited. This has increasingly cornered the position of Majapahit indigenous food to compete with fast food culinary which is marketed in a more professional manner by industry and international scale companies.

Given the low competitiveness and contribution of Majapahit indigenous food in the development of sustainable culinary tourism, it requires a structured and systematic strategy design. Based on the findings of this study, the design of the strategy includes increasing the role of

stakeholders in an integrated manner. Each stakeholder certainly has their own role and the purpose of these roles is to complement each other.

In addition to the integration of stakeholders, the participants also suggested the need to hold regular events or activities to promote more massive Majapahit indigenous food. The reality is that events that specifically promote Majapahit indigenous food are very rarely held. Even if there is an event related to Majapahit, it does not specifically promote the food but other Majapahit culture.

It requires several stages to formulate a structured and systematic strategy design. The first is the identification process to map the types of Majapahit special food. The second process is preserved or reconstructed. It requires massive activities to show that Majapahit indigenous food is still being produced. The aim is to show the existence or sustainability of Majapahit indigenous food. The third is communicated or promoted. Fourth, it is consumed regularly at least by local people. The latter is created. Considering that tourists' tastes can change, Majapahit indigenous food must also be packaged according to market desires without changing the main package.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the competitiveness of Majapahit indigenous food in Indonesia and analyze the contribution of Majapahit indigenous food to the development of sustainable culinary tourism in Indonesia. And creating a strategy formulation for the development of Majapahit indigenous food as a sustainable culinary tour through the application of an economic experience and intimacy approach. The results showed that Majapahit indigenous food did not have strong competitiveness. As a result, the contribution made by Majapahit indigenous food to the development of sustainable culinary tourism has not been significant. Nonetheless, the research findings show that Majapahit indigenous food still has the potential to be further developed. Therefore, it requires a structured and systematic strategy design so that Majapahit indigenous food can become a culinary tourism product that is in demand by many tourists. It was concluded that the strategy includes increasing the role of stakeholders in an integrated manner. Each stakeholder certainly has their own role and the purpose of these roles is to complement each other. In addition to the integration of stakeholders, the participants also suggested the need to hold regular events or activities to promote more massive Majapahit indigenous food. In fact, events that specifically raise the theme of Majapahit indigenous food are rarely held at this time. Even if there is an event related to Majapahit, it does not specifically promote the food but other Majapahit culture. This study contributes to increasing sustainable development in a developing country like Indonesia through the sustainability of authentic culinary tourism. However, similar to other studies, this study has limitations due to time and resources. Even so, researchers have tried to provide an objective presentation. The main limitation of this research is that this study is based on a case study with a small sample so that the findings of this study are limited to context studies. Referring to the limitations of this study, it is suggested that future research can try to replicate the categories identified in the economic experience and intimacy model related to native Majapahit food by using a quantitative study design. Additionally, an important implication for future research in tourism marketing science is adopting a broader multidisciplinary approach to achieve a more realistic and unbiased understanding.

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