



## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TRADITIONAL DAYAK CULINARY HERITAGE IN ESTABLISHING DESTINATION BRAND IDENTITY FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL KALIMANTAN

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### Abstract

*This study aimed to examine the growth of the traditional culinary industry sector in Central Kalimantan and its relationship with tourist destinations, emphasizing its role as a branding tool that shapes the destination brand identity in Central Kalimantan. The research methodology employed was qualitative with a focused case study approach in Central Kalimantan. Data were obtained through triangulation techniques, including observation, interviews, and the analysis of documentary data, involving various informants such as officials from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, academicians, tourism destination managers, culinary entrepreneurs, tourists, and local communities. Data analysis utilized an interactive model comprising data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion stages. The research findings highlighted the diversity of Dayak culinary offerings in Central Kalimantan, including Juhu Umbut Rotan, Juhu Singkah Enyuh, Juhu Kujang, Chips made of Kalakai, Kalumpe, Sambal Kandas Sarai, and Kenta through the Mangenta process, demonstrating positive impacts on the development of tourist destinations. Furthermore, Dayak culinary practices were elevated as a branding element capable of shaping destination identity. The synergy between the government and local communities is vital in promoting Dayak's culinary heritage to fortify destination brand identity and boost tourism allure. Through cohesive collaboration, Central Kalimantan can effectively leverage Dayak cuisine's distinctiveness to build a robust and sustainable destination brand. To maximize this potential, fostering strong synergy among the government, local communities, and culinary entrepreneurs is crucial. Proactive government engagement, sustained support for culinary entrepreneurs, organizing culinary festivals to enhance global awareness, targeted backing for enterprises like MEFs Food & Snacks, active community participation in digital marketing, and continuous research to monitor market trends are pivotal.*

**Keywords:** *central kalimantan; dayak culinary diversity; destination branding; tourism development; traditional culinary industry*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the continually evolving landscape of the global economy, the high level of competition in the market demands brands to stand out. One effective strategy to achieve this is through brand differentiation, involving efforts to distinguish oneself from competitors (Ghuri & Chateora, 2014). Successful differentiation requires a strong and distinctive brand identity that can convince the target audience of its differences from competitors. This process involves conveying the characteristics, vision, and values of the brand to the target audience. The brand identity is then projected as an image by marketers, aiming to evoke positive perceptions from the audience and offer superior value compared to competitors. The concepts of brand identity and brand image also apply in the realm of destination branding. "Brand identity" refers to the characteristics and attributes associated with a specific destination, while "brand image" relates to the perceptions that tourists have of the destination's branding efforts. This aligns with the view of Yusof et al. (2014), stating that the destination brand image is closely linked to tourists' perceptions of that destination.

Branding is a crucial component in the marketing world to shape positive perceptions in consumers' minds about the brand identity. The establishment of branding can be achieved through the consistent integration of various aspects during marketing communication. By implementing effective branding strategies, a product can form a distinct brand identity, thus differentiating itself from competitors and developing a loyal customer base (Kotler, 1991). This differentiation becomes its unique characteristic, providing a competitive advantage by standing out from competitors.

Branding is a need across various sectors in the business industry, including the tourism sector. Destination branding aims to build a competitive identity through reputation management, thus establishing trust in the market. Emphasizing the unique qualities of the destination becomes a critical factor in the growth of a strong brand identity (Ghuri & Cateora, 2014), where the destination highlights its distinctive features compared to other destinations. By having a strong and distinct brand identity, a destination can form a brand image in the minds of tourists, convincing them that the destination has uniqueness compared to others. The role of branding is crucial in providing information to tourists that pleasant experiences await them during their visit. This experience is expected to create deep and lasting memories of the destination (Kerr, 2006).

While Indonesia has a good reputation for its natural resources and culture, only a few regions are synonymous with Indonesian tourism. Some of these include Bali, NTB, NTT, East Java, Jakarta, North Sumatra, Maluku, and several other areas designated as Indonesia's super-priority destinations by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia. However, it should be noted that in lesser-known areas, such as Central Kalimantan, there is significant potential to become attractive tourist destinations. With further exploration, these regions have the potential to become unique and interesting to discover.

Central Kalimantan has appeal for both domestic and international tourists, as indicated by its potential analysis. Within its 13 districts/cities, there are various tourist attractions, some of which are known for their focus on ecotourism. However, despite having significant potential, the number of tourists visiting this area does not match its offerings. According to data from the Central Kalimantan Provincial BPS-Statistics in 2022,

there was an annual decrease of 48% in domestic and international tourist visits from 2019 to 2021 (Source: BPS Provinsi Kalimantan Tengah 2022). This decline is not only due to the COVID-19 pandemic but also because of the low popularity of Central Kalimantan as a tourist destination compared to other locations. The lack of awareness among tourists about the unique characteristics of Central Kalimantan contributes to its lack of popularity. Therefore, it is essential to make efforts to gain the ability to shape the brand identity and effectively convey it to tourists through branding techniques. These branding efforts are made by highlighting its unique properties, forming an unmatched and distinct image compared to other locations, especially through the offer of traditional culinary synonymous with the Dayak community of Central Kalimantan.

Traditional culinary is a manifestation of culture and can serve as a distinctive representation of a place or region, closely related to the daily lives of its inhabitants (Corigliano, 2002; Rand, et al., 2003; Andersson et al., 2017). A notable example is the island of Bali, which has successfully showcased its identity through a variety of local traditional culinary dishes. These culinary dishes serve not only as authentic expressions but also play a key role in enhancing Bali's attractiveness as a tourist destination (Putra, 2014). Prominent examples of these culinary dishes include Ayam Betutu, Babi Guling, Sate Lilit, and various other traditional culinary delights that have become symbols of Bali's unique tourism landscape. Furthermore, these diverse food offerings represent a cherished cultural heritage that continues to evolve to this day.

In the current era of globalization, traditional culinary aspects play a crucial role as distinguishing features that reflect the essence of their origin (Delamont, 1994). It is important to note that culinary or gastronomy has emerged as a key factor in shaping postmodern societal identities (Hjlager & Richards, 2002). Functioning as a manifestation of identity and cultural heritage from a specific place or region, traditional culinary aspects can build perceptions and reputations for the respective destination. Additionally, traditional culinary not only serves as a unique complement to a specific destination but also holds significant status as a fundamental component of the overall identity (Everett & Aitchison, 2008).

Culinary offerings play a pivotal role in attracting tourists to embark on their journey to a particular destination (Prayogo & Suryawan, 2018). Tourists often focus solely on the pursuit of the taste of famous local dishes. This phenomenon illustrates the potential of culinary as a powerful instrument for promotion and for shaping a distinctive brand identity for a specific location. Furthermore, culinary plays a crucial role in building trust, enhancing understanding, and enabling tourists to make informed evaluations. However, it must be acknowledged that not every region has the potential to fully exploit this incredible resource.

Central Kalimantan is one of the regions that holds great potential for creative economic development by leveraging its rich local wisdom. However, despite this potential, the unique characteristics of Central Kalimantan have not been fully showcased on a national level, especially in the culinary industry. It is important to note that the culinary domain displays remarkable diversity, which can be explored and promoted beyond the boundaries of Central Kalimantan. Culinary products emerging from this region generally have roots in and are inspired by the valued local wisdom of its inhabitants, especially the Dayak tribe, who make up the majority of the population. Among the prominent dishes are

*Kenta, Juhu Umbut Rotan, Juhu Umbut Sawit, Juhu Asem, Wadi, Kalumpa/Karuang*, various fermentation types, and other delicious dishes that are unique and tempting. Nevertheless, at present, these delicious dishes remain limited to certain social scopes and can only be enjoyed within specific communities.

Traditional Dayak culinary in Central Kalimantan not only offers gastronomic delights but also has a profound influence on the perceptions and experiences of tourists visiting the region. Each culinary dish goes beyond the realm of taste pleasure, involving complex historical and ritualistic values. *Kenta*, for example, is a traditional dish made from glutinous rice, carrying deep historical and ritualistic meanings. Beyond its role as a culinary creation, this dish symbolizes communal ties, acts of offering, and vital life rituals for the Dayak community, especially in the context of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan. The existence of these culinary delights creates a unique and culturally meaningful experience, positioning Central Kalimantan as a special destination with a culinary tapestry rich in cultural wealth and spiritual values, reflected in every traditional dish.

Based on a comprehensive analysis of existing gaps, this research aims to delve deeper into the various traditional culinary aspects of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan while simultaneously exploring their significance as a key component that strengthens the growth of the developing tourism destination. Furthermore, this research aims to provide an understanding of how diverse culinary offerings can shape a distinct brand identity, effectively differentiating itself from competitors through its unparalleled and extraordinary attributes, thus forming and reinforcing the overall tourism destination branding in Central Kalimantan.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODE**

This study aimed to analyze the growth of the traditional culinary industry sector in Central Kalimantan and its correlation with tourism destinations, as well as its function as a branding instrument that shapes the identity of the destination brand in Central Kalimantan. The research methodology implemented was qualitative and employed a case study approach, specifically focusing on Central Kalimantan. The data were acquired through the utilization of triangulation techniques, which amalgamate observation, interviews, and documentary data. The informants, serving as sources of research data, include stakeholders such as Government Culture and Tourism Officers, academics, managers of tourist destinations, culinary entrepreneurs, tourists, and local communities.

The data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (2014) interactive model, which encompasses data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion (drawing/verifying). Data collection involved direct observation of the research subject, identifying the diverse scope of local traditional culinary offerings in Central Kalimantan. Subsequently, interviews were conducted with the informants to obtain data or confirmations about the findings of the conducted observations. The required data, in the form of information about the development of the traditional culinary industry in Central Kalimantan and its role in destination development, particularly as a branding tool that shapes the brand identity of tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan, were obtained.

As supplementary data, documentation was gathered to strengthen the study's findings. The gathered data was subsequently condensed to yield strong data that can address the research questions, without eliminating or reducing the existing data.

Subsequently, the qualitative data were organized and presented in the form of narrative descriptions, facilitating comprehension and planning future work based on the previously acquired understanding. Lastly, the concluding process was undertaken until a comprehensive, credible, and objective conclusion aligned with the research objectives was attained.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Central Kalimantan, with Palangka Raya as its capital, is one of the provinces located on the island of Borneo (Kalimantan). This province is renowned as *Bumi Tambun Bungai* and is characterized by the motto *Isen Mulang*, which symbolizes the qualities of resilience and perseverance. The primary ethnic group inhabiting this area is the Dayak, who are further categorized into various sub-ethnicities such as *Dayak Ngaju*, *Dayak Ma'anyan*, *Dayak Ot Danum*, *Dayak Bakumpai*, and others. The presence of these sub-ethnic groups contributes to the diverse array of traditions and cultures observed across different regions of Central Kalimantan (Mau & Sukawati, 2019). These cultural practices encompass a wide variety of traditional Dayak culinary that has been transmitted through generations, encompassing aspects such as the sourcing of raw materials, techniques for food preparation, methods for storing, as well as their distinct and unique presentation. Moreover, these culinary delights not only fulfill the function of providing sustenance and nourishment but also hold significant cultural meanings and values (Alexandro et al., 2020). Essentially, each region and sub-ethnicity possesses its distinctive culinary practices that contribute to the definition of its unique identity.

#### 3.1 The Variety of Typical Dayak Culinary in Central Kalimantan

Central Kalimantan, a prominent region on Borneo Island renowned for its abundant tropical forests, possesses significant natural resources, particularly a diverse range of plant life. Even in the contemporary era, the majority of the indigenous Dayak community, residing in the inland forests, heavily relies on these forests and rivers for sustenance, underscoring the vital role of these natural elements in shaping the Dayak way of life. As Ayu (2012) posits, the community possesses localized knowledge and expertise, especially in the traditional processing of food sources derived from the forest and rivers, despite the escalating threats to biodiversity and forest degradation. Remarkably, food sourced from these environments remains accessible and abundant.

Forests and rivers play pivotal roles for the indigenous Dayak community, particularly in directly utilizing forest vegetation for sustenance. The forest offers a diverse array of plant-based nourishment, exemplified by the traditional Dayak Tribe vegetable, *Umbut*. Derived from the tender extremities of plant stems like ginger (*Zingiberaceae*), banana (*Musaceae*), palm (*Arecaceae*), and rattan (*Arecaceae*), *Umbut* is readily available in both forested areas and along riverbanks, serving as a frequently utilized ingredient in culinary preparations.

A distinctive traditional dish within the Dayak community, particularly in Central Kalimantan, is made from *Umbut*, known as *Juhu* in the Dayak language. This dish is crafted by blending special spices (either yellow or red) with meat or fish, resulting in a unique flavor profile characterized by subtle bitterness. To counterbalance this bitterness, distinctive seasonings and processing techniques are employed. Nevertheless, this

bitterness imparts a unique attribute to the culinary experience, complementing the delectable, tangy, and sweet elements of the meat or fish amalgamation.

Beyond *Umbut*, various other categories of typical Dayak vegetables are commonly cultivated on the periphery of rice fields, including *Segau* (typical Dayak mustard green), *Terung Dayak* (*Solanum ferox*), *Timun Dayak* (typical Dayak cucumber), *Kanjat* (typical Dayak vegetable), and assorted vegetables. Furthermore, specific varieties of vegetables thrive in indigenous open spaces or wetlands, exemplified by *Kalakai* (*Stenochlaena palustris*), while different types find optimal growth conditions in woodland environments, including *Tabantal* (*Smilax sp.*), *Tunjuk Langit* (*Helminthostachys zeylaniza*), and a diverse assortment of other vegetable species. In general, all types of vegetables are processed into dishes, each possessing a distinctive and unique flavor.

One vegetable that captures the interest of the Dayak community is the cuisine made from Cassava Leaves, commonly known as *Kalumpa* or *Karuang* in the Dayak language. This particular dish involves finely grinding Cassava Leaves using a *Lesung-alu* (a traditional utensil for pulverizing/mashing comestibles). Typically, *Kalumpa* is combined with *Terung Pipit* or *Takokak* (small Eggplant), with seasonings including onion, garlic, lemongrass, chili as an optional, and galangal, all simultaneously crushed. Frequently, this dish is combined with coconut milk and consumed alongside warm rice, anchovies, and chili peppers, such as *Sambal Terasi* (traditional chili sauce made with dried shrimp paste)), enhancing its savory taste. This vegetable-based delicacy is favored by the local community due to the accessibility of its constituent ingredients, easily procurable or even cultivatable independently.

Additionally, various kinds of *Kulat* (Dayak term for Mushroom) are ingested as vegetables. Ecologically, mushrooms can grow either individually or in clusters on deteriorated or fallen tree trunks, as well as in naturally damp soil. The types of mushrooms generally consumed by the Dayak community include *Kuping Mushroom*, *Keritip Mushroom*, and several other varieties. Traditionally, the Dayak community prepares mushrooms by boiling or sautéing them in combination with basic condiments, such as garlic, pepper, and salt, contributing to its relatively extensive popularity among the local populace.

The Dayak community, alongside their agricultural pursuits, is renowned for their proficiency in diverse forms of fermentation. One notable instance is the fermentation of annual fruits such as *Durian* (regarded as the “king of fruit”) and *Cempedak* (Moraceae). This particular process is undertaken during periods of abundant fruit harvest, serving as a means of stock for vegetables and as an enhancement to various culinary preparations. The fermentation of *Durian* involves extracting the fruit's pulp, which is then either salted or occasionally combined with crushed chili peppers. The optional inclusion of hot pepper provides a spicier flavor profile for those with a preference for such tastes. Subsequently, the mixture is thoroughly blended and stirred until achieving a smooth consistency, after which it is placed within a tightly sealed container. This preserved *Durian* meat is commonly referred to as *Tampuyak*, finding utility as a side dish when mixed with chili sauce or as an additional seasoning for *Pepes* (the steaming of food in banana leaves) or gravy dishes.

Fermentation can also be conducted on *Cempedak* fruit. However, the portion taken is the peeled, diced, and thoroughly cleansed section of the skin. The skin is conserved in a saline solution and subsequently placed in a hermetically sealed container. Consequently, in addition to the pulp, the rind of the *Cempedak* can be utilized as a fermented vegetable

with a distinct aroma and flavor. Typically, the fermented product is deep-fried as a side dish and consumed with chili sauce.

*Wadi*, a well-known fermented food of the Dayaks in Central Kalimantan, holds high regard within the local community. *Wadi*, also known as "putrefied food," is a type of fermented food made from fish or pork. It is seasoned with white glutinous rice or roasted corn kernels, ground either manually or using a blender machine. The manufacturing process involves thoroughly washing the fish or meat, cutting it to desired sizes, and soaking it in brine for 5-10 hours. After the soaking process, the fish or meat is removed and dried, then mixed with *Sa'mu* or *Kue Dua Jari* (a traditional Dayak rice cake) until evenly distributed. The next step involves storing the mixture in hermetically sealed glass jars or plastic boxes for a minimum of 3 to more than one week. It is important to note that *Wadi* should not be consumed immediately after the process is completed. Instead, it is recommended to be reprocessed through frying or cooking with gravy. Despite the seemingly simple manufacturing process, it is susceptible to spoilage and rot if there are errors in mixing and adding spices, as well as during the soaking process. This vulnerability is one of the reasons why the art of making *Wadi* is now unpopular among the younger generation, as it requires specialized expertise to produce it that is safe for consumption.

The culinary diversity of Central Kalimantan extends beyond indigenous ingredients to include traditional practices like *Mangenta*. This process involves *Kenta*, a traditional food distinctive to the Dayak community of Central Kalimantan, crafted using glutinous rice as its main ingredient. The preparation process, locally known as *Mangenta*, begins with soaking glutinous rice, followed by draining and roasting for approximately 10 minutes over medium heat. After roasting, the altered-color glutinous rice is pounded using a mortar and pestle until it has a smooth consistency. Subsequently, coconut water is added to the cleaned glutinous rice, and left to absorb for about five minutes. Granulated sugar or palm sugar, grated coconut, and salt are added according to desired measurements, with the blending process continuing until all ingredients are evenly mixed. Following this, the mixture is left to rest for approximately five minutes before *Kenta* is ready to be served. An alternative presentation of *Kenta* involves a steeping process with hot water, which can then be combined with milk. The chewy texture of *Kenta* introduces a delightful dimension to this dish, particularly due to the resulting sweet flavor.

*Kenta* is more than just a dish; it is a tradition deeply rooted in the culture of the Dayak community, specifically the Dayak Ngaju tribe in Central Kalimantan. The process of creating *Kenta*, involving a thousand participants in the 2022 Isen Mulang Cultural Festival (FBIM) in Palangka Raya, set a national record for the highest number of participants. *Kenta* is not just an ordinary dish; it also holds high spiritual value, especially in the context of Dayak traditions, often regarded as an offering to the *tatu parei* (ancestral/spirit of rice). Although it is now enjoyed as a secular dish, its original meaning remains associated with pre-harvest ceremonies, reflecting the profound traditional values woven into each stage of its preparation. As part of the cultural heritage's sustainability, *Mangenta* not only creates culinary wealth but also becomes a symbol of togetherness and gratitude in the lives of the Dayak community.

*Mangenta* carries significant historical and ritualistic value, often prepared to initiate crucial events such as harvests or weddings within the Dayak Ngaju tribe. The term used is "*kuman behas taheta*", translating to "eating new rice". It is crafted following the tradition

of farmers expressing gratitude for the onset of the rice harvest, representing an enduring practice originating from the ancestors of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan. In cultural terms, *Mangenta* is considered an offering to the *tatu parei*, embodying a form of gratitude for creating a bountiful harvest.

Upon further investigation, Central Kalimantan reveals a diverse array of Dayak culinary options stemming from various sub-ethnic groups dispersed throughout different areas. These distinctive dishes, not only serving as staple foods but evolving into quintessential traditional culinary offerings, are made available in nearby food stalls or restaurants. However, they remain relatively rare, limited to specific circles, and enjoyed during specific occasions (Alexandro et al., 2020). This presents a challenge for Central Kalimantan in the realm of preserving and cultivating its distinctive culinary identity amidst the growing impact of contemporary gastronomic influences and shifting lifestyle trends. Consequently, the region must endeavor to maintain its identity and garner recognition among a broader community.

### **3.2 The Significance of Typical Dayak Culinary in Facilitating Tourism Destination Development**

Culinary experiences play a pivotal role in the tourism sector, with a considerable portion of tourists allocating their expenditures to this aspect. Traditional culinary offerings, in particular, possess the unique ability to captivate tourists, establishing a profound interconnection between culinary experiences and the growth of tourism activities (Antara & Trimandala, 2023). This reciprocity is evident as traditional culinary not only contributes to the expansion of tourism but is also promoted and sustained by tourism.

Indonesia, renowned for its diverse culinary landscape, holds significant potential for culinary tourism. The allure lies in the rich tapestry of culinary delights derived from various ethnicities and cultures, with Central Kalimantan standing out for its profound diversity in Dayak culinary traditions deeply rooted in cultural elements, setting it apart as a distinctive destination.

In its developmental journey, Central Kalimantan strategically leverages its unique traditional culinary offerings to attract and captivate tourists. A notable example is *Mangenta*, a culinary tradition originating from the Dayak community, specifically the Ngaju Dayak tribe. It transcends its culinary nature, evolving into a revered celebration spanning generations. Its integration into the annual Isen Mulang Cultural Festival (FBIM) in Palangka Raya positions *Mangenta* as a focal point, enticing visitors with promises beyond culinary pleasures – a profound immersion into historical and ritualistic values.

The extensive participation in *Mangenta* during the cultural festival, involving a thousand enthusiasts, underscores its societal importance and communal significance, earning accolades such as the MURI award for the highest number of participants. This exemplifies *Mangenta's* integral role in fostering communal togetherness within the local community.

Delving into its historical tapestry, *Mangenta* weaves a narrative that extends to the ancestral roots of the Dayak tribe in Central Kalimantan. Symbolizing the gratitude of farmers for the commencement of the rice harvest, *Mangenta* becomes a living embodiment of indigenous traditions. When it takes center stage in the Isen Mulang Cultural Festival,



tourists actively participate in the rich tapestry of historical heritage, moving beyond being mere spectators.

The ritualistic dimensions of *Mangenta* add layers of fascination for tourists. Beyond being a culinary affair, it serves as a sacred expression of gratitude and reverence to the rice spirit, known as *tatu parei*. The ceremonial aspects create an ambiance of sanctity, immersing tourists in the profound religious and communal practices that define the Dayak community's cultural identity.

By embedding *Mangenta* within the broader canvas of a cultural festival, tourists are not only treated to the savory notes of traditional culinary but are also beckoned into an immersive tourism experience. This experience is characterized by a nuanced understanding of historical intricacies and the embodiment of ritualistic practices, leaving an indelible imprint on the memories of visitors.

In the broader tourism context, *Mangenta* emerges as a distinctive emblem for Central Kalimantan, setting it apart as a unique destination. The resonance of *Mangenta* in the Isen Mulang Cultural Festival, drawing thousands each year, extends beyond culinary enthusiasts, capturing the imaginations of those fascinated by the cultural richness and historical legacies of the Dayak tribe.

*Mangenta* doesn't merely present itself as a tourist attraction; it catalyzes the broader development of the tourism sector. Through strategic promotion and marketing efforts, *Mangenta* propels Central Kalimantan into the limelight, becoming a beacon that shapes tourism trends, fuels positive economic impacts, and stimulates the growth of tourism-related enterprises in the surrounding areas.

As *Mangenta* continues to play a central role in the Isen Mulang Cultural Festival, Central Kalimantan doesn't just offer breathtaking natural landscapes but also becomes a living repository of cultural heritage. The sustainability of this annual event ensures that the culinary traditions and cultural legacies of the Dayak tribe remain vibrant, fostering a sense of identity and contributing to sustained economic growth in the region.

Continuing the narrative on culinary tourism in Central Kalimantan, another noteworthy example is Kampung Lauk, situated in Palangka Raya. True to its name, Kampung Lauk, with "*Lauk*" meaning fish in Dayak, presents a distinctive culinary tourism concept featuring an array of traditional Dayak dishes centered around fish, particularly river fish. The fish is freshly prepared upon guest orders, employing various cooking methods like grilling, frying, or incorporating it into a savory gravy, tailored to individual taste preferences. The menu showcases a diverse selection of fish, including *Nila*, *Patin*, *Jelawat*, *Haruan*, *Riu*, *Gurame*, Shrimp, and Crab. These fish varieties are sourced from fish farms, wild rivers, or external locations and are typically served with rice, *Lalapan* (raw vegetable salad with traditional sauce), and additional vegetable side dishes.

Kampung Lauk stands out not only due to its diverse culinary offerings but also boasts additional tourist attractions, such as the opportunity to observe firsthand the process of fish cultivation. This undoubtedly enhances the appeal of Kampung Lauk, as visitors can directly engage with the processes of fish cultivation, food preparation, and serving. Furthermore, the dining facilities take the form of traditional lodges situated on the outskirts of the Kahayan River, which itself serves as a prominent tourist attraction in Palangka Raya. The combination of these unique attractions is a compelling force in developing Kampung Lauk's tourism offerings.

While not achieving widespread recognition, the development of Kampung Lauk plays a crucial role in preserving the distinct culinary characteristics of the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan. Its presence has the potential to impact the influx of tourists, particularly to Palangka Raya, albeit to a relatively insignificant extent. Tourists are motivated to visit Kampung Lauk for diverse reasons, from seeking culinary experiences to making it their primary destination when traveling to Palangka Raya due to its unique offerings.

The existence of Kampung Lauk is indicative of the favorable expansion of the culinary sector in Central Kalimantan, deeply rooted in local culture and wisdom. This presents an opportunity for entrepreneurs to capitalize on and cultivate a creative culinary industry firmly grounded in local traditions, ultimately contributing to the advancement of tourism. One such example is MEFs Food & Snacks, a business focused on processing various types of fish meat, skins, and bones into distinctive souvenirs that exemplify the essence of Central Kalimantan. Through innovative methods, this enterprise effectively minimizes waste production, generating negligible amounts of industrial residue. The outcome of this process is a wide array of products, including *Abon*, *Wadi*, *Amplang*, *Pempek*, chips, and various other ready-to-eat (RTE) offerings. These traditional processing techniques, deeply entrenched in local wisdom and inherited cultural heritage (Alexandro et al., 2020), yield products that are unparalleled and distinguishable from their counterparts. Consequently, these traditional souvenir items prove to be valuable assets that can be harnessed to bolster the development of tourism destinations.

The existence of Kampung Lauk and MEFs Food & Snacks serves as an exemplification that substantiates the significance of culinary as a fundamental component in the advancement of tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan. The introduction of traditional culinary has aroused the curiosity and fascination of diverse communities and tourists alike, particularly those interested in savoring the authentic and distinctive delicacies of a particular region. This phenomenon is frequently observed, as individuals often embark on journeys to specific destinations solely to indulge in and experience traditional gastronomy or sample traditional culinary creations (Hall et al., 2003). Concurrently, tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan, with the positive progression of their traditional culinary heritage, have the potential to serve as a complementary factor in their overall development. However, one of the challenges that must be confronted involves effectively harnessing the uniqueness of traditional culinary as an identifying element capable of establishing the brand identity of the destination. Branding assumes a pivotal role as an enticing factor that attracts tourists to visit a particular destination. It can be affirmed that destination branding is at the forefront of promoting and publicizing a tourism destination (Judisseno, 2019).

The role of typical Dayak culinary traditions in Central Kalimantan serves as a compelling force in the development of tourism destinations. Culinary experiences, particularly those rooted in indigenous traditions such as *Mangenta* and Kampung Lauk, play a pivotal role in captivating tourists and fostering a deep interconnection between culinary richness and tourism activities. The Isen Mulang Cultural Festival, featuring the iconic *Mangenta*, stands out as a symbol of Central Kalimantan's unique cultural identity, drawing thousands of enthusiasts each year. Beyond being a mere culinary affair, *Mangenta*

becomes a sacred expression of gratitude and reverence, immersing tourists in the profound religious and communal practices of the Dayak community.

Similarly, Kampung Lauk, with its focus on traditional Dayak fish dishes, adds another layer to the culinary tourism narrative in Central Kalimantan. The direct engagement with fish cultivation processes and the utilization of traditional lodges along the Kahayan River enhance the overall appeal of Kampung Lauk as a distinctive culinary destination. The entrepreneurial efforts of establishments like MEFs Food & Snacks, transforming fish products into unique souvenirs, further underscore the potential of traditional culinary practices in contributing to the advancement of tourism.

As Central Kalimantan balances tradition and development, the positive progression of its culinary heritage emerges as a pivotal factor in shaping its tourism narrative. The diverse and authentic culinary offerings not only attract tourists but also contribute to the preservation of cultural identity. However, effective branding that harnesses the uniqueness of these culinary traditions remains a challenge that needs to be addressed to establish Central Kalimantan as a distinctive and sought-after destination in the global tourism landscape. The existence of culinary hubs like *Mangenta*, Kampung Lauk, and innovative enterprises exemplifies the integral role of culinary experiences in the broader development of tourism destinations, paving the way for sustained economic growth and cultural vibrancy in the region.

### **3.3 Utilization of Typical Dayak Culinary Variety as a Pivotal Element in Establishing Brand Identity for Tourism Destination Branding**

Within the framework of destination marketing, branding plays a pivotal role in shaping, demonstrating, communicating, and positioning the brand identity of a particular locale in a visually, mentally, and emotionally compelling manner to potential tourists. This strategic approach serves as a compelling factor that entices tourists to explore a given destination. Bali, with its strong brand identity captivating tourists, provides a compelling illustration of this phenomenon. Employing a strategic approach, Bali promotes destination branding through a condensed and distinct cultural strategy, coupled with showcasing extensive natural diversity (Wahyundi, 2020).

The construction of a robust Bali brand identity is a prolonged endeavor, comparable to nurturing an infant according to the American Marketing Association. Brands, like infants, require guidance, education, nurturing, support, and continuous care to thrive and mature. The progression Bali underwent in fortifying its brand highlights the significance of consistent innovation, ultimately attaining the status of one of the premier global destinations (CNN Indonesia, 2022).

Central Kalimantan, as a prominent tourist attraction with abundant tourism resources, is poised to establish a distinctive brand identity for its destination through various strategies. Among these approaches, the incorporation of traditional culinary practices as an integral element of the local culture stands out. The symbiotic relationship between traditional culinary and tourism destinations is widely recognized, emphasizing the powerful role of culinary offerings as tools for effective destination marketing (Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

As the field of tourism expands, there is a growing acknowledgment of the significance of culinary activities within this sector. Culinary is not merely an additional factor that

supports and sustains tourism; it is also recognized as a key element influencing tourists' motivation to embark on journeys. The primary objective for these individuals is to immerse themselves in the genuine and authentic experience of traditional culinary, reflecting the cultural heritage of a particular destination (Boniface, 2003). Importantly, the term "authentic" denotes reliability, originality, genuineness, or legitimacy. In the context of food, authenticity refers to dishes that are truly representative of their origin, possessing distinctive qualities deeply rooted in the specific cultural background. Authentic food is unique and distinct from dishes found in other locations, serving as a defining characteristic that encapsulates the essence of a place through its traditional culinary.

Connected to the social, natural, and cultural attributes of a specific locality or region, traditional culinary plays a significant role in shaping a destination's brand identity by fostering differentiation (Lin et al., 2011). This process establishes a powerful brand identity capable of attracting tourists (Burstedt, 2006). Differentiation serves as a competitive advantage that distinguishes a destination from others due to its inherent value, rarity, and difficulty in replicating (Mau & Sukawati, 2019). This concept represents a crucial component in establishing a strong brand identity (Ghauri & Cateora, 2014). A vital aspect of this phenomenon involves a destination meticulously examining the concept of differentiation to construct a robust and distinctive brand image, essential for attaining a competitive edge over other destinations.

Building upon the findings of data analysis, the typical culinary diversity of Dayak Central Kalimantan, including *Kenta*, possesses its distinctiveness across various dimensions, such as the utilization of ingredients, the process of obtaining raw materials, food preparation procedures, and final presentation. This culinary assortment embodies a cultural legacy preserved to this day, featuring relatively infrequent encounters like the fermented foods of *Wadi*, *Kalumpa*, *Juhu Umbut-umbutan*, and other traditional culinary. By further developing these traditional culinary practices, they hold the potential to serve as a supplementary attraction, contributing to a strong brand identity that conveys a specific image for tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan. Through authentic differentiation, Central Kalimantan's tourism destinations can effectively demonstrate and position their distinctiveness, setting them apart as valuable entities from other destinations.

The significance of the connection between traditional culinary, including *Kenta*, and tourist destinations cannot be disregarded. Each destination possesses varying degrees of attraction that can entice tourists. In addition to culinary, other elements of genuineness have the potential to captivate tourists. However, the traditional culinary aspect can serve as a crucial attraction for a destination. This is evident in certain destinations, both local and international, formulating their marketing strategies by concentrating on culinary due to its highly strategic role. Furthermore, culinary portrayal can manifest a destination's cultural identity (Frochot, 2003). Culinary, including *Kenta*, can be utilized as a valuable asset of culinary or gastronomic tourism and as one of the instruments to introduce the culture and branding of a particular region, such as Central Kalimantan.

To enhance the process of destination branding in Central Kalimantan, harmonious collaborations among various stakeholders are imperative. The government should actively and extensively promote the distinctive culinary practices of the Dayaks in Central Kalimantan to a broad audience, ensuring its widespread recognition. One effective approach would be to serve Dayak delicacies, including *Kenta*, to all visitors as a means of

exemplifying this endeavor. Notably, culinary specialties such as *Juhu Umbut Rotan*, *Juhu Singkah Enyuh*, *Juhu Kujang*, Chips made of *Kalakai*, *Kalumpe*, *Sambal Kandas Sarai*, and others should be highlighted. This strategy will enable outsiders to become acquainted with the delectable and unique Dayak culinary, thus appreciating its diverse characteristics. However, it is crucial to emphasize that the responsibility of promotion does not solely rest with the government but also necessitates a collaborative effort from local communities, particularly those engaged in the culinary industry. This cohesive collaboration will effectively introduce traditional culinary to a broader audience, ultimately establishing a strong brand identity that distinguishes itself through its exceptional qualities, thereby fortifying the branding of tourism destinations in Central Kalimantan. *Mangenta*, as an integral part of Dayak culinary traditions, adds an extra layer to this narrative, offering a unique cultural and historical dimension to the overall brand identity of Central Kalimantan. The inclusion of *Mangenta* in promotional efforts further enriches the destination's appeal, attracting tourists with promises beyond culinary pleasures – a profound immersion into historical and ritualistic values.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The culinary diversity of the Dayak community in Central Kalimantan plays a crucial role in shaping the region's tourism destinations, particularly in the context of branding. Traditional dishes such as *Juhu Umbut Rotan*, *Juhu Singkah Enyuh*, *Juhu Kujang*, *Kalakai Chips*, *Kalumpe*, and *Sambal Kandas Sarai*, along with the inclusive *Kenta* through *Mangenta*, contribute significantly to the positive trajectory of the tourism economy. Additionally, innovative culinary initiatives like MEFs Food & Snacks, which specializes in transforming fish products into unique souvenirs, serve as prime examples of how culinary creativity can drive local economic growth while minimizing waste. *Mangenta*, as an integral part of traditional culinary practices, takes center stage at the Isen Mulang Cultural Festival, significantly enriching the destination's identity. Similarly, Kampung Lauk, with its exclusive emphasis on Dayak fish dishes, offers more than just a culinary experience; it provides opportunities for visitors to engage in fish cultivation processes, enhancing their overall cultural immersion. In the realm of destination branding, traditional Dayak culinary traditions, notably *Mangenta*, and innovative ventures like MEFs Food & Snacks, hold significant promise for shaping the brand identity of Central Kalimantan. Establishing strong synergy among the government, local communities, and culinary entrepreneurs is crucial to maximize this potential, drawing inspiration from Bali's success in crafting a globally competitive brand identity. Proactive governmental involvement in promoting and engaging local communities, providing consistent support for culinary entrepreneurs, organizing culinary festivals to enhance global awareness, offering targeted support for enterprises like MEFs Food & Snacks, encouraging active participation of local communities in digital marketing, and conducting ongoing research to monitor market trends are all essential components. Future studies should explore nuanced strategies for effectively promoting Dayak culinary traditions, with a focus on detailing collaboration mechanisms between the government and local communities, particularly emphasizing direct involvement and benefits for the Dayak community. Furthermore, there is an opportunity for research to explore the integration of sustainable practices into the promotion of traditional culinary tourism, thereby ensuring the long-term preservation of cultural

heritage and environmental sustainability. Through cohesive collaboration, Central Kalimantan can adeptly leverage the unique offerings of Dayak cuisine to build a robust and sustainable destination brand.

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