

Distribution Chain and Potential of Gonggong as a Culinary Tourism Destination in Bintan Island

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the Gonggong (dog conch) supply chain in Bintan Island and identify its potential to become a culinary tourism destination besides the well-known natural and cultural tourist destinations in Bintan Island. This is motivated by the existence of gonggong as endemic animals that only exist in the Riau Islands, especially in Bintan and Bangka Belitung Islands so that gonggong is known as a typical food of Bintan Island. However, this typical of Bintan Island is not yet nationally known like special foods of other regions. This study was conducted in Bintan Island using a descriptive-qualitative method to describe the supply chain and the potential of gonggong as a special food for culinary destination. Data was collected through in-depth and structured interviews and observations. The results of this study indicate that in terms of quantity, gonggong is available throughout the year with a tendency of abundant availability, and as a result, it has the potential of culinary destination for Bintan Island. In order for the gonggong culinary to be attractive to tourists, it needs packaging in a series of tourist travel attractions emphasizing foods and integrating it with cultural values of the local communities and with the rich natural phenomena of Bintan Island. Digital marketing strategies can be used for the purpose above through various social media or e-commerce platforms that are packaged in an attractive manner to build tourists' perception that Gonggong is the typical culinary destination of Bintan Island that is worthy of visit.

KEYWORDS: gonggong; culinary tourism; gastronomy; food anthropology; culture; supply chain; promotion.

INTRODUCTION

Riau Islands (Kepri) has the second largest number of foreign tourist visits after Bali. Data shows that the number of foreign tourist visits to Indonesia in 2019 is 16,106,954, with Bali tourist visits reaching 38.86 percent, Riau Islands 17.79 percent, Jakarta 15.24 percent, and

other areas 28.01 percent. This shows that Riau Islands is the second most favorite destination for foreign tourists in Indonesia after Bali. Viewed from the country of origin, the majority of foreign tourists visiting the Riau Islands came from Singapore at 48.52 percent, followed by Malaysian tourists at 10.57 percent, Chinese tourists at 10 percent, and Indian tourists at 5.25 percent, and the remaining 20.5 percent of tourists came from the Philippines, South Korea, Japan, England, Australia, the United States, and others (BPS Provinsi Kepri 2019).

The dynamics of tourism in Riau Islands generally shows a significant growth marked by the number of foreign tourists who visited Riau Islands from 2013 to 2019 which tended to increase, although there was a slight decline in 2016. Data from the Provincial Tourism Office of Riau Islands (2019) shows that in 2013, the number of foreign tourist visits is 1,859,066 and the number increased to 1,973,425 in 2014. Although in 2015, foreign tourist visits increased from the previous year reaching 2,037,673, in 2016 there was a decrease of foreign tourists from the previous year of around 100 thousands visitors to 1,920,232. In 2017 there was a significant increase of around 200 thousand foreign tourists to 2,139,962, and continued to increase in the next two years, namely 2,635,664 visits in 2018 and 2,864,795 in 2019. Data shows that foreign tourist visits to Riau Islands are realized through four islands, namely Batam (68%), Bintan (22.16%), Tanjung Pinang (5.91%), and Karimun (3.94%).

Many tourists visit Riau Islands because this province offers a variety of attractions for tourists. Various attractions presented for tourists can be categorized into three clusters, namely natural attractions, cultural attractions, and man-made attractions (Allahar 2015). In addition, tourism in the Riau Islands offers various activities in the three clusters of attractions which it offers



a variety of tourism, namely marine tourism consisting of beaches, mangrove forests, and coral reefs; educational tourism in form of dugong research centers and mangrove forests; cultural tourism in the form of traditional Malay dances, traditional Malay clothes, traditional processions, Gurindam 12 values which contains philosophies about life and several others related to Malay culture; village tours that offer activities during the tour; historical tours related to the tour of the legacy of the Lingga-Riau kingdom glory on Penyengat Island; and religious tourism which is the tours of the tombs of kings and leaders of the Lingga-Riau kingdom. In addition, the province of Riau Islands offers a variety of accommodations from homestays with affordable prices to luxury resorts with exclusive prices.

Unfortunately, among the various attractions offered in the Riau Islands, culinary has not been used as one of the tourist destinations for domestic and foreign tourists. Food actually can be one of the important attractions that draw tourists to visit tourist destinations and tasting foods can become an experience for tourists (Henderson 2009). Furthermore, according to Henderson (2004) and Quan & Wang (2004) in Henderson (2009), food and tourism are closely related and are important components in tourism. All tourists need food to eat when they visit a tourist destination and the food itself can become the main motivation for them to revisit a tourist destination.

The province of Riau Islands, especially the Bintan Island, has a special food as its icon, namely Gonggong (*strombus canarium*), which is a type of sea snail commonly found on the coast of Bintan Island and its surroundings (Manalu, Lestari, and Melani 2015; Sammulia et al. 2021; Viruly 2011) according to Amini (1984) in Viruly (2011). Gonggong are commonly found on Dompok Island, Lobam Island, Mantang Island, Senggaran Island, and Tanjung Uban Island. Despite gonggong has been the icon of Bitan Island, it has not yet become one of the culinary destinations widely promoted as part of the tour packages. Currently, gonggong is only limited to be used as daily food for the communities of the Island. If there are tourists who enjoy the culinary of gonggong, it is because the initiative of the tour guides who introduce the gonggong to tourists for their meal. Furthermore, the processing of gonggong is still done in a simple way by boiling and serving it with peanut sauce or chili sauce. This processing emphasizes the original taste of the gonggong.

Until now, studies on gonggong are still very limited. The initial study of gonggong was carried out by Amini (1986) on the coastal waters of Bintan-Riau Island that

emphasized the proximate composition. It was followed by other studies on the growth patterns of gonggong (Manalu, Lestari, and Melani 2015), the methods of gonggong fishing using *kila* as baits (Sianjuntak, Pratomo, and Idris 2017), gonggong larval developments (Muzahar and Hakim 2018), sex identification of gonggong morphologically (Susiana, Apriandi, and Rochmady 2019), and the utilization of gonggong shell wastes as raw materials for pharmaceutical preparation (Sammulia et al. 2021). From the various studies on gonggong above, there has been no study on the potential of gonggong as the unique culinary destination of the Riau Islands.

This condition is different from that of other regions that have developed their local potentials into culinary tourism destinations. Based on the literature, previous researches show that the development of local resource potentials can enrich and strengthen the culinary tourism of a region. Minang with its unique culinary variety can become a potential culinary destination with its own identity (Besra 2012). However, according to Prayogi (2017), the emphasis should not only be made on popular special foods, but also should be made on the optimizing of local resources to support the development of culinary tourism. For example, Malang City is not only popular with meatballs, but there are other potentials in the region that are developed through innovation and diversification of food products to create a variety of interesting culinary products that can be sold to visitors (Prayogi 2017). Another example, Tangerang maximizes its culinary tourism potentials (Kristiana, Suryadi, and Sunarya 2018) by taking advantage its culinary diversity through strategic steps in arranging promotions and references to help tourists on culinary tours. Another similar study is about making the *Ase* porridge as one of the Betawi culinary riches to attract tourists (Muliani 2019) because Betawi is known for its variety of traditional foods and has the potential to attract tourists travelling to this region. While the research on the development of the Mandalika Central Lombok Special Economic Zone (SEZ) (Suteja and Wahyuningsih 2019) was started by building culinary tourism as one of attractive components for tourists to visit. There are a lot of local culinary diversities in Indonesia that can be developed, such as *taliwang* chicken, *plecing kangkung* (a kind of kale salad), *beberuk*, *bebaleng*, *urap-urap*, and various kinds of satay.

Based on the above phenomenon, this study aims to analyze the supply chain and potential of Gonggong as a culinary tourism destination in Bintan Island. The results of this study are expected to provide a complete picture and information for the government to establish strategies

in developing culinary tourism in Bintan Island.

Foods in various forms can attract tourists (Henderson 2009). Furthermore, Henderson (2009) states that food plays an important role in tourists' decision making and satisfaction through tourism products and tourism promotion strategies. In addition, foods can offer pleasure, entertainment, and foods can also have a social purpose. Enjoying of foods of a society by tourists can also provide insight into the society's way of life and help the tourists understand the cultural differences between their own culture and the culture of the society in which they are traveling (Hegarty and Barry O'mahony 1999).

Experts have agreed to adopt the definition of food tourism formulated by Hall and Sharples (2003) (Ellis et al. 2018) which food tourism is defined as "an activity of visiting food producers, food festivals, restaurants, and certain locations to taste food, and experience typical food of the visited destination as the main driving factor of motivation to travel." There are several literatures that study food and tourism, and define and classify them in several terms such as "culinary tourism", "food tourism" or "gastronomic tourism." Some academics argued that the three terms are very similar and are in fact used interchangeably in some cases (Horng and Tsai 2012). However, Ellis et al. (2018) argued that this is not the case because the three terms are used in slightly different contexts and the meaning of each term represents a different perspective. The following is the difference between each of these terms.

Long (2004) in Horng and (Simon) Tsai (2010) stated that the term "culinary tourism" was coined in 1998 and refers to international tourists who plan their trips partly or largely on the basis of a desire to experience distinctive and exotic cuisines and different traditions. However, culinary tourism is more than just trying new and exotic foods. The basis of tourism is the perception about something that is different from the usual occurrences. Such perception can be different for each individual and each culture which includes specific belief systems, lifestyles, and ways of life (Horng and (Simon) Tsai 2010). In addition, food can also become a tourist destination for tourists (Henderson 2009). Therefore, culinary tourism is a form of cultural tourism because foods cannot be separated from the culture of all societies (Horng and Tsai 2012; Henderson 2009; Ellis et al. 2018; Ignatov and Smith 2006). However, not only food or culture but all aspects of "food culture" (including cooking and eating) can form the basis of cultural narratives, rituals, festivals, and other cultural expressions.

Thus, culinary tourism is more than about eating of foods while travelling, because it is also about a direct experience of a unique culinary culture and local wisdom of a society (Ignatov and Smith 2006). Furthermore, Horng and (Simon) Tsai (2010) emphasized that "culinary tourism" is about an individual's experience related to food, where in this experience contains a cultural learning and knowledge transfer about the destination area and its people, which is packaged in tourism activities so that food in culinary tourism is seen as the medium of cultural experience.

Next, another term that is often used is "food tourism". Hall and Sharples (2003) are among those who often use the term "food tourism". While culinary tourism refers to food-related cultural activities, food tourism refers to physical experiences which are motivated by a desire to enjoy local foods (Hall et al. 2003). In other words, food tourism emphasizes the physical manifestations and culinary tourism emphasizes cultural information obtained through physical experience. Both terms are used to understand tourists' desires to eat through their eating activities.

The terms of "gastronomic tourism" or "gastronomy" are rarely used than the terms of "culinary tourism" and "food tourism". Hegarty and O'Mahony (1999) put "gastronomy" in terms of the place of foods in the culture and the lifestyle of people related to foods. It can be said that "culinary tourism" refers to the cultural experiences possessed by tourists and "gastronomic tourism" concerns the place of foods in the culture of a local community.

Ellis et al. (2018) in their study of "food tourism" found that "food tourism" is about cultural anthropology through the understanding of tourist's interaction with a destination area through the medium of food. Because food is a form of cultural experience, authenticity is very important. With this in mind, food serves as a metaphor for the construction and expression of ethnic and cultural identity, and people relate food to rituals, symbols, and belief systems from a cultural anthropological perspective through the study of food. Thus, food represents traditions, stories and symbols where tourists will interact in them.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was carried out in Bintan Island of Riau Islands Province, at three locations which the two main locations become the centers of gonggong growth, namely Lobam, Busung, and Penaga areas. Of the three locations, Busung

and Penaga areas which are still included in the Bintan bay area are known to the people of Bintan as areas that have quality gonggong because these areas that have coastal characteristics of sand and mud are suitable for breeding areas of gonggong. Compared to gonggong found in sandy coastal areas, the quality of gonggong that are bred in sand mixed with mud are much better. In terms of appearance, the red gonggong have better meat quality and taste than the white ones.

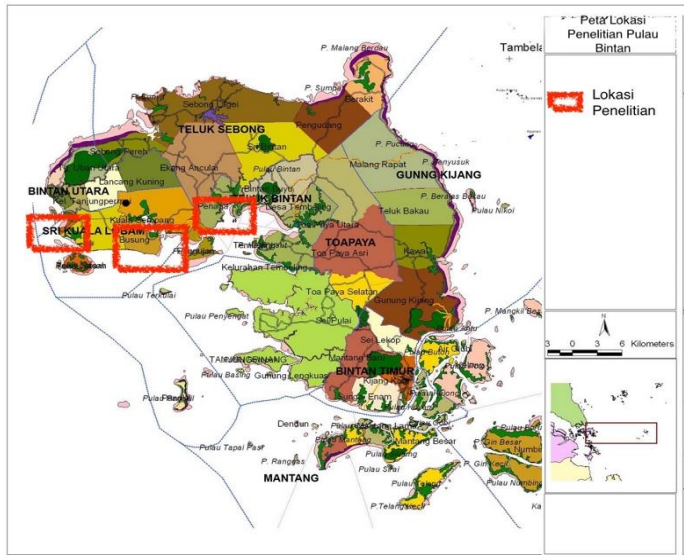


Figure 1 - Research Locations in Bintan Island



Figure 2 - White Gonggong (left figure) and Red Gonggong (right figure)
 Source: Research Doc, 2021

The samples were obtained using a purposive sampling technique by determining groups or key informants consisting of fishermen, gonggong collectors, owners of seafood restaurants (commonly known by local people as *kelong*), and travel agents. Samples were taken to see the value chain and supply chain of gonggong from fishermen to gonggong that are presented in seafood restaurant menus for visiting tourists or consumers. Key informants consist of fisherman representatives from 3 locations of

study who directly know and control the information about gonggong, tradesmen of gonggong, large collectors of gonggong who become the reference for fishermen to sell their gonggong in the three areas. Other key informants are owners of big seafood restaurants (*kelongs*) who have many customers, and travel agents who serve domestic and foreign tourists.

The data was collected using structured and in-depth interviews with a list of questions that have been prepared for each key informant according to their respective roles. Observations were made on fishermen, collectors, and *Kelong* owners. Observations on fishermen were focused on their activities to obtain gonggong, which these activities are carried out in three ways, first, when the water on the beach recedes far, fishermen will go down to look for gonggong on the sidelines of the rocks or in the muddy sand (commonly called *bekarang* by the local communities). The second way is by diving, usually done by fishermen. The third way is by casting net in the estuary without waiting for the sea water to recede. Observations were made on collectors who receive the catch of gonggong from fishermen who then keep them alive by storing them in cages submerged in the seawater. Meanwhile, observations and interviews with the owners were related to the processing of gonggong and special places to keep the gonggong alive because gonggong must be alive and well before being processed into dishes according to the requests of tourists or visitors. To support the theoretical framework and analysis, a literature study was conducted to examine previous research and theoretical references as instruments for analyzing the findings of research problems.

The primary data was obtained from field observations and structured interviews with fishermen, collectors, *Kelong* owners and travel agents. While the secondary data was obtained from the results of the BPS report of Riau Islands Province 2020, literatures supporting the theories in this study, and various other documents relevant to the topic of this study. Data collection and observations began in January 2021 until mid-April 2021. The prioritized data in the interviews was the production of Gonggong before the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the database used was database of 2019.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Gonggong Supply Chain

Gonggong is an endemic biota that lives in Riau Islands, especially in the waters of Bintan Island and its

surroundings (Manalu, Lestari, and Melani 2015; Sammulia et al. 2021; Viruly 2011). In Indonesia, only two regions have gonggong endemic biota, namely Riau (Bintan) Islands and Bangka Belitung Islands. These marine biotas are not widely known by the Indonesian people, although they have a high economic value. The results of interviews with fishermen show that gonggong are available throughout the year, especially from June to October, with the production of gonggong are very abundant influenced by the westerly wind. A single fisherman can produce up to 20 kg of gonggong every day. Meanwhile, from November to May, number of gonggong will decrease significantly because they are influenced by the northerly wind and a fisherman will be only able to get around 3 kg up to 5 kg per day. The abundance of gonggong has made gonggong as an icon and culinary specialty of Riau Islands, especially Bintan Island. It leads the local government in the 1980s to build a gonggong monument located on the beach in Tanjung Pinang City. This makes the Bintan region a supplier of gonggong to other surrounding areas. This statement is supported by gonggong collectors which claimed that their biggest and permanent consumers are traders from Batam area, the people of Bintan Island, and the people around Bintan Island. Periodically, the collectors will supply gonggong to meet market demand in those areas.

Currently, there is no data regarding the exact amount of gonggong production because it is not officially recorded by the Marine Service. The amount of production is usually based on the recorded catches and sales made at the existing fish trade centers at docks or ports. Gonggong buying and selling transactions are carried out directly from fishermen to buyers so that there is no official and valid data available. However, the results of the assessment of information obtained from fishermen and collectors show that the production of gonggong is quite massive and even tends to increase from previous years.

The Gonggong habitat is divided into two areas, namely on slightly muddy sandy beaches and on muddy waters. Fishermen catch gonggong in three ways, namely by going down to shores when the water recedes far (which is commonly referred to as *bekarang*) and mostly done by women by taking them over directly by hands. While for gonggong in muddy sand and inundated with sea water, they are obtained by casting net (trawl) and obtained by diving. This fishing activity is carried out by fishermen in the Bintan Strait and Busung area which are known as the largest suppliers of the highest quality gonggong. The nets are spread to the bottom of the muddy area which is then allowed to stand for a while before being lifted. The use of

trawls as a medium for catching gonggong has received opposition from fishermen of non-gonggong, because it damages coral reefs and disturbs fish habitat, which affects their catches. The solution to this problem is to make a mutual agreement to localize the gonggong catch area with certain boundaries by not extending the area to the entire sea.

Figure 3 shows the results of field mapping related to the distribution chain of gonggong starting from fishermen to being served in the form of processed food at *Kelongs* or at end users.

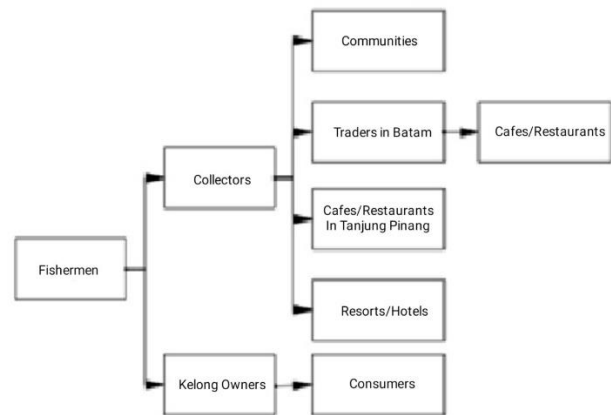


Figure 3 - The distribution chain of Gonggong
 Source: Author, 2021

Fisherman

Fishermen who look for gonggong in the Bintan and Busung bays will sell their catches to collectors in Busung, Penaga, and Lobam areas. In addition to collectors, fishermen will sell their catches to *Kelong* owners in Bintan Island. On average, during the gonggong season, every fisherman can sell up to 20 kg per day, and outside the season they can sell their catches from 3 kg up to 5 kg.

People distinguish the types of gonggong based on shell patterns, namely white and red patterns, with the selling value of the red gonggong is higher than that of the white gonggong. Fishermen sell their catch of white gonggong to collectors at a price of Rp 11,000 – Rp 18,000 per kg depending on the season which affects their availability. In a gonggong season where the availability is abundant, fishermen can sell for Rp 11,000 per kg. When the availability is limited, the highest selling price will reach Rp 18,000 per kg. Red gonggong can reach a price ranging from Rp 23,000 up to Rp. 25,000 per kg because

the quality and taste of the meat is better than white patterned gonggong.

Collectors

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, every day, collectors were able to buy gonggong from fishermen in the amount of 80 kg - 100 kg, or in the range of 2.7 tons to 3 tons per month. Even at certain times when the demand from consumers is high, collectors will usually increase the capacity of the farmers from 4 tons up to 5 tons. The condition of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a drastic decrease in supply to less than 1 ton per month as a result of declining market demands. This situation is risky for collectors because more gonggong will die in the process of maintenance or captivity if they are not sold quickly. The average death of gonggong reaches 10% of the total catches. Collectors will try to keep gonggong alive and fresh when the Gonggong are sold, by collecting the gonggong in nets placed in wire boxes as storage media and then soaking them in seawater located on the edge of the estuary as well as the location for the gonggong captives by collectors. Gonggong should not be exposed to rain or fresh water directly, because it can cause the death of gonggong. Because gonggong that are received by collectors usually are still dirty due to sand or mud, the collectors must clean the gonggong before they are put into captivity, which can take up to 2 days to clean them up with the hope that buyers receive the clean gonggong.

Collectors usually have regular customers who mostly come from Batam Island. These customers are *Kelong* owners and collectors on Batam Island. Every day on weekdays, customers from Batam will take an average of 30 kg - 50 kg of gonggong from collectors, but on weekends the demands are usually much higher reaching 70 kg - 100 kg. Every collector in Bintan Island has regular customers ranging from 2 to 4 customers from Batam. Usually, they can sell an average of 4 tons of gonggong every month. There are also traders from the Batam Island who will come twice a week to pick up the gonggong that they have ordered in advance. In addition, periodic deliveries to Batam usually are carried out using ferry transportation from Tanjung Uban to the port of Telaga Pungur Batam. Whether they are big collectors or small collectors in Bintan Island, most of them will sell their gonggong to Batam. Collectors usually take a profit margin of Rp. 4,000 – Rp. 5,000 per kg of gonggong sold from the purchase price, both for white and red gonggong.

Not only from consumers from Batam, the general

communities in Bintan Island also buy gonggong from collectors, because the gonggong are available at any time. They cannot rely on fishermen because the fishermen need to wait for the right time to catch Gonggong, i.e., when the sea water recedes. In addition to providing requests for the general communities, collectors also provide requests for restaurants located in Tanjung Pinang, with an average daily delivery of around 30 kg - 40 kg of gonggong. There are even collectors and *Kelong* owners who become seafood suppliers for luxury hotels and resorts in the Lagoi tourism area, Bintan. For example, collectors from Tanjung Pisau Penaga and the owners of Kelong Pelom Mas become suppliers of seafood needs (including Gonggong) for restaurants at several resorts, namely Bayan Tree, Natra, Anmon, Bintan Lagoon, and Nirwana Resort. Delivery is done periodically depending on the incoming order. In the seafood order, gonggong becomes one of the permanent components, because it has become one of the menus at the resort restaurants, as the identity of local culinary.

Kelong Owners

To meet the demands of local consumers or tourists for processed food of gonggong, *Kelong* owners every month usually spend an average of 1 ton of gonggong. To get a competitive price, they buy gonggong directly from fishermen because by buying directly from fishermen, they can get cheaper price than that of collectors, with a price difference of Rp 4,000 – Rp 5,000 per kilo.

Kelong usually sells the processed gonggong at a price per serving from Rp 60,000 up to Rp 90,000, depending on the variety of preparations and the type of gonggong. Most of the processed gonggong are only boiled. Most processed gonggong are boiled but each *Kelong* has its own signature in the chili sauce or peanut sauce as a complementary menu to boiled gonggong. *Kelong* owners inform the researcher that it is possible for gonggong to be processed based on consumer's demand. Gonggong can be made boiled, with sweet and sour preparations, using Padang spices, butter, or other ingredients based on consumers' tastes. However, up to now, *Kelongs* only serves boiled gonggong and they have not yet served other forms of processed gonggong on their food menu.

Like collectors, *Kelong* owners must keep gonggong alive and fresh when they are served. Breeding gonggong is not without risks which often a gonggong is infected with a disease that spreads quickly to other gonggong. To prevent this problem from happening, water circulation

and shelter are the main concerns of *Kelong* owners in breeding gonggong, which they will build reservoirs flowing with seawater, or they put the gonggong in nets and immerse them in seawater in estuaries to prevent the gonggong exposed to fresh water that can cause them to die.

Kelongs that are scattered around Bintan Island always serve gonggong as one of the products in the processed food menu. All visitors who come in Bintan, whether they are domestic or foreign tourists, will be served gonggong as one of their menus. In promotional activities, *Kelongs* usually do not explicitly promote gonggong as their typical food of Bintan Island for tourists who visit Bintan Island, but Gonggong will be served as a package with other foods based on orders from travel agents who bring tourists with them to eat. *Kelongs* usually build cooperation with travel agents or travel tours. For example, *Kelongs* make collaborations with Star Jet, which is a travel agent for Chinese tourists; the Indonesian Tourist Guides Association and HPI; Bintan Travelers, Indo Rent; and with other travel agents. When it is time to serve the guests, they will take the tourists to *Kelong* as their partners.

Gonggong and Tourism Promotion

Tour packages offered by travel agencies cover cultural, natural, and religious tourisms. Unfortunately, they have not offered culinary tour packages as a separate part of the entire series of tourist trips offered. Culinary or eating activities are only limited to fulfilling biological needs, not yet becoming a special attraction that is packaged attractively for tourists. Tourism in Bintan Island is more emphasized more on natural and cultural tourism, and has not yet explored the existing culinary tourism in depth. Although gonggong has become a part of every tourist activity, it has not been promoted as a culinary tourism attraction.

Fortunately, there are several travel agents who make a special tour package exploring the characteristics of the Riau Islands by inviting foreign tourists when the sea water recedes. This is done by the travel agency of Traveler Bintan and HPI. This is a very interesting package, not only for foreign tourists, but also for domestic tourists. Several times this package was offered to foreign tourists and they gave a positive and enthusiastic response because they wanted to enjoy this experience again. This package directly brings tourists to enjoy the experience of looking for gonggong and experience of processing the gonggong according to their

desires or tastes by varying on how to cook gonggong, as an example, not just by boiling them.

In practices of tourism business, there is community empowerment program that is carried out by travel agents, for example, by Travelers Bintan and HPI. They build partnerships with local community-owned *Kelongs* in building productive economic enterprises. This collaboration is followed by the implementation of service standards and environmental hygiene, as well as food processing and presentation, with a hope of generating motivation for tourists to visit again.

CONCLUSION

The tourism industry has a multiplier effect, one of which is the effect on food and agriculture industry (Henderson 2009). Market demand from tourism industry should be followed by innovation and diversification of processed food products. The supply chain and distribution of gonggong as one of the food commodities in Riau Islands shows a high value, both in terms of quantity and economy. The peculiarity of gonggong has made this endemic animal deserves to be the icon of Bintan Island in terms of food. Gonggong is not only seen as a representation of typical exotic food from Riau Islands because it is considered that it has a cultural value, by allowing tourists get a direct experience with the event of looking for gonggong on the beach and processing them as meal. Thus, tourists can experience on how the culture of fishermen community in their activity of looking for gonggong when the sea water recedes. The interaction between tourists and the local communities will create an appreciation of their cultural values. Thus, gonggong is not only seen and interpreted only as a special food because there are cultural values in it.

Unfortunately, gonggong as the destination of culinary tourism has not been programmed to be a separate tourist destination. Concrete efforts that need to be made to package gonggong as the culinary tourism are: *first*, promoting the gonggong as one of the ethnic and distinctive foods that only exist in the Riau Islands; *second*, making a gastronomic travel itinerary where tourists are introduced to special foods, especially gonggong; *third*, organizing a cooking school with gonggong as one of the ingredients, either as a main meal or as snack; *fourth*, holding a special food festival featuring a variety of local foods; and *fifth*, experimenting on diversification of gonggong food products using local ingredients, such as sweet and sour spices, satay, crackers, *otak-otak*, *prata*, and so on.

Key factors that influence the success of culinary tourism development are: effectively identifying and using the existing core resources and evaluating government's capabilities and policies in promoting culinary tourism (Hornng and Tsai 2012). The shift from conventional marketing to digital marketing by using various online or e-commerce media platforms has been proven can increase competitive advantage as evidenced by the increase in sales turnover (Syahrial et al. 2020; Ni Komang Thessy Aprelia and Pitanatri 2021) and it works also for traditional culinary products (Syahrial et al. 2020). Local governments have a strategic role in encouraging the progress of the tourism industry through facilitating the provision of supporting infrastructures (Afrilian 2021). In addition, the government must be able to promote the culinary industry and build an ecosystem that supports the sustainability of culinary tourism, both in terms of culture, society, politics and the environment. The owned resources can be optimized in building an image that affects the perspective of tourists (Ortega and Rodríguez 2007).

The database of culinary tourism destination is important to be built as the basis for planning and managing future strategies. Another aspect, i.e., cultural identity is the main characteristic that can be an added value for the culinary tourism destination. Therefore, the characteristics of local cuisine can be the important tourism resource for value adding and increasing the development of sustainable tourist destination.

Rich and diverse culinary tourism resources that are supported by public and private sectors will have a competitive advantage in culinary tourism. The government should establish policies to promote the development of sustainable culinary tourism which are integrated with tourism and hospitality related industries through education and development of tourism awareness of local communities to be actively involved by developing and providing added value to the culinary tourism destinations.

Strategies to build culinary tourism must be able to integrate cuisine, culture and tourism. Synergies and partnerships should be built between the government, industries and local communities in marketing and expanding the culinary tourism market. This must be followed by an increase in the quality of products and services involving professionals in tourism and hospitality sectors to able to provide a variety of local specialties that have cultural significances and enrich the national

cuisines.

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