

HARMONY IMPLEMENTATION "TRI HITA KARANA (THK)" IN THE PACKAGING OF CULINARY PRODUCTS TO CREATE A TOURIST EXPERIENCE

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Abstract:

The local culinary industry has excellent potential to attract tourists but needs more attractive packaging and effective marketing strategies. This research aims to discover how THK-based packaging design can influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions regarding tourism products in Bali and the challenges faced in implementing THK-based packaging. The research uses qualitative methods to understand how the Tri Hita Karana (THK) principles can be integrated into tourism products and how this influences the tourist experience. In-depth interviews can be conducted with relevant stakeholders, such as tourism product developers, marketers and tourists. Through interviews, researchers can understand their perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation and impact of THK in tourism products. In this research, an ethnographic study was also carried out, which involved participatory observation at Bali tourist locations. It will help researchers gain insight into daily interactions between tourists, local communities and the environment. This method helps to see how THK principles are integrated into daily practice and how they influence the tourist experience. This method discovered several Balinese culinary product designs, such as food and drinks, that combine the Tri Hita Karana (THK) principles. The Packaging of Culinary products in the form of food and drinks sold around tourist attractions and souvenir shops not only offers uniqueness but also imbues tourists with values rooted in Balinese culture.

Keywords: Culinary, Packaging, Tri Hita Karana, Tourism

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is experiencing a significant evolution in the global era (Page & Connell, 2020; Tirados, 2011; Webster, 2019), with local culinary products becoming one of the main attractions for tourists (Ellis et al., 2018; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Henderson, 2016; Scarpato & Daniele, 2003). The unique flavors, cooking techniques and presentation of traditional culinary delights significantly enrich the tourist experience. However, creative innovation is needed to remain relevant and attractive in the global market, especially in packaging and marketing local culinary products. On the other hand, globalization has opened new markets and created greater demand for authentic culinary experiences (Mak et al., 2012; Scarpato & Daniele, 2003; Sidali et al., 2013). Tourists now seek unique and original experiences often found in local culinary specialties (Gheorghie et al., 2014; Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Romadhon, 2024; Stone et al., 2018). It creates excellent opportunities for local culinary producers to expand their reach to international markets. However,



the challenge is presenting and marketing these products to appeal to global consumers' tastes and habits.

Shifting consumer trends towards sustainability and authenticity also demand innovation in packaging. Packaging that is environmentally friendly and reflects local identity appeals to environmentally conscious consumers and adds authenticity to the product (Birch et al., 2018; Chua et al., 2023; Khare, 2015; Sims, 2009). Modern travelers seek authentic experiences that connect them to local culture, and culinary delights are one of the most effective ways to do so. Innovative packaging can increase a product's visual appeal while providing information about the origins and story behind the food, reinforcing its authenticity and perceived cultural value.

Integrating Tri Hita Karana (THK) principles in tourism products offers uniqueness and deepens it with values rooted in Balinese culture. THK, which means "three causes of prosperity," teaches the importance of maintaining balance and harmony between humans and each other, humans and the environment, and humans and spiritual power or God (Made et al., 2023; Peters, 2013; Pitana, 2010). Applying this principle in the development of tourism products in Bali has the potential to create more authentic and meaningful experiences for tourists. In tourism, THK can be integrated through various aspects, from product design and packaging to how the product is marketed and consumed. For example, food and beverage packaging that uses natural materials such as banana leaves or bamboo shows a commitment to environmental sustainability and adds deep aesthetic value while depicting Bali's rich and unique identity.

Apart from that, the application of THK in interactions between people in the tourism industry is also vital. This can be realized by empowering local communities, using local products, and ensuring that tourism activities support preserving Balinese culture and traditions. This way, tourists buy the culinary product and become part of a rich and dynamic cultural experience. Spirituality is also an inseparable component of THK. Tourism products that support spiritual practices or introduce tourists to the spiritual aspects of life in Bali can increase awareness and respect for the island's spiritual traditions. In this way, THK is a philosophy and a tool that encourages innovation in Bali's tourism products. The THK integration provides a deeper dimension to the tourism experience, making it more memorable and comprehensive. Tourists who come to Bali, thus, not only enjoy its natural beauty but also understand and appreciate the cultural richness brought and maintained by the local population through the THK principles that they find in product packaging.

Literature Review. In the global era, competition in the local culinary sector is increasing, including for packaged products offered to tourists (Horng & Tsai, 2012; Nashiruddin Al-Bakry, 2024; Raikkonen et al., 2013; Widiastini et al. P. & Andiani, 2014). In the context of Bali, the application of the Tri Hita Karana (THK) philosophy in developing culinary products offers a holistic approach that harmonizes the relationship between humans, nature and spirituality, which can strengthen this attraction (Dewi, 2019; Dharmawan et al., 2017; Hadiyanto, 2022; Suarta et al., 2018). One critical aspect that is often overlooked but has great potential in increasing attractiveness is that innovative packaging design plays a role not only as product protection but also as a medium for communication and promotion (Dominic, 2021; Elkhattat & Medhat, 2022; Mujib & Saptiningsih, 2021; Rahman, 2016) which increases product sales value by highlighting sustainability and authenticity.

Previous studies show that packaging design plays a vital role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions (Alhamdi, 2020; Nugrahani, 2015; Wang et al., 2023), where innovative and attractive packaging is often considered an indicator of quality and authenticity. In the context of local culinary products in Bali, the application of packaging design that adopts THK and



sustainability principles not only attracts attention but also creates a positive perception of the quality and authenticity of the product. It becomes especially relevant as tourists often seek authentic and unique experiences related to the locations they visit. Adoption of marketing strategies that promote these products through packaging designs that reflect cultural and sustainable values can be a powerful tool in promoting local culinary products to tourists (Hornig & Tsai, 2012; Richards, 2012; Utama, 2017; Wondirad et al., 2021). Although the importance of packaging design has been recognized, more innovative concepts still need to be implemented in the packaging of local culinary products. Many local producers still need to use traditional packaging methods less attractive to modern tourists. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by exploring the potential of innovative and sustainable packaging designs to increase the attractiveness of local culinary products in the eyes of tourists.

This research is relevant and urgent, considering the increasing number of tourists and competition in the global culinary market. Local manufacturers must understand how to utilize packaging design to attract attention and influence traveler perceptions. In addition, this research also aims to understand how packaging design can improve tourist experiences and promote local cultural values through culinary products by integrating packaging design elements such as color, shape and materials that reflect the uniqueness of Balinese culture.

METHODS

This research adopts a qualitative approach to explore the integration of Tri Hita Karana (THK) principles in Bali tourism products and their influence on tourist experiences. This approach was chosen because of its ability to understand complex social and cultural contexts, such as those found in THK practice. In this research, in-depth interviews and ethnographic studies (Harwati, 2019; Proenca & Jiménez-Sáez, 2020) were used to find answers to questions about THK-based packaging design that can influence consumers' perceptions and purchasing decisions regarding tourism products in Bali and the challenges faced in the implementation of THK-based packaging. Interview subjects were tourism product producers, marketers and tourists.

The aim is to collect qualitative data about the subject's perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation and impact of THK on tourism products. The researchers conducted interview sessions with respondents who met at product sales locations to convey their experiences and views freely. Next, the interview results were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the main themes related to applying THK to tourism products and their influence on tourist experiences. Meanwhile, the ethnographic study was conducted at selected tourist attractions in Bali that sell typical Balinese culinary products using THK principles. In its implementation, participatory observation is carried out, where researchers will be directly involved in tourism activities and social interactions, recording observations systematically. Observation data will be collected in the form of field notes and photos. Data analysis will look for patterns and relationships between variables to understand the influence of THK on tourism experiences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

THK-Based Culinary Packaging Design: Consumer Perceptions and Purchasing Decisions on Bali Tourism Products. Tri Hita Karana (THK) is a traditional Balinese philosophy that leads to achieving harmony and balance in life (Astuti et al., 2019; Peters, 2013; Rosilawati et al., 2020). This philosophy emphasizes the importance of maintaining and optimizing the relationship between humans and God (Parahyangan), humans and fellow humans (Pawongan), and humans and the environment (Pabelasan). In the Balinese tourism and culinary industry context, THK principles can




be integrated into various aspects, including product packaging design. Through reflective design (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2013; Norman, 2007; Song et al., 2022), packaging functions as product protection and a medium that expresses deep cultural values.

This research explores how THK principles manifest in the packaging design of typical Balinese culinary products. Product packaging, as one of the first points of contact with consumers, plays a vital role in communicating the identity and values espoused by the brand (Ambrose & Harris, 2017; Keller, 2016; Silayoi & Speece, 2007). By integrating THK elements, the packaging enhances visual aesthetics and adds value dimensions related to spirituality, social togetherness and environmental sustainability. Based on the results of an interview with one of the visitors, he explained, "The packaging design uses paper, and there is a picture of a dancer. It promotes concern for Balinese nature and culture (Krisna, 31)." Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the implementation of THK principles in packaging design can provide valuable insight for consumers, which is essential for further consideration for stakeholders in the Bali culinary and tourism industry.

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze various packaging designs for culinary products in Bali. Through content analysis of visual and textual elements on packaging, this research will identify ways THK is integrated and projected to attract attention and influence consumer purchasing decisions (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Savelli et al., 2022). By focusing on the relationship between packaging design and the THK concept, this research can provide practical and strategic recommendations for optimizing packaging design in the unique cultural context of Bali. Furthermore, survey methods and in-depth interviews were carried out with consumers who had purchased Balinese culinary products to obtain responses to the packaging design. This research also examines the influence of visuals and packaging materials on product sustainability and authenticity perceptions. Data was collected from samples of tourists at several popular tourist locations in Bali, both observations and interviews. From the data collected, it is clear that consumers tend to highly value products whose packaging reflects THK's values. Packaging that uses natural materials such as bamboo, wood or woven pandan leaves is often associated with product authenticity and quality. It shows that THK, when integrated with packaging, increases positive perceptions of the product.

Table 1. Balinese Culinary Product Design

No	Product	THK Principles in Products
1		<p>Arak Bali Dewy Sri is a type of typical Balinese arak drink with an alcohol content of 40%, which is processed from a mixture of selected red and white sticky rice, made professionally with a particular distillation machine from Germany and is the only brand of Arak Bali that has been produced and legalized since 1968. Packaged using woven palm leaf, giving a natural impression to the product</p>

2



Hatten Wines, a leading wine producer from Indonesia, produces high-quality wines in Bali using local varieties such as Alphonse Lavallée, Belgian and Probolinggo Biru. One of their flagship products, the "Two Islands" dry black grape, symbolizes harmony between Alphonse Lavallée grapes from Bali and Belgian grapes from Lombok. The product's packaging, decorated with Balinese cultural illustrations, reflects the Tri Hita Karana principle of harmony between humans, nature and spiritual life, illustrating Hatten Wines' commitment to sustainability and respect for Bali's cultural heritage.

3



Banyuatis Coffee and Bali Buleleng Coffee are premium coffees in paper bags containing pictures of Balinese dancers. These bags are visually attractive and support environmental sustainability. The Buleleng brand coffee displays the Buleleng icon, the Ambara Raja Lion statue, which shows the uniqueness of the Buleleng Regency, namely the historical stories of the destination.

4



Snake fruit, popular in Bali, can be packaged in traditional woven bamboo. It is one of the superior agricultural products in Bali Province, produced by farming communities in the Karangasem Regency area. Snake fruit has become a souvenir product from Bali. This packaging is aesthetic and reflects local crafts but is also environmentally friendly because it uses natural materials that can be biodegraded.

5



Nasi Jinggo is one of the famous street snacks in Bali. Usually, this rice is served wrapped in banana leaves tied with bamboo sticks. Sellers can also include bamboo forks or spoons that can be thrown away or reused, replacing single-use plastic. Wrapping the rice in banana leaves preserves its taste and shows concern for the environment.

6



Dodol is one of the famous snacks in Buleleng Regency. Dodol Ajik is wrapped in dried corn leaves and then packaged in paper.

7



Bali Chocolate Pods are processed using local ingredients produced by Balinese farmers. The chocolate is packaged in paper and displays images of Balinese icons to implement social-cultural-environmental harmony.

Packaging that highlights local and sustainable elements attracts attention and motivates purchases because it supports preserving local culture and the environment. "Dodol Ajik tastes delicious and is wrapped in corn leaves, so it is attractive to consume because it is natural (Saputra, 28 years)". Based on the observations and interviews with several tourists who bought culinary products at souvenir shops, it is known that packaging is an effective communication tool that can and should be used to emphasize THK values.

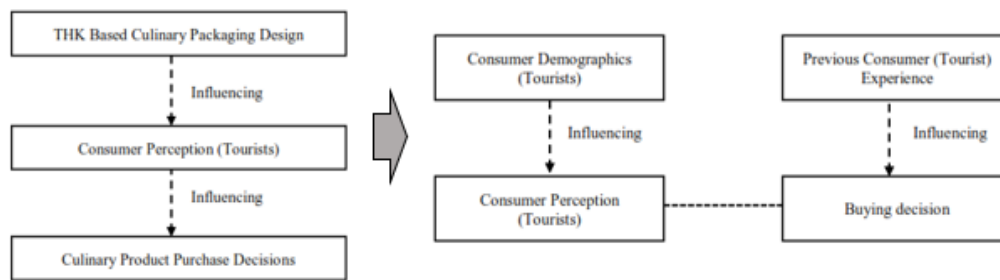


Figure 1. THK-Based Packaging Design Influences Perceptions and Purchasing Decisions

Based on chart 1, it can be explained that THK-based culinary packaging design is an independent variable that influences consumer perceptions. In this case, consumer perception as a mediator variable influences purchasing decisions, which is the dependent variable (Djunaidi et al., 2021; Haikal, 2018; Ishak et al., 2016). Consumer demographics and previous experience are control variables that influence both consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. This chart shows how THK-based packaging design can influence perceptions and purchasing decisions and how control variables can influence both processes.

Culinary products that successfully communicate these values through packaging are preferred by tourists looking for an authentic and sustainable experience when visiting Bali. THK-based packaging increases sales and strengthens brand identity (Margono, 2018; Pakarinen, 2018; Pardono et al., 2022) and ecological awareness, which is increasingly important in the current global era. Thus, there is a massive opportunity for marketers and product developers to integrate THK further into their branding and packaging strategies. So, it is highly recommended that players in the Balinese culinary industry adopt this approach in packaging design, not only as a marketing strategy but also as a commitment to the sustainability and preservation of Balinese culture.

Challenges in Implementing THK-Based Packaging in the Bali Tourism Industry. Implementing the Tri Hita Karana (THK) concept in packaging design offers various benefits but presents several challenges (Astawa et al., 2020; Udayana & Dwijendra, 2022). The concept is rooted in the Balinese philosophy of harmony between humans, nature and divinity, demanding a holistic and sustainable approach in every design aspect. In this global era, sustainability is the main focus





(Grubor & Milovanov, 2017; Mardatillah et al., 2019). The application of THK in packaging design promises to be a breakthrough that integrates cultural values with modern ecological principles. However, several specific challenges must be identified and addressed strategically to achieve this.

The first challenge was integrating THK's deep values with modern packaging technology. It involves using environmentally safe, economically viable, and culturally relevant materials. Material selection must consider its impact on nature and its ability to support the social life of local communities (Díaz et al., 2015; Ljungberg, 2007; Ogunkah & Yang, 2012). Sustainable material innovation and technological development are required per the principle of natural balance promoted by THK. It is worth considering that there is a need to raise awareness about the long-term benefits of using THK-based packaging, which protects the product and supports ecological balance and social welfare. Effective education can encourage more companies to adopt the principle of harmony towards social, cultural and environmental aspects (Elkhattat & Medhat, 2022; Jedlicka & Faludi, 2009). The presence of the THK concept in product design needs to be implemented, and consumers should be encouraged to choose more responsible products.

Faced with regulatory challenges, the government and regulatory institutions need to create a framework that supports the implementation of THK in the packaging industry. This framework could include incentives for continued innovation and stringent material safety and sustainability standards. Collaboration between policymakers, researchers and industry practitioners will be critical to establishing norms that support environmental sustainability and social justice.

Table 2. Challenge Mitigation Matrix in Implementing THK-Based Packaging in the Bali Tourism Industry

Challenge	Potential Impact	Mitigation Strategies
High production costs	Increase in operational costs, which can reduce competitiveness.	Applying efficient packaging manufacturing technology and looking for local raw materials that are cheaper but sustainable. The government can provide subsidies or fiscal incentives.
Availability of raw materials	Dependence on unsustainable imports of raw materials	Develop local resources with research and development to find alternative, sustainable local raw materials. Collaboration with universities and research institutions.
Regulations that are not yet supportive	Barriers to the implementation and development of THK packaging	Encourage dialogue between industry and government to develop policies that support innovation and adoption of THK-based packaging
Market Acceptance	Resistance from consumers due to packaging changes	Implement marketing strategies that highlight the advantages of THK packaging, such as sustainability and long-term benefits for the environment and local culture.
Production Technology	Limitations in producing effective and efficient packaging	Investment in the latest technology and workforce training to improve the quality and efficiency of THK-based packaging production

Most product packaging in souvenir shops and tourist destinations still uses plastic. Apart from being easy to find and cheaper, buyers consider plastic a material that guarantees cleanliness. "Indeed, there are still many, even more, cake packages that use plastic. However, this was done to



give a hygienic impression, where consumers prefer products packaged in plastic (Willy, 43 years)." Based on the results of an interview with one of the cake producers, it can be explained that plastic is cheap and easy to get, but consumers feel more confident if it is wrapped in plastic.

THK-based packaging often requires more expensive materials, and it is not easy to obtain packaging materials. To overcome this, companies can collaborate with local suppliers to provide more affordable raw materials. Additionally, investing in more efficient production technology can reduce long-term production costs. The availability of sustainable and environmentally friendly raw materials can be challenging (Garetti & Taisch, 2012; Hool et al., 2023; Jayal et al., 2010), especially in areas that still need adequate infrastructure. The solution is for companies to develop a supplier network that can guarantee a consistent supply of raw materials. Diversifying raw material sources is also essential to avoid dependence on one source.

Regulations that support the use of sustainable packaging still need to be improved. Industry can play an active role in advocacy and dialogue with the government to encourage the development of policies that support innovation and the use of sustainable packaging by THK principles. Market acceptance of THK-based packaging may vary. Consumer education regarding the environmental and social benefits of this packaging is vital to increase market acceptance. Effective marketing and building awareness of the added value of such packaging can encourage more consumers to choose products with sustainable packaging (Jedlicka & Faludi, 2009; Ottman, 2011). The application of THK in packaging design certainly requires production technology that is only sometimes widely available, so development and investment in research and new technology are crucial to enabling sustainable mass production of packaging. To optimize implementation, collaboration with research and development institutions can accelerate innovation in packaging technology.

The THK-based holistic approach in packaging pays attention to profit, harmony, and shared prosperity (Jedlicka & Faludi, 2009; Mustafa et al., 2021; Zokaei et al., 2013). It requires a profound transformation in how the industry views packaging design, which is no longer simply functional but also a means to achieve greater sustainability and shared prosperity goals. This implementation, although challenging, offers an opportunity to become a global example of sustainable packaging innovation. Overcoming these challenges strategically, implementing THK in packaging design can open new paths for an industry that is not only profit-oriented but also committed to harmony and shared prosperity. This approach is relevant for Bali or Indonesia and could become a global model for creating sustainable and holistic packaging solutions.

CONCLUSION

This research explores the importance of integrating Tri Hita Karana (THK) principles in culinary product packaging design, highlighting how these principles can function as a magnet that attracts tourists to Bali. The THK principle, which emphasizes the importance of harmony between humans, nature, and spiritual life, has convinced consumers to buy products that carry this principle. The research results show that packaging designs that reflect THK strengthen consumers' positive perceptions of the product and enrich the authentic experience tourists seek. It is especially relevant in Bali, where tourists often seek immersive and memorable experiences closely linked to local culture.

Through in-depth interviews with various stakeholders, including product developers, marketers, and tourists, as well as ethnographic studies at tourist locations, this research reveals how THK can be integrated into everyday business practices. Culinary products such as Arak Bali Dewi Sri, Dodol Ajik, Nasi Jinggo and several other culinary products have adopted THK principles and have been proven to communicate cultural values more effectively. This product packaging is



a physical container and a storytelling medium that conveys Balinese stories and values. The use of cultural symbols on packaging gives a deeper dimension to the product so that it is not only a consumer good but also a learning experience about Bali for tourists.

This study shows that THK can be crucial in marketing and packaging strategies for local culinary products. The integration of THK in packaging design offers an approach that can strengthen product identity and increase consumer engagement with the values it promotes. Furthermore, the application of THK to the culinary industry in Bali is not only profitable from a marketing perspective but also supports sustainability and cultural preservation. It opens up opportunities for culinary entrepreneurs to design and market their products as food and drinks and as a representation of the harmony of life they promote.

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