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A Mapping of Papeda Distribution as a Gastronomic Tourism Opportunity in Maluku and Papua

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ABSTRACT

Culinary traditions are an essential component of the tourism sector, functioning not only as sources of economic value but also as representations of regional cultural identity. Food offers more than sensory pleasure; it conveys information about local culture, geography, and social characteristics. Indonesia, with its rich natural resources and cultural heritage, possesses a wide variety of traditional foods that serve as important tourism attractions. The diversity of staple foods, such as rice, corn, cassava, and sago, reflects the cultural richness of different regions. Papeda, a traditional sago-based dish from Eastern Indonesia, exemplifies this diversity. It represents local identity, embodies traditional knowledge, and provides an authentic culinary experience through its unique preparation and serving practices. This study applies a literature review method by examining national and international journal articles and relevant books related to papeda and traditional foods of Eastern Indonesia. The analysis reveals considerable variation in ingredients, tools, preparation techniques, and consumption practices of papeda, particularly in Maluku and Papua. These variations highlight papeda's strong potential as a culinary tourism attraction that can strengthen regional cultural identity and contribute to tourism development in Eastern Indonesia, especially in Maluku and Papua.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned as an archipelagic nation inhabited by diverse ethnic groups, whose cultural variety enriches the country with abundant artistic and cultural values. Culture is an essential element that characterizes a nation and must be preserved. Indonesia's cultural identity is reflected in various aspects, including its languages, traditional attire, and culinary heritage. Fundamentally, food plays a crucial role in human life, not only physiologically and socially, but also as a form of cultural identity that influences the tourism sector (Bessiere, 1998; Conner, 2002). As one of tourism's key products, culinary traditions play a significant role within the tourism industry. Food or cuisine serves not only as a main attraction in a tourist destination but also as a factor that distinguishes one destination from another. Its contributions to both regional and national development are substantial, whether in economic terms or cultural identity (Henderson, 2009; Du Rand, 2003). As part of cultural heritage, food also plays an important role in shaping the identity of individuals and cultural groups within a region.

Food does more than deliver taste; it serves as a window into the culture, geography, values, and characteristics of a place. Bonicafe (2003) even states that to understand a culture, one must experience its food. Understanding food is akin to understanding a region and its local communities, for within food lies a wealth of information, from basic ingredients, storage methods, preparation techniques, and cooking methods; to the tools used; variations in presentation; flavors; and the values and customs embedded within. Furthermore, methods of serving and eating also reflect cross-cultural diversity (Hegarty, 2002). Indonesian culinary culture is shaped by various factors, including natural characteristics, history, and tradition (Wijaya, 2019). With the multitude of ethnic groups found in Indonesia, local foods are highly diverse and hold great potential as key attractions in promoting Indonesia as a tourism destination (Riswandi, 2024). As a nation blessed with fertile lands and a tropical climate, Indonesia offers a wide range of food sources, including grains, tubers, vegetables, legumes, and fruits (Dewi & Niken, 2015).

This diversity also influences variations in staple foods across Indonesia. Staple foods typically refer to foods consumed in large quantities, characterized by a neutral taste, high carbohydrate content, and origin from local natural resources. In Indonesia, staple foods are highly varied, including those derived from rice, corn, cassava, and sago (Dewi & Niken, 2015). Each region has its own staple foods, shaped by differences in natural resources (Dewi & Niken, 2015).

Staple foods, an integral part of daily life, whether as main meals or snacks, visually illustrate the unique identities of each region. Their preparation involves local ingredients and traditional techniques, adhering to recipes passed down through generations, thereby earning recognition as traditional foods (Soh et al., 2021). Wijaya (2019) describes the diversity of staple foods in Indonesia: in western regions such as Sumatra, Java, Bali, and West Nusa Tenggara, rice predominates; in central regions such as Kalimantan and Sulawesi, rice is also dominant; while in eastern regions such as East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, and West Papua, staple foods typically consist of corn and cassava. Wijaya (2019) further notes that in some communities of Eastern Indonesia, papeda, made from sago, serves as a staple food. Papeda, or sago porridge, which is a main food in Papua and Maluku, shares similarities with traditional dishes from Sulawesi such as kapurung, both using sago as the primary ingredient (Suismono & Nikmatul, 2011). Based on the definition of traditional food according to Fadiaz (Soh et al., 2021), papeda can be classified as such. Traditional foods are usually prepared based on characteristic recipes inherited across generations (Napu, A. et al., 2023), making them distinctive and easily recognized (Ilham et al., 2021).

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As part of traditional culinary heritage, papeda plays an important role in showcasing the local uniqueness of a region. The presence of papeda in Eastern Indonesia serves as a symbol that supports tourism development by attracting more visitors. Its uniqueness not only offers a new experience for tourists in enjoying distinct flavors but also expresses local wisdom embedded in its culinary tradition (Ilham, Frank, Flassy, & Muttaqin, 2021). Traditional foods that provide detailed information about ingredients, tools, processing methods, and cultural context are often associated with gastronomy (Sari & Elsty, 2024). Gastronomic tourism offers an experience that prioritizes quality, with attractions centered on authentic food and beverages that hold cultural significance. Papeda, as one of the traditional foods of Eastern Indonesia, possesses unique characteristics reflected in its ingredients, preparation processes, and serving methods. The authenticity of papeda should be preserved and promoted through the tourism sector. As a staple food distributed across various regions of Eastern Indonesia, it is important to conduct comprehensive studies and analyses regarding its distribution. Such analysis will provide a foundation for developing gastronomic tourism potential, particularly for papeda in Eastern Indonesia, by highlighting variations in its distribution and characteristics across the region.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Traditional Food

The definition of traditional food may vary; however, it generally refers to culinary heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation and has become an integral part of Indonesian society's cultural identity. Traditional food is closely associated with local traditions, offers distinctive sensory experiences, and possesses high nutritional value (Adiasih & Brahmana, 2017; Nugroho, S. P., et al., 2023). Historically, food played a central role in rituals and customary ceremonies and was transmitted across generations. Both the preparation processes and the ingredients used in traditional foods have been carefully preserved over time. Food functions not merely as a means of consumption, but also as a medium that strengthens relationships between humans and God or ancestral spirits, among individuals, and with nature. Moreover, traditional food reflects the outcomes of cultural interaction and acculturation. In this context, traditional food refers to foods and beverages commonly consumed by specific communities, characterized by distinctive flavors that are socially accepted and culturally recognized within those communities.

In the preparation of traditional food, cultural aspects play a vital and central role, encompassing skills, creativity, artistic elements, traditions, and taste preferences. The richer a community's cultural background, the greater the diversity of food variations, the more complex the preparation techniques, and the more elaborate the presentation methods (Hasnah & Nugroho, 2021). Traditional food can thus be described as common dishes inherited from previous generations, often consumed from ancestral times to the present, forming part of the daily practices of specific ethnic groups and regions. Its preparation follows recipes passed down through generations, aligns with human tastes and religious norms, and utilizes locally available raw materials and spices (Nugroho, S. P., et al., 2023).

2.2. Gastronomy

Gastronomy is a field of study that examines the cultural dimensions of food and beverage consumption. Beyond fulfilling physical needs, gastronomy explores regional culinary characteristics as part of cultural heritage and as a potential driver for tourism development aimed at enhancing local economies and regional income (Sari, Gadu, & Mahsun, 2023). Gastronomy is defined as a comprehensive guide encompassing all aspects of food and beverages (Sanitich, 2004; Krisnadi, 2018), involving interdisciplinary studies

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that reflect history, culture, and the environment. Cultural and environmental factors significantly shape gastronomic identity. Geographic conditions and climate influence the types of food produced as well as flavor profiles. For example, on islands, dietary patterns are strongly influenced by the availability of fishery resources, and food quality is often associated with geographical conditions, as products grown in specific regions are perceived to possess superior quality (Sari, Gadu, & Mahsun, 2023).

2.3. Gastronomic Tourism

Gastronomic tourism involves visits to various locations, including food producers, culinary festivals, restaurants, and sites associated with distinctive local dishes. During these activities, tourists not only consume specialty foods but also observe and engage in food production and preparation processes (Sari, Gadu, & Mahsun, 2023). Gastronomic tourists are characterized by their desire to understand different cultures through food and beverages (Chaney & Ryan, 2012). According to Kozak and Sormaz, gastronomic tourism emphasizes cultural elements that embrace local practices and the ethical values of a region (Sari, Gadu, & Mahsun, 2023). This type of tourism highlights high-quality and immersive experiences, aiming to foster a deeper understanding of the values, culture, and characteristics of traditional food and beverages in a destination (Sari & Kezia, 2024).

Brillat-Savarin (as cited in Nugroho, S. P., et al., 2023) defines culinary tourism as: (1) an effort to preserve cultural heritage through food maintained by human practices; (2) a framework providing guidance based on specific principles for those who seek, produce, or prepare food; and (3) a sector that generates significant economic impacts for farmers, livestock breeders, fishermen, and related industries. Each aspect of gastronomy possesses its own distinctive characteristics. In the context of culinary tourism, the practical aspects of gastronomy serve as guidelines for evaluating food processing methods and are also analyzed from a cultural perspective (Nugroho, S. P., et al., 2023). The integration of gastronomy and tourism has emerged as a new resource for developing innovative tourism products. One of the primary benefits of culinary tourism development is the provision of authentic culinary education, along with increased understanding and appreciation of local food cultures (Nugroho, S. P., et al., 2023).

Food-oriented travel has increasingly become a major motivation for tourists. In many destinations, the culinary industry plays a significant role in creating employment opportunities and business ventures that contribute to household income growth. This development forms part of a structured effort to add value along the food production chain, from production to consumption (Assistant Deputy for Cultural Tourism Development, 2019). As explained by Indra (2021), culinary tourism involves traveling to experience the uniqueness of a place through food-related experiences. Gastronomic tourism (Hall, C. M., Sharples, L., 2003; Muliani, 2019; Hasnah & Nugroho, 2021) is typically undertaken by travelers with strong interests in specific foods or beverages of a region, often associated with premium pricing, fine-dining restaurants, vineyards, or culinary festivals.

3. METHODS

The research method employed in this study is a literature review, in which the researcher examines scientific articles and research journals to obtain insights and perspectives related to the topic under discussion. The literature search was conducted without limiting the sources, covering national and international journals as well as books, as the topic remains relatively underrepresented in existing literature. The keywords used were “papeda” and “traditional papeda dishes in Eastern Indonesia.” After identifying relevant articles, the researcher carefully analysed them by summarizing, comparing, evaluating, and synthesizing viewpoints related to the research topic (Magdalena & Haripin,

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2021). The selected journals were then examined in detail in accordance with the objectives of the study (Andriani, 2021).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

Sago, an indigenous plant of Indonesia, occupies the majority of the world's total 6.5 million hectares of sago-growing areas, with approximately 5.4 million hectares located in Indonesia, around 95% of which are in Papua (Syartiwidya, 2023). The sago plant, also known as a palm or by its Latin classification Palmae, is a tropical or subtropical species that grows on monocotyledonous trees.

In the context of sago production, at least 14 species from 8 palm genera are utilized; however, only *Metroxylon spp.* and *Arenga pinnata* in the "Old World," along with *Mauritia* in the "New World," are considered highly significant starch sources (Ruddle, et al., 1978). The term Old World refers to the regions of Asia, Africa, and Europe known to their inhabitants prior to the discovery of the Americas. Conversely, the New World refers to the American continents, including North, Central, and South America.

Table 1. Palm Trees Processed for Trunk-Derived Starch (Ruddle et al., 1978)

Genus	Species*	Documented Areas of Application
1.Old World		
Arenga	*pinnala (saccharifera)*	India Peninsular Malaysia Philippines Indonesia
Caryota	*aequatorialis* *mitis* *rumphiana* *urens*	Malaysia Peninsular Malaysia Kalimantan India Vietnam
Corypha	*Umbraculifera* *Utan*	Sri Lanka Philippines Malaysia Madura Sulawesi
Eugeissona	*insignis* *utilis*	Sarawak Kalimantan Malaysia
Metroxylon	*spp.* *sagu (rumphii)*	Papua New Guinea Irian Jaya Kalimantan India Peninsular Malaysia Papua New Guinea Irian Jaya Philippines
Genus	Species*	Documented Areas of Application
2. New World		
Arecastrum	*Romanzoffianum*	Paraguay Southern Brazil
Copernicia	*alba* *prunifera*	Northeast Brazil Northeast Brazil

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Genus	Species*	Documented Areas of Application
Manicaria	*Saccifera*	Orinoco Delta
Mauritia	*Flexuosa*	Amazon Basin
		Orinoco Delta
Roystonea	*Oleracea*	West Indies

Source: Author's Research Findings, 2025.

**For several genera, the identification and geographical distribution of each species remain entirely uncertain, and the existing literature is still inconclusive. These species are not yet fully documented*

According to Ruddle, palm plants are also a commonly used source of starch in both the Old World and the New World. The cultivation of sago in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific has existed for a long time, comparable to the use of dates in Mesopotamia. Several reports have documented the use of sago over many centuries. In fact, sago was recorded as early as 1200 AD based on Chinese writings (Ong, 1977 in Metaragakusuma et al., 2017). The explorer Marco Polo, who traveled extensively and visited Sumatra, noted that sago was widely consumed as a traditional food in western Sumatra (Polo 1930: 279–280) in the year 1298, while the first sago factory was recorded in Malacca in 1416.

In the early 16th century, an Italian navigator named Pigafetta, during his circumnavigation of the globe, encountered a delicacy called papeda in Ternate and Maluku, made from sago flour as well as sago flour used to produce local bread. By the early 18th century, sago flour had become a highly recognized commercial product in Europe (Davis, 1757 in Metaragakusuma et al., 2017).

In more recent times, the cultivation of rice, cassava, and corn has gradually replaced the role of sago. In the early 20th century, sago trees were reported to have been cultivated in western Java, but they are now rarely found (Alkema & Bezemer 1927). Nevertheless, sago continues to serve as an important food source in several Indonesian island regions, including the Mentawai Islands off the western coast of Sumatra (Nooy-Palm 1967: 169 in Ruddle at al., 1978), Bangka and Billiton Islands in Riau Province, Kalimantan, Maluku, Irian Jaya, and North Sulawesi (Boediono, 1972). Sago remains a staple food in the lowland and swamp areas of Aru Island in Maluku, as well as in Kisar, Roma, Babar, and Damar, and serves as an alternative to tubers, corn, and rice in the Kai and Wetar Islands. In Malaysia, sago is used in commercial products, while in Brunei it ranks second after rice (Ruddle et al., 1978).

Sago cultivation areas are distributed across the South Pacific Islands, including Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, and the Marshall Islands, and across Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Malaysia, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 below.

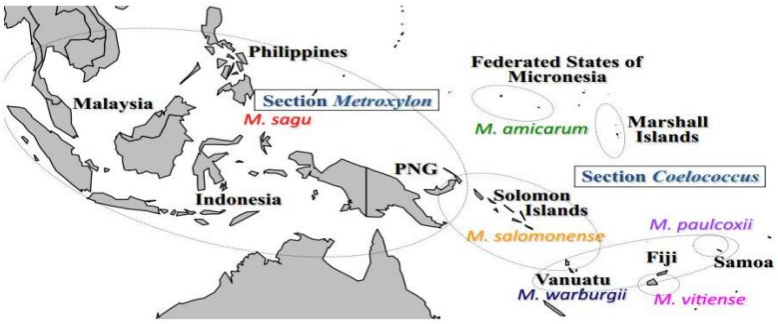

Figure 1. Sagoo or *Metroxylon spp* Distribution

Source: Abbas & Ehara, 2012

Figure 1 shows the distribution of sago in several countries. As illustrated, its spread reaches multiple countries, particularly in parts of the Asian continent.

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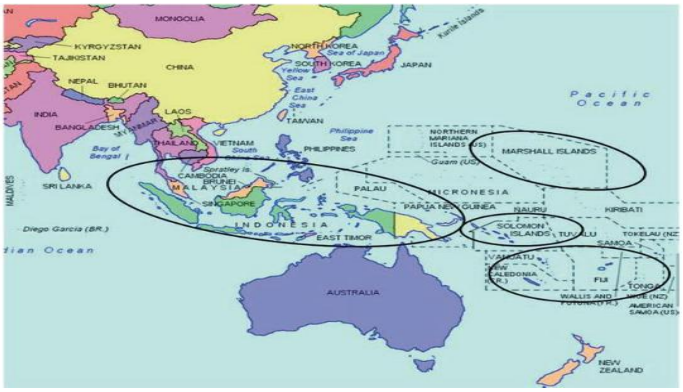

Figure 2. Distribution Map of Sago Palm Producing Countries
Source: Konuma, 2018

Figure 2 displays the distribution of sago-producing countries, including Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Marshall Islands, the Solomon Islands, and Fiji. A single sago palm can produce up to 25 tons of starch per hectare per year, a figure higher than the production of rice (6 tons), corn (5.5 tons), wheat (5 tons), and cassava (1.5 tons). This high productivity is accompanied by strong adaptability, as sago palms are capable of growing in swampy and wetland areas that are typically unsuitable for conventional agriculture.

In Indonesia, most sago cultivation areas are located in natural sago forests, which grow without intensive external treatment during cultivation. These areas are spread from western Sumatra to Kalimantan, eastern Sulawesi, Maluku, and Papua. Sago palms generally grow wild in swampy regions with hydromorphic soils, situated between sloping and flat lands. The plant is tropical and subtropical, primarily thriving between 10° south and 10° north latitude, and can reach elevations of up to 700 meters above sea level.

Sago palms have the capacity to produce up to 25 tons of starch per hectare annually, surpassing rice (6 tons), corn (5.5 tons), wheat (5 tons), and cassava (1.5 tons). Due to their high productivity and adaptability, sago palms can grow successfully in swamps and wetland areas that are generally unsuitable for conventional farming.

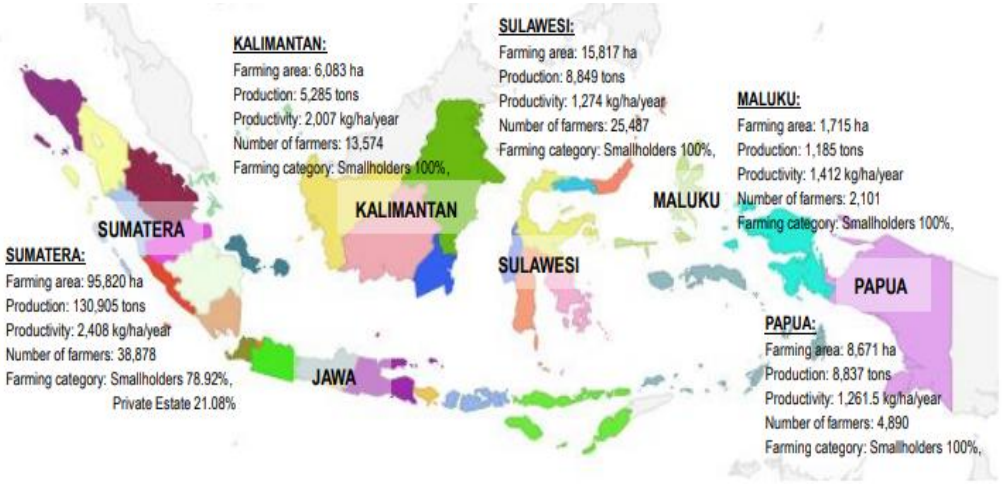

Figure 3. Sago Cultivation Areas and Production in Indonesia
Source: Directorate General of Estate Crops, Republic of Indonesia, 2015

Figure 3 shows the distribution of sago cultivation areas and their production in Indonesia. It can be seen that the largest sago planting area is in Sumatra, covering 95,820 hectares, while the smallest area is in Maluku, with only 1,716 hectares. In 2018, four provinces in Indonesia had the largest sago cultivation areas, namely Aceh, Riau, South Kalimantan, and Papua, as illustrated in Figure 4.

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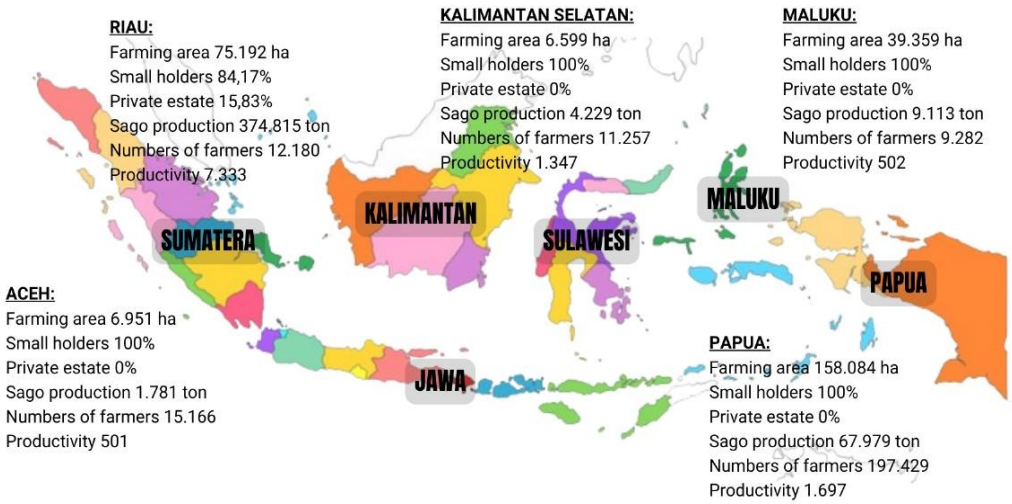

Figure 4. Statistic of Indonesian Smallholder Plantations 2018-2020
Source: Directorate General of Estate Crops, Republic of Indonesia, 2015

There are four provinces in Indonesia with the largest sago production: Riau, Papua, Maluku, and South Kalimantan, which together contribute 96.28% of the average sago production across the country. Riau is the leading province in sago production, accounting for 80.99% of Indonesia's total sago output, as shown in the table, followed by Papua, Maluku, and South Kalimantan, contributing 12.35%, 2.02%, and 0.93%, respectively.

In 2018, the largest cultivation area and highest sago production in Papua were recorded in Mimika, with a cultivated area of 142,241 hectares and a total production of 52,896 tons. This was followed by Asmat, with 4,134 hectares and 5,304 tons of sago, and Jayapura, with 3,921 hectares and 4,494 tons of production. Of the total 142,241 hectares in Mimika, only 28,448 hectares were considered mature sago areas, while in Asmat, 3,126 hectares of the 4,134 hectares were mature, and in Jayapura, 3,509 hectares of the 3,921 hectares were deemed mature and ready for sago production.

Sago production is categorized into two types: wet sago starch (aci basah) and semi-wet starch, with the term "aci" referring to the starch derived from the sago palm. Eastern Indonesia, including the provinces of Maluku, North Maluku, Papua, and West Papua (Kharisma & Ferry, 2018; Rohmawati, S., 2020), is known for processing sago into a staple food called papeda. Papeda is a traditional food widely consumed by local communities in Eastern Indonesia, especially in Papua, West Papua, Maluku, and some parts of Central Sulawesi, in the form of a gel or paste made from sago. The use of sago provides a positive contribution and is considered a regional potential in West Papua.

Besides being a staple food, particularly in Sorong City, sago has various other uses, such as an industrial raw material, eco-friendly plastic, and as an adhesive for plywood production (Egam & Harlinah, 2022).

The process of making papeda essentially involves gelatinizing sago flour. Sago flour is mixed with a small amount of cold water to form a suspension that remains easy to stir. This suspension is then mixed with boiling water while being continuously stirred until it thickens and changes color from white to transparent. Stirring is performed directionally to ensure even gel or paste formation. The characteristics of papeda ready to serve are transparency, a rope-like form, and a grayish color, depending on the consistency of the starch suspension (Tulalessy, Q., 2016).

When lifted carefully, parts of the gel remain intact due to strong bonding, which is a characteristic of batali, preferred by communities that rely on sago as a staple food. However, the batali property may be lost if the sago flour is overly filtered, causing fine fibers to be washed away. Papeda is generally served with side dishes such as fish, meat, coconut, vegetables, and other nutritious foods, often wrapped in banana leaves. As a

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staple food in Eastern Indonesia, papeda is prepared using unique tools and methods that follow the traditions of specific regions. Further information regarding the identity of papeda in various areas of Eastern Indonesia will be discussed below.

Table 2. Papeda Identity of East Indonesia Authors' Data Processing, 2024

No.	Region	Description/ Ingredients/Tools/*Local Wisdom*	Method	Side Dishes
1	Inanwatan, Sorong Selatan (Tulalessy, 2016)	In the Inanwatan language, papeda is called *dao*. Papeda has a '*batali*' shape, resembling a rope and not easily breakable, which is caused by the remaining pith in the sago since the sago is not completely refined. Its color is grayish (depending on the starch).	1. Mix the sago starch with a little cold water until a suspension of a certain consistency is formed. 2. Then pour in hot water (boiling water) while stirring until it thickens and the color changes (from white to translucent). 3. Stir in one direction until the gel/paste that forms has a uniform color.	Fish, Meat, Coconut and Vegetables
2	Suku Marind-Anim, Merauke, Papua Selatan (Kadir, dkk., 2022, 2023)	Wet or dry flour Serving method: Pour the yellow fish broth onto a plate, then scoop the papeda using a special papeda stirrer and spoon, and place it onto the plate. Add vegetables and sambal to enhance the flavor. Almost all indigenous Papuan tribes serve papeda to honor special guests during traditional events. However, papeda is also prepared for everyday consumption. It is a common food found along the coasts of Papua.	1. Dissolve and rinse the sago flour with clean water. 2. Strain it so that only the fine sago granules remain for cooking. 3. Place the wet flour into a pot. 4. Gradually pour in boiling water while stirring slowly. 5. Continue stirring until the mixture reaches a glue-like consistency. 6. No spices are added, so the papeda retains its plain flavor, similar	Fish in Yellow Soup, Water Spinach, Papaya Flowers and *Sambal*

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No.	Region	Description/ Ingredients/Tools/*Local Wisdom*	Method	Side Dishes
			to other porridge dishes.	
3	Papua & Maluku (Rana, 2017; Tana, M. F. A. et al., 2023)	Papeda is a traditional dish made from sago and holds significant cultural meaning and value for the people of Papua. Papeda is not merely an ordinary food but also a symbol representing the cultural richness and traditions of Papuan society. Ingredients for making papeda: 100 g sago flour 1000 cc water ½ teaspoon salt ½ teaspoon granulated sugar	1. Mix 300 cc of water with 100 grams of sago flour. Stir until well combined. 2. Add salt and granulated sugar to enhance the flavor. 3. Boil the remaining 700 cc of water. 4. Slowly pour the boiling water into the sago flour mixture. Stir gently until it thickens and reaches a glue-like consistency and texture. 5. The cooking process is complete when the mixture changes from white to transparent. 6. If the mixture is not yet cooked, continue cooking over low heat while stirring. 7. Serve the papeda while hot.	Fish Soup and Vegetables
4	Maluku Tengah (Mahulette, dkk., 2021)	Sago flour is combined with boiling water to form a gel-like consistency (Greshoff, 1903). The container used for making papeda is called *sempe*. The tool used to stir papeda is called *aru-aru*. The papeda serving utensil (spoon) is called *gata-gata* (made from two bamboo	1. Add boiling water to the sago flour. 2. Stir using the aru-aru until a gel forms. 3. Some local communities add vinegar to make the papeda appear	Fish with Yellow Soup (cooked with chili, ginger and turmeric)

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No.	Region	Description/ Ingredients/Tools/*Local Wisdom*	Method	Side Dishes
		sticks) (Deinum and Setijoso, 1932).	brighter in color.	
5	Danau Sentani, Jayapura (Yamamoto , dkk., 2021)	Papeda is consumed for lunch and dinner. The most suitable sago starch for preparing papeda is derived from the trunk of the Yepha sago palm, as it retains its palatability even when served cold.	1. Mix the sago starch with water. 2. Pour in hot water to thicken the mixture.	Fish Soup
6	Maluku, Maluku Utara, dan Papua (Rana, G.K., 2014)	Papeda, or sago porridge, is consumed as a staple food. It has a glue-like texture and a bland taste, and it contains dietary fiber, carbohydrates, lignin, and hydrogel components. Despite these properties, papeda is low in protein, vitamins, and minerals, and it is free from sugar. Sago porridge is considered effective in helping to regulate body heat, particularly when consumed during the intake of stamina-enhancing supplements or antibiotics. The ingredients required for its preparation include 100 g of sago flour, 1,000 cc of mineral water, and ½ teaspoon each of sugar and salt.	1. Add 300 cc of water to 100 g of sago flour and stir until well combined. 2. Then add salt and sugar to taste. 3. Boil the remaining water. Slowly pour the hot water into the sago flour mixture, stirring gently until it thickens, with a glue-like consistency and texture. 4. Cooking is complete when the porridge changes color from white to fully translucent. 5. If the porridge is still undercooked, place the raw paste back into the pot and continue cooking over low heat while stirring. 6. Serve the papeda while hot.	Tuna Fish Soup, Yellow Fish Soup (seasoned with turmeric, basil leaves, and lime), and stir-fried papaya flowers and leaves.
7	Suku Sentani di Kampung Doyo Lama, Kecamatan Waibu,	Papeda serves not only as a staple food but also holds high economic, social, and cultural value for the Sentani people.	1. Place the sago flour into a clay container. 2. 3. Then add an	The Sentani people usually eat papeda with side dishes of water spinach and yellow fish

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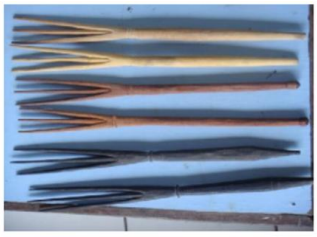
No.	Region	Description/ Ingredients/Tools/*Local Wisdom*	Method	Side Dishes
	Kabupaten Jayapura, Provinsi Papua (Sanito, R.C., 2017)	This papeda is prepared using traditional tools such as the *hiloy/siroy*, which resembles a fork, the papeda-turning tool called *yanggalu/yanggaru*, and the sago-pounding tool, or famea, used for processing sago into papeda.  **Traditional Papeda Fork Utensils (Photo: Raynard C. Sanito).**  **Papeda Stirring or Turning Tool (Photo: Raynard C. Sanito).** Traditionally, the Sentani ethnic community produces these utensils using wood sourced from various local plant species. This indigenous knowledge has been transmitted across generations, encompassing an understanding of the criteria for selecting suitable types of wood for sago pounding, the processing of sago into papeda, and the traditional implements used for consuming papeda.	appropriate amount of hot water and lime. 4. 5. Next, stir repeatedly with the traditional Sentani papeda-turning tool, called *yanggalu/yanggaru*, until it thickens into papeda. The papeda is served using the traditional Sentani fork, called *hiloy/siloy*, which is also used as an eating utensil for papeda.	soup.
8	Saparua, Ambon, Maluku (Hiariej, 2019)	Papeda is the staple food of the Maluku people, made from sago flour, also known as sagu manta. In Ambon, Maluku, the container used to serve papeda is called sempe. Sempe is always used together with a traditional tool called *gala-gala*, made of bamboo and shaped like a	Papeda is made from sagu manta and hot water using a traditional tool called aru-aru (in Ambon Malay). The tool resembles a short baseball bat and is used to mix the sagu manta with hot water until it thickens into papeda. This process is called *tuang* papeda.	Vegetables and Fish Soup

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No.	Region	Description/ Ingredients/Tools/*Local Wisdom*	Method	Side Dishes
		tuning fork, but longer. This tool is used to roll papeda using the *bale* technique. From this practice, the Ambonese community developed terms to indicate the amount of papeda to be eaten, such as one *bale*, two *bale*, and so on. Making papeda requires precision and skill in measuring water, because too much water will make the papeda watery, while too little will make it hard and inedible. Papeda plays an important role in the life of the people of Saparua, Ambon, Maluku, as it was traditionally prepared as a provision for husbands (fishermen) going out to fish. The papeda would be wrapped in banana leaves and served as a staple food during meals. The preparation of papeda also became a measure of readiness for Saparua women in domestic life. A Saparua woman was considered ready for marriage only if she could prepare papeda properly and correctly.		

Source: Author's Research Findings, 2025.

4.2. Discussions

Papeda, as one of the traditional foods of Eastern Indonesia, has the potential to become a gastronomic tourism product, as reflected in Table 2, which identifies the characteristics of papeda distributed across the region. Based on explanations from Hall, C., M. and Sharples, L., 2003; Muliani (2019); Hasnah, V. A. and Nugroho (2021), this culinary tourism emphasizes the strong interest of tourists in the typical foods and beverages of a region. Papeda is made from sago as the main ingredient, processed using various methods and techniques, and the table shows the variation of utensils and side dishes accompanying papeda in several areas of Eastern Indonesia. Nevertheless, the ingredients and serving methods have significant similarities, namely that it is cooked with warm water and served with side dishes, vegetables, and fish. This diversity is illustrated in the distribution map shown in Figure 5 below.

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Figure 5. Mapping of Papeda in the Maluku and Papua Archipelago Regions
Source: Authors' Data Processing, 2024

According to Figure 5, there are slight differences in the presentation of papeda across regions. In general, papeda is served with side dishes, vegetables, and fish. Cultural variations in papeda presentation are reflected in the differences in utensils used, preparation techniques, and accompanying dishes. Typically, papeda is served in simple bowls made of clay or ceramic, although some still use traditional tools. For example, in North Maluku and Jayapura (Papua), papeda is served in a special container called *sempe*. In Maluku, the serving tool is known as *gata-gata* or *gala-gala*, shaped like a tuning fork and made of wood. The same type of utensil in Jayapura is called *hiloy* or *siroy*. In Jayapura, papeda is stirred using a traditional tool called *yanggalu* or *yanggaru*, which resembles a small paddle. This tool is similar to the one used by communities in Central Maluku, known as *aru-aru*, for stirring *papeda*.

The local wisdom embedded in papeda is not only reflected in its preparation and utensils but also in the types of accompanying dishes. Since papeda itself has a neutral flavor, it is usually consumed with side dishes, which is why people in Eastern Indonesia typically eat it with fish or other protein-based dishes. Various fish preparations are used, such as in North Maluku, where fish is cooked into dishes like ikan *kuah kuning* (yellow fish soup) and tuna soup. Additionally, to enhance the flavor of papeda, local communities often enjoy it with vegetables such as papaya flowers and lime.

Ikan *kuah kuning* is a fish dish served in a spiced broth similar to soup. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), soup is a liquid-based food seasoned with spices such as nutmeg, pepper, and various vegetables. Simply put, broth can be described as the liquid from a curry (vegetables, meat, etc.) that is usually served with rice or poured directly over

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it. According to Gisslen (2018), soups can be classified into three basic types: clear/thin soups, thick soups, and special soups that do not fall into the first two categories. Vegetable or meat stock serves as the main ingredient in soup preparation. In the context of papeda accompaniments in the Maluku and Papua regions, the terms "soup" and "broth" are often used. Soup refers to side dishes with a larger amount of liquid, whereas broth refers to dishes with less liquid. Visually, soup generally has more liquid, while broth tends to be thicker.

Aside from ikan *kuah kuning*, there are other unique preparations using meat, vegetables, and coconut. These side dishes can be found in Sorong, Southwest Papua. Such variations are often influenced by geographical and cultural conditions, including local wisdom and taste preferences. For example, in Merauke, South Papua, people often eat papeda with sambal (chili condiment).

In Indonesia, meals are often accompanied by sambal as a complement, with various types differing by region. In the Maluku and Papua islands, this chili sauce is generally known as colo-colo. This type of sambal resembles sambal matah from Java. According to Surya and Tedjakusuma (2022), sambal colo-colo is made from red bird's eye chilies, shallots, lime, and chopped tomatoes mixed together and served raw. Typically, the seasoning is simple, consisting of only salt, with occasional additions of soy sauce.

For the people of Papua, papeda is not merely a staple food but also a source of cultural knowledge with significant value. According to Tulalessy (2016), sago (the main ingredient of papeda) is considered a source of cultural knowledge reflecting the identity of Papuan communities. The process of stirring sago into papeda carries values that shape the characteristics of the local Papuan society. They stir papeda in one direction, transforming it from white to translucent. Finished papeda has a distinctive gelatinous texture that is difficult to break. This characteristic is adopted by Papuans as a symbol of strong bonds within the community.

The local wisdom and cultural values inherent in papeda represent a potential asset for Indonesia's gastronomy that should be preserved. Gardjito (2021) argues that food prepared using local ingredients and traditional tools, with distinctive flavors, is a form of culinary art unique to local communities across Indonesia, reflecting the identity of those communities. He also states that traditional food is an effective tool for building national identity and character, emphasizing that Indonesian traditional food products should be developed to strengthen national sovereignty. As a traditional food from Eastern Indonesia, papeda has significant potential to be recognized and developed as a flagship product in Indonesia's culinary tourism industry.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the article discusses the important role of papeda as a traditional food in Eastern Indonesia, particularly in the provinces of Maluku, North Maluku, Papua, and West Papua. Made from sago, papeda is not only a staple food for local communities but also holds significant value as a source of cultural and economic significance The process of making papeda involves processing sago flour until gelatinization occurs, resulting in its unique characteristics, such as the '*batali*' texture favored by sago consumers. Papeda is generally served with side dishes and vegetables, sometimes wrapped in banana leaves, and its presentation varies across regions, as reflected in differences in utensils and serving techniques. The local wisdom embedded in papeda makes it an important gastronomic asset for Indonesia. Gardjito (2021) emphasizes the importance of preserving and developing traditional food products like papeda as part of national identity and character. Therefore, papeda has the potential to become a flagship product in the culinary tourism industry in Eastern Indonesia, particularly in Maluku and Papua.

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