

Identification of *Lethek* Noodles as a Gastronomy Tourism Product in Tourism Village

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Abstract: Gastronomy is currently one of the key factors in the development of traditional food-based culinary preparations in tourist villages. The aims of this study are to determine the history, origin, culture, cooking process, serving of *mielethek* and the efforts to use *mie lethek* as a gastronomy tourism product in the Tourism Village. This study shows a positive relationship between local food and tourism development in tourist villages. Meanwhile, the method used in this study is qualitative data-based research. The research location is in Bendo Tourism Village, Trimurti, Srandakan, Bantul, DIY. This research was conducted for two months (March-April 2022). The data collection technique uses in-depth interviews with three key informants consisting of the owner of the *mie lethek* factory, factory workers, *mie lethek* sellers and buyers. The results of the study illustrate that *mie lethek* traditional culinary processing products can be used as gastronomy tourism products in tourist villages. This research also reveals that *mie lethek* has extraordinary potential in terms of history, how to make, process, and serve. The main implication of this study could be an opportunity to design processing culinary products to promote tourism villages through gastronomy.

Keywords: gastronomy; mie lethek; processing culinary; tourism product; tourism village

INTRODUCTION/RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The tourism industry in Indonesia is a sector that is easy to develop, this sector is expected to become the number one foreign exchange income. One of the tourism that is developing is culinary tourism. Culinary tourism is one type of tourism that has an impact on the development of an area. Culinary tourism also plays a role in creating jobs and reducing unemployment and creating community welfare. This is proven by the increasing number of tourism places in Indonesia that are famous for culinary tourism. Culinary tourism, according to Besra (2012: 82) comes from a foreign language, namely voyages culinarians (France) or culinary travel (English), which means travel related to cooking. Besra also explained that according to the International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA), it is a unique eating and drinking activity carried out by every traveling traveler.

Culinary is a part of gastronomy. The word gastronomy comes from the ancient Greek *gastros*, which means "stomach" or "stomach," and *nomos* which means "law" or "rule." Gastronomy includes the study and appreciation of all food and drink. Gastronomy also includes detailed knowledge of the national foods and drinks of major countries around the world. The role of

gastronomy is as a basis for understanding how food and drink is used in certain situations. Gastronomic tourism is a new trend in tourism.

One of the areas in Yogyakarta that has a fairly well-known culinary tourism is Bantul. Bantul has various kinds of culinary specialties, one of which is *Lethek noodle*. It is a typical food of Bantul Regency, which is unique and has a history of making it. This noodle is made from cassava flour and tapioca. The manufacture of *letheke* noodles still uses the traditional way, namely using the help of cow power.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Gastronomy

According to Santich B in Antonius Riski (2018), gastronomy is a guide about various ways that involve everything about food and drink. Gastronomy or gastronomy is the art or science of good food (Good eating). This study deals with describing the culture, history, and environmental conditions regarding "where, when, why, and how."

According to Caria Ningsih and Dewi Turgarini (2020), Gastronomy can be explained as the study of the relationship between culture and food, gastronomy also studies various components of culture with food as the center (culinary art). The scope of gastronomy does not only look at food in terms of fulfilling physiological needs but also assesses food as a cultural aspect and an asset for the region. It was also stated that gastronomy is the art and science of good eating.

According to Turgarini in Karina Sinthiya (2021), Gastronomy does not only focus on food and drinks regarding how to cook them but includes choosing raw materials, tasting, serving dishes and studying them, seeking experience in consuming these dishes and knowing the nutritional value contained in food. and drinks related to ethics and etiquette, as well as knowing the philosophy, history, tradition and social.

Tourist Village

According to the People's Core Tourism (PIR), what is meant by Tourism Village is a rural area that offers an overall atmosphere that reflects the authenticity of the countryside both from socio-economic life, socio-cultural customs, daily life, has a typical building architecture and village spatial structure, or economic activities that are unique and interesting and have the potential to develop various components of tourism, for example attractions, accommodation, food and beverages, and other tourism needs (Hadiwijoyo, 2012).

According to Priasukmana and Mulyadin in Sari (2019), Tourism Village is a rural area that offers an overall atmosphere that reflects the authenticity of the countryside both from socio-economic life, socio-cultural customs, daily life, has a distinctive building architecture and village spatial structure, or economic activities that are unique and interesting and have the potential to develop various components of tourism, such as attractions, accommodation, food and drinks, souvenirs, and other tourism needs.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the research used the qualitative method. Meanwhile, the data collection techniques used are interviews, observation and documentation. Interviews were conducted by interviewing three informants, including the owner of the *lethek* noodle factory, the factory worker, and the buyer of *lethek* noodle. The research location was in Bendo Tourism Village, Trimurti, Srandakan, Bantul, DIY. This research was conducted for 2 months during February-March 2022.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION (HEADING 1)

The Overview of the Research Location

Bendo Nyawiji Tourism Village is a pioneering tourism village that is still developing and was only inaugurated by the Tourism Office in mid-December 2021. This Tourism Village has various natural wealth assets, and local wisdom that is still maintained today, and also still applies the noble values in life. As is the case with the simple Javanese concept that life must coexist with nature for the sustainability of life that is more beneficial. In addition to the cool, beautiful and green natural charm, in this Tourism Village, there are also various kinds of regional businesses that still uphold traditional values, such as the business of making *lethek* noodles.

Lethek noodles is a typical food of Bantul Regency, which is unique and has a history of making it. The manufacture of *lethek* noodles still uses the traditional way, namely using the help of cow power. Cow power is used to drive a cylinder weighing 1 ton. The cylinder serves as a mixer for the ingredients for making noodles. *Lethek* noodles factory located in this tourist village has also been around for a long time around the 1940s. *Lethek* noodles itself comes from the Javanese language, namely "lethek" which means "dull", so this noodle is called *lethek* noodles because of its dull color, even though it is dull in color does not mean this noodle is dirty. This noodle is dull in color because it is the original color of tapioca flour or cassava which is dried in the sun. Even *lethek* noodles are recognized as healthier because they do not contain preservatives and bleach during production.

The History or The Origin of *Lethek* Noodle Factor

Lethek noodle is a type of vermicelli. As the name implies, it is called *lethek* noodles because the color of the noodles is not generally white or yellow, but looks dull because it does not use bleach, dyes or preservatives in its manufacture. *Lethek* noodles is made from tapioca flour or cassava flour.

Lethek noodles Factory located in Bendo Nyawiji Tourism Village was established around 1940. This factory was built by the late Mr. Umar. Currently, *lethek* noodle factory is owned by Mr. Yasir Feri as the grandson of the late Mr. Umar.

At the beginning of the construction of this *lethek* noodle factory, Mr. Feri's grandfather, who came from Yemen, migrated to Indonesia in the 1920s. He came to Indonesia wanting to preach / preach the religion of Islam, besides that he also sold yarn in various markets in Jogja. At that

time, Mr. Umar was selling yarn at one of the animal markets in Bantul, while he was selling, Mr. Umar saw that a Chinese person was buying cows there. He followed the man to Dusun Nengahan Trimurti to find out what he had done to buy a cow. After arriving at the hamlet of Nengahan, Pak Umar got acquainted with one of the community leaders in the village, named Mbah Mangun. Pak Umar revealed his intention and purpose to Dusun Nengahan, finally Mbah Mangun ordered his son named Sastro Mualip to take Pak Umar to see what the Chinese were doing in Dusun Nengahan. It turned out that the Chinese worked in a noodle factory located in the hamlet. At that time, the Chinese factories were very strict, no one was allowed to see/come with them if it wasn't their part. But because Mr. Umar was acquainted with Mbah Mangun as a well-respected public figure at the time, Mr. Umar was finally allowed to see the factory.

When he saw the factory, Pak Umar had the thought of building a factory because the production equipment was quite easy to find. At that time the production tools used were bamboo, wood and red bricks. In addition to the easy-to-find production tools, Pak Umar also needs a location for Islamic symbols. After discussing with friends, Pak Umar finally decided to build a factory in Bendo Hamlet.

In the early days of development, Pak Umar built three factories. 2 factories are located in Bendo Hamlet, and 1 is located in Bantul City. Mr. Umar operated his factory for 30 years, from 1940 - 1970. Then this factory was held by Mr. Feri for 12 years, from 1970 to 1982. In the same year, instant noodles began to appear, which caused many people to switch to instant noodles and factories *lethek* noodles stopped operating because of the reduced demand. *Lethek* noodle factory has been vacuum for about 20 years. Until 2002, Mr. Feri as a grandson operated this factory again. This was done on the advice of several people and the support of local residents.

Besides the desire to preserve *lethek* noodle, Mr Feri also wants to create jobs for the residents of Bendo Hamlet. This was conveyed directly by Mr. Feri as the owner of the factory. "There are 35 employees here and all of them are Bendo residents. I want this factory to be able to help local residents to get jobs"

How to Make Lethek Noodles

The ingredients for making *lethek* noodles use organic ingredients and over time have experienced various kinds of innovations. This was conveyed by Mr. Feri as the current owner of *lethek* noodle factory:

"At the beginning of the factory establishment, the manufacture of lethek noodles used a mixture of tapioca flour and rice flour. But in 1960 the price of rice was expensive and difficult to find, then it was replaced with corn flour. Over time corn also became a staple food and the price was expensive. Finally, the ingredients for making lethek noodles were changed again to a mixture of tapioca flour and cassava flour. Until now, the main ingredients for making lethek noodles are cassava flour and tapioca flour."

How to make *lethek* noodles:

1. The cassava flour is mixed with tapioca flour in a cylinder. Mix it using cow power.
2. After the dough is mixed, the dough is steamed. After that, the flour mixture is returned to the cylinder to be milled so that the dough is more evenly distributed.
3. The dough that has been mixed well is put in a press machine to be printed into the shape of noodles. After that the dough that has been in the form of noodles will be steamed again.

4. After the steaming process, the dough in the form of noodles is chilled for 1 night. The next day the noodles are soaked in plain water to be broken down and cleaned of mucus.
5. The last process is drying. At the time of drying, noodles take about 5 hours if the weather conditions are good. After finishing the drying process, the noodles are then packaged and ready to be sold.
- 6.



Figure 1 Cylinder, a place to mix tapioca flour and cassava flour with the help of cow power
(source: 2022 Field Observations)



Figure 2 Flour dough that is finished and ready to be pressed into a noodle shape.
(source: Field Observation 2022)



Figure 3 The process of pressing the dough into a noodle shape.
(source: Field Observation 2022)



Figure 4 The dough is ready to be steamed
(source: Field Observation 2022)



Figure 5 The drying process for *lethek* noodles.
(source: Field Observation 2022)



Figure 6 *Lethek* noodles which is already packed and ready to be sold.
(source: Field Observation 2022)

The production of *lethek* noodles takes approximately 2 days. Each production, this factory produces approximately 1 ton of *lethek* noodles.

***Lehtek* Noodles and Tourism Village**

Lethek Noodles made by Mr. Feri is called Mie Lethek Bendo Cap Garuda. Mie Letek has been sold in various markets in DIY and even outside the city. Currently, lethek noodles have become a typical food that must be tried when visiting Bantul Regency. The majority of sellers of lethek noodles when cooking are still in the traditional way, namely by using a brazier and charcoal. According to them, if they use brazier and charcoal, the aroma and taste of the noodles will be different and they also want to keep the tradition. One of the buyers of mie lethek named Mita said that mie lethek was different from other noodles,

"mie lethek is different from other noodles. Mie lethek is made from natural ingredients of tapioca flour and cassava, without preservatives. So the taste of the noodles is delicious and the texture of the noodles is more chewy."



Figure 7 One of the processed foods, *Lethek Noodles*
 (source: Travelingyuk.com 218)

Figure 8 One of the processed foods, *Lethek Noodles*
 (source: Field Observation 2022)

*Lethek*Noodle has been used by tourism village managers to become a tourist icon and has been included as one of the tour packages.

APPLICATION STUDY PACKAGE DAYS WITHOUT BICYCLES

- a. 5 people Rp.120,000 /person
 Facilities: Resource Person, 1 X Snack, 1 X Buffet Meal, *Lethek* Noodle Factory, Blangkon Making, Guide, Insurance
- b. 10 people Rp. 105.000/Person
 Facilities: Resource Person, 1X Snack, 1X Buffet Food, *Lethek* Noodle Factory, Blangkon Making, Guide, Insurance
- c. 20 peopleRp.100,000 /person
 Facilities: Resource Person, 1X Snack, 1X Buffet Food, *Lethek* Noodle Factory, Blangkon Making, Guide, Insurance



Figure 9 tour package brochures
 (source: Bendo nyawiji village tour package)

The advantage of the *lethek* noodle factory for tourist villages is that it is the main strength / main attraction. This was conveyed by one of the managers of the tourist village named Dani "The existence of this *lethek* noodle factory is a differentiator from other tourist villages. *Lethek* noodle has become a typical icon of the tourist village of Bendo because *Lethek*noodle is only found in the village of Wita Bendo Nyawiji.

Lots of tourists have visited the tourist village of Bendo Nyawiji, there are even tourists who come just to enjoy the attraction of making *lethek* noodles and bringing souvenirs in the form of *lethek* noodles. The tourists who come want to know and see how to make *lethek* noodles in the traditional way using the help of cows, even though nowadays many factories are already using modern methods using machines.

With this, the tourism village manager wants to further develop the Bendo Nyawiji Tourism Village, this was conveyed by Dani as one of the tourist village managers. "Our wish in the future is to collaborate with the owners of *letheke* noodles to make a *letheke* noodle festival and also create a museum that contains history, product displays, gifts and souvenirs about *letheke* noodles"

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that *letheke* noodles are one of the typical foods of Bantul Regency which can be used as gastronomic tourism because it has a history and uniqueness in the way of making it which still uses cylinders with the help of cows. The color and taste of these noodles also make *letheke* noodles different from other noodles. With the *Letheke* noodle Factory in Bendo Nyawiji Tourism Village as a gastronomic tour, it is hoped that it can develop and promote Tourism Villages.

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