

VRIO Analysis in Developing Branding Strategies for Egg-Based Food Products as Souvenirs from Blitar: Local Perspective

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Abstract

Blitar is rich in tourism potential. The local economy stands to benefit significantly from tourism, creating job opportunities and enhancing community development. Blitar's position as a major egg producer offers unique opportunities for developing egg-based souvenirs. However, challenges include identifying appealing products and effective branding strategy is required to enhance the marketability of these products, fostering economic growth and tourism in the region. This study utilizes a mixed-method approach to explore consumer perceptions of egg-based processed products in Blitar, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews of business actors. A survey of 61 respondents gathered measurable data on consumer preferences and factors influencing purchasing decisions. In-depth interviews provided insights into marketing strategies and challenges faced by producers. The study employs descriptive statistics and VRIO analysis to develop effective branding strategies for promoting processed egg products as signature souvenirs from. The analysis reveals that respondents indicating higher interest in egg-based products as souvenirs from Blitar as food significantly influences their choice of tourist destinations, with a strong preference for local ingredients. However, awareness of Blitar's egg production potential is low, leading to limited appeal for egg-based products. The VRIO analysis shows organizational weaknesses hinder competitive advantage despite valuable product features. Effective branding strategies tailored to consumer expectations are crucial for market success. Enhancing product awareness and education through organized action can further strengthen the appeal of these culinary offerings in tourism.

Keywords: branding strategies, consumer preferences, egg-based products, market awareness, tourism potential

Introduction

Blitar, located in the southern part of East Java, possesses a remarkable wealth of tourism potential. From its stunning Serang Beach to its Kelud Mountain, Blitar offers a captivating variety of landscapes that attract tourists. In addition to its natural beauty, Blitar also boasts a valuable culinary, historical, and cultural heritage such as Tomb of Soekarno, Indonesia's 1st President, PETA Museum, and Penataran Temple. These factors, supported by the ease of transportation access from major cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and Malang, make Blitar a promising destination for both domestic and international tourists. In the context of tourism, nature-based, culinary, and cultural tourism continue to be popular trends. Studies by (Carvache-Franco et al., 2023; Tang et al., 2022) indicate that gastronomic tourism, cultural

tourism, and rural tourism are among the most sought-after types of tourism by travelers. Blitar, with its rich culinary heritage and preserved rural ambiance, has all the components to support the development of these tourism sectors. Therefore, understanding how to optimize this potential through tourism integrated with local products, especially food products, is essential.

The development of the tourism sector in Blitar not only impacts the local economy but also the social and cultural development of its community. From an economic perspective, tourism can serve as a significant catalyst for short-term economic growth (Tai et al., 2022). When tourists visit, they spend money not only on transportation and accommodation but also on food, souvenirs, and other services available at the destination. Furthermore, a study by (Naseem, 2021) shows that tourism has a long-term relationship with regional income. Tourist spending and the number of tourist arrivals are important indicators in measuring the impact of tourism on a region's economic growth. Blitar, with its abundant natural and cultural resources, can leverage the tourism sector as a key driver of sustainable economic growth.

Moreover, one significant benefit of tourism development is the creation of job opportunities for local residents (Soares et al., 2021). Residents involved in sectors such as hospitality, culinary arts, handicrafts, and other services will directly benefit from the increasing number of tourists. Thus, sustainable tourism development in Blitar will provide substantial economic benefits for the local community. Within the tourism ecosystem, local souvenir products, especially food products, play an important role in enriching the tourist experience. Local food is not just a source of nutrition for tourists; it is also a way to introduce the cultural richness of a region. According to (Fusté-Forné et al., 2021), local food significantly contributes to the tourism experience and strengthens the connection between local identity and sustainable tourism experiences.

In Blitar, local products derived from the region's natural resources, such as eggs, hold great potential for development into unique souvenir products. A study by (Dancausa Millán & Millán Vázquez de la Torre, 2022) emphasizes that high-quality food products, especially those with unique geographical indications, are increasingly sought after by consumers. These products not only reflect the quality and uniqueness of their place of origin but can also be used as a strategy to extend the gastronomic tourism season. Blitar, which is one of the largest egg producers in East Java, has significant potential to develop egg-based products as its signature souvenirs. Eggs, one of the most common foodstuffs and a major source of protein consumed in Indonesia, can be processed into various types of food products that appeal to tourists. However, despite Blitar's advantage in egg production, there has been little innovation in processing eggs into distinctive and unique souvenir products compared to other regions. Moreover, the eggs from Blitar often sold as fresh product or used as raw material to be processed in other region. Consequently, the additional economic value is not created within Blitar region.

Although developing egg-based souvenir products in Blitar holds great potential, several challenges must be addressed. One of the main challenges is identifying the types of egg-based products that are most appealing to consumers. This is crucial because consumer preferences for souvenirs tend to vary depending on factors such as taste, packaging, and price. In addition, understanding the factors that influence consumer choices when purchasing souvenirs is essential. According to (Jiang et al., 2023), food brands significantly impact consumer satisfaction and their intention to travel. In the context of Blitar, building a strong brand identity for egg-based products could be an effective strategy to attract more tourists.

Another important factor is the creation of a brand that effectively communicates the quality and uniqueness of Blitar's egg-based products. Today's consumers are not only looking for delicious products but also products that have a story or meaning behind them. Therefore, building a strong narrative about how these products are linked to Blitar's local culture can be an effective way to attract consumer interest. Local cultural aspects can be integrated into

product branding by incorporating elements like customs, values, and collective norms into product shape, size, and packaging (Sharma, 2021). Local cultural aspects can also be integrated into product branding by using sign-meaning sub-categories like cultural attribution, knowledge perception, and stakeholders orientation to better communicate with audiences (Fan, 2020).

The research on developing egg-based products as souvenirs from Blitar makes significant contributions to culinary tourism and local branding by focusing on eggs, a product often neglected in the souvenir market. This study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences and market dynamics. By examining contemporary trends in gastronomic tourism, the research underscores the cultural importance of local foods and their role in enhancing tourist experiences. Effective branding is essential for establishing a strong identity for these egg-based products, as it differentiates them in a competitive market and fosters emotional connections with consumers. The study highlights that a well-crafted branding strategy should emphasize the geographical origin of the products, sustainability practices, and narratives that reflect local culture. These elements not only enhance the appeal of Blitar's egg-based souvenirs but also position them as distinctive offerings that can attract a broader consumer base. Ultimately, this research aims to bridge existing gaps in the market while supporting sustainable economic growth by integrating local culinary heritage into the tourism experience.

Branding plays a crucial role in creating a strong identity for local products, especially those positioned as signature souvenirs. An effective branding strategy not only helps differentiate products in an increasingly competitive market but also creates an emotional connection with consumers. In the context of Blitar's egg-based products, branding strategies can be focused on several aspects. First, it is important to emphasize the connection between the products and their geographical origin. As explained by (Dancausa Millán & Millán Vázquez de la Torre, 2022), food products with protected geographical indications tend to have higher added value in the eyes of consumers. Communicating the origin of the products from Blitar, known as one of the largest egg producers, can provide a significant competitive advantage.

Second, the sustainability aspect can also be a key element in the branding strategy. Modern tourists are increasingly concerned about the environmental impact of the products they consume. By highlighting environmentally friendly and sustainable production processes, Blitar's egg-based products can attract consumer segments who care about environmental issues. Third, the story behind the products also plays an important role in creating a strong brand. Building a narrative about how Blitar's egg-based products reflect the local culture and traditions can enhance the brand's appeal. Consumers tend to connect more emotionally with products that have a story or meaning behind them, especially if the story is related to the product's origins or local traditions.

Branding strategies that emphasize sustainability and local culture can make Blitar's egg-based products stand out in the increasingly competitive souvenir market. With a strong and unique identity, these products can attract not only tourists who visit Blitar but also a broader consumer base interested in high-quality, sustainable, and culturally rich products. By focusing on branding, Blitar has the potential to establish its egg-based products as a distinctive and memorable souvenir, contributing to the region's overall tourism growth and economic development.

This paper seeks to investigate consumer interest in egg-based products that can be developed as unique souvenirs from Blitar. The study will examine consumer hopes and expectations regarding these products, assess their competitiveness, and explore ways to leverage these factors to create effective branding strategies. The urgency of this research is

underscored by its potential to boost Blitar's economy through job creation and increased awareness of the region's egg production capabilities. By implementing branding strategies that emphasize sustainability and local culture, the research aims to establish Blitar's egg-based products as distinctive souvenirs, thereby appealing to a wider consumer audience. Ultimately, this study addresses existing market gaps and contributes to sustainable economic growth by integrating local culinary traditions into the tourism experience.

Research Methods

This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to explore consumer perceptions in the Blitar region regarding various egg-based processed products. Additionally, it aims to gain deeper insights through interviews with business actors. This approach enables the study to collect both broad and in-depth data, resulting in a more comprehensive analysis and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

The quantitative approach in this research was conducted through a survey involving 61 respondents residing in Blitar. The survey technique was selected as it allows for data collection from a large number of respondents in a relatively short time and provides results that can be statistically measured. Respondents were randomly chosen with the criteria that they had purchased or had knowledge of processed egg products in Blitar. This approach is expected to provide a general overview of the Blitar community's perceptions of egg-based processed products, which have the potential to become regional souvenirs.

The survey instrument used in this study was a questionnaire specifically developed to measure various aspects of consumer perceptions. The questionnaire covered several key dimensions, including the characteristic of the respondent, factors influencing the selection of tourist destinations, interest in purchasing food souvenirs, particularly those made from local ingredients. Additionally, the study will examine the types of food souvenirs preferred by tourists and the primary considerations influencing their selection.

The questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms to facilitate data collection from a large number of respondents within a limited time frame. The use of online media was chosen due to its efficiency and high accessibility for respondents in Blitar. A random sampling technique was employed to ensure that each individual in the population had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent, making the data more representative of the studied population. This method is expected to minimize bias in data collection and provide more valid results.

In addition to the survey, this study also utilized a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews with several business actors involved in the production and marketing of processed egg products in Blitar. This approach aims to deepen the understanding of challenges and opportunities faced in developing processed egg products as Blitar's signature souvenirs. The interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview guides, allowing for flexible discussions to uncover information that may not be revealed through the questionnaire.

Through these interviews, the study gathered data on marketing strategies undertaken by business actors, their perceptions of market trends, and their views on efforts to enhance the appeal of processed egg products in local and regional markets. This information is essential for developing branding strategies that are relevant and aligned with the actual conditions in the field.

In addition to primary data collected through surveys and interviews, this research also utilized secondary data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). This secondary data includes information on egg production in the Blitar region, as well as data related to tourism development in Blitar. The data provides a broader context for understanding the potential development of processed egg products as Blitar's signature souvenirs. Furthermore, secondary

data is used to validate the survey and interview results, thus offering a more comprehensive analysis.

Data collected from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Descriptive analysis aims to provide a general overview of consumer perceptions of various processed egg products. This analysis helps identify the distribution of respondents based on variables such as preferences for certain types of products, reasons for choosing specific products, and factors influencing purchasing decisions.

Subsequently, to formulate an effective branding strategy, a VRIO analysis (Value, Rarity, Imitability, Organization) was used. The VRIO analysis is a useful method for evaluating resources and capabilities possessed by a product or organization based on four main criteria: whether the product has value (Value), whether it is rare (Rarity), whether it is difficult to imitate (Imitability), and whether the organization can optimally manage these resources (Organization).

In the context of this study, the VRIO analysis was applied to assess the advantages of Blitar's processed egg products in aspects such as product uniqueness, quality of raw materials, and the region's geographical potential. The results of this analysis were then used to formulate branding strategies that can enhance the competitiveness of processed egg products in the souvenir market.

Through a mixed-method approach, this study seeks to explore consumer perceptions while also gaining deeper insights from the perspective of business actors. The quantitative approach through surveys provides measurable data that can be analyzed statistically, while the qualitative approach through interviews offers richer context and understanding of market dynamics. By combining these methods, this research aims to develop branding strategies that are relevant and practical for local business actors in promoting processed egg products as Blitar's signature souvenirs.

Results and Discussions

The analysis of the respondent characteristics data reveals several specific patterns. Regarding gender, female respondents dominate this survey. This indicates that interest in the research topic is higher among the female group compared to males within the sampled population.

In terms of generational representation, the majority of respondents belong to Generation X and Y, with a small portion from Generation Z. This suggests that the survey predominantly involves individuals from the productive age groups. The absence of representation from the Baby Boomer generation indicates that older age groups are less engaged in this research.

From a geographical perspective, the majority of respondents reside in Blitar City. This implies that the survey is more focused on urban areas rather than rural regions within Blitar. Lastly, concerning income, most respondents report earnings below the average. This suggests that the survey primarily includes respondents with lower to middle purchasing power. The summary of characteristic of respondent in this study is shown in the table 1 below.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics Of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	61	
<i>Male</i>	14	22,95%
<i>Female</i>	47	77,05%
Generation Cohort	61	
<i>Baby Boomers</i>	0	0,00%
<i>Generation X</i>	27	44,26%

<i>Generation Y</i>	20	32,79%
<i>Generation Z</i>	14	22,95%
Domicile	61	
<i>City of Blitar</i>	42	68,85%
<i>Region of Blitar</i>	19	31,15%
Monthly Income	61	
<i><IDR 5 Mio</i>	51	83,61%
<i>IDR 5-20 Mio</i>	7	11,48%
<i>IDR 20-50 Mio</i>	2	3,28%
<i>>Rp. 50 Mio</i>	1	1,64%

(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

The implications of these findings are that the survey results may be more relevant for depicting consumer preferences and characteristics among productive age groups, women, and individuals with lower to middle purchasing power residing in urban Blitar. Therefore, generalizing these survey results to a broader population should be approached with caution, considering the limitations of the existing sample.

The first question posed to all respondents concerned the factors influencing their choice to visit tourist locations in Blitar. This inquiry is grounded in previous studies, particularly by (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020), which indicated that food significantly impacts the selection of tourist destinations. The research found that favorable culinary experiences at these locations could encourage repeat visits from tourists (Labibe, 2023). Food involvement also significantly affects place attachment and destination loyalty, with these relationships being differentiated by tourists' lifestyles (Jiang et al., 2023). The results of the survey are illustrated in the following figure 1 below.

What supporting factors for tourism will determine your choice in selecting a tourist location in Blitar (You may choose >1)?

61 responses

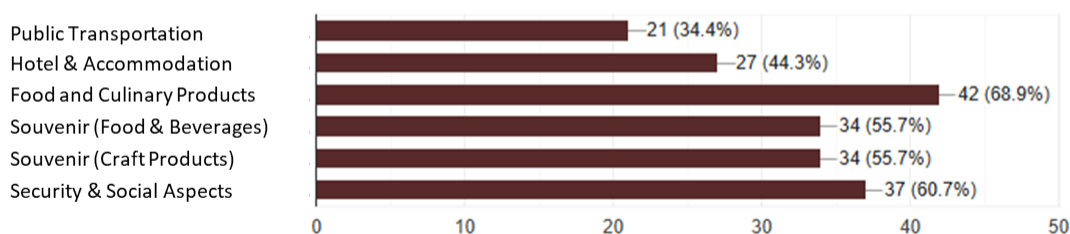


Figure 1. Bar Chart per Supporting Factors in Determining Tourist Location
(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

The survey findings confirm that food is indeed the primary factor supporting respondents' decisions when selecting tourist destinations, surpassing other considerations such as safety and transportation. Notably, 94.8% of respondents indicated that they would purchase local food at tourist sites within Blitar, while 88.5% expressed the opinion that traditional dishes from Blitar should be made from locally sourced ingredients.

If you are visiting Blitar, would you purchase local Blitar food products?

61 responses

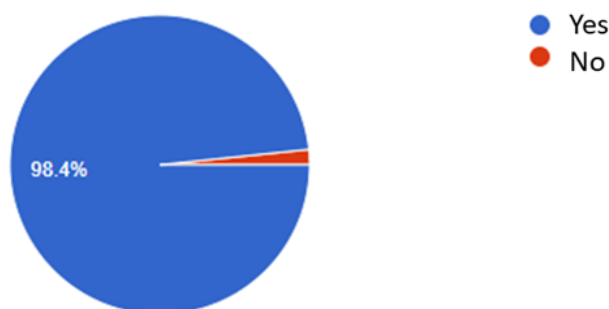


Figure 2. Pie Chart on Willingness to Purchase Local Blitar Food Products
(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

On the figure 2 this analysis underscores the critical role of culinary offerings in shaping tourist experiences and preferences. The overwhelming emphasis on food suggests that culinary tourism is not merely an ancillary aspect of the travel experience but a central component that can drive tourism growth in Blitar. The high percentage of respondents willing to buy local food indicates a strong market for culinary tourism, which could be leveraged to enhance visitor engagement and satisfaction.

Furthermore, the preference for locally sourced ingredients reflects a growing trend among tourists who prioritize sustainability and authenticity in their dining experiences. This finding aligned with previous study. Food tourism flourishes due to tourists' desire to consume traditional, new, and/or unusual culinary heritage at destinations, shaping decision-making processes, dining choices, and holiday destinations (Taheri & Gannon, 2021). Both of study trend aligns with broader movements in tourism that emphasize local culture and community involvement.

Should Blitar's local food products be made with local ingredients from Blitar as well?

61 responses

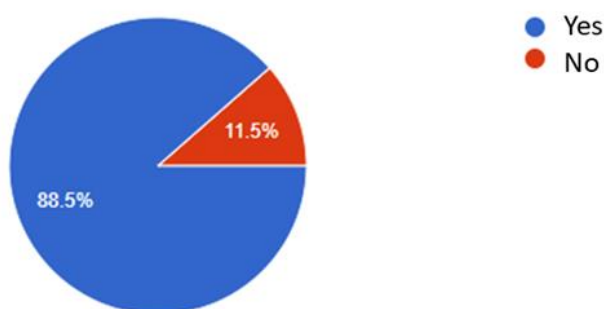


Figure 3. Pie Chart on Favourable of Local Ingredient in Blitar Food Products
(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

On the figure 3 despite the fact that the majority of respondents expressed interest in local food products, the survey revealed a significant gap between consumer interest and their

understanding of local potential. Only approximately 68.9% of respondents recognized that Blitar is a center for egg production. This finding highlights the critical need for consumer education to enhance awareness of the advantages of local products and to create added value for processed egg products. Increasing consumer knowledge about the origins and quality of these products is essential. By fostering a deeper understanding, it is anticipated that consumer purchasing interest will rise, thereby strengthening the market position of processed eggs as a distinctive souvenir from Blitar.

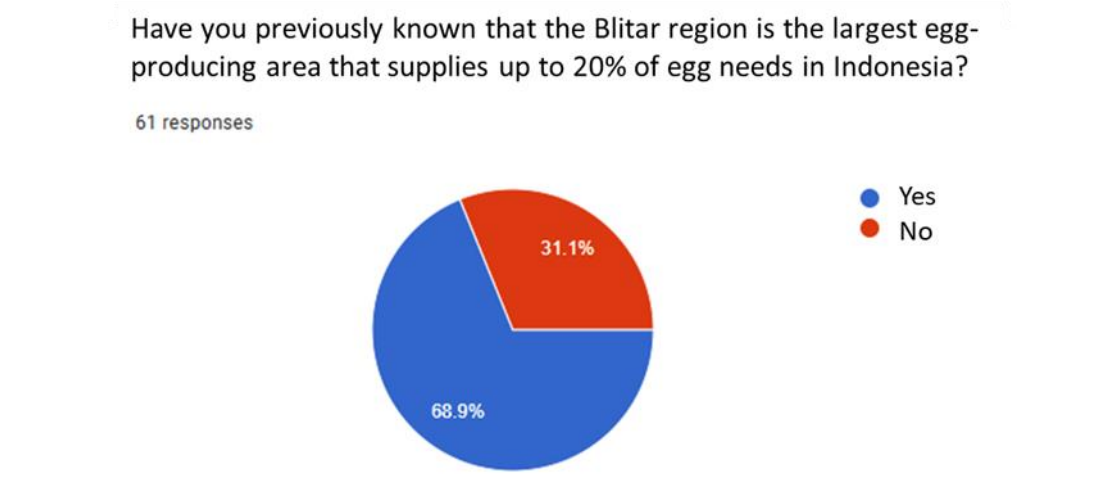


Figure 4. Pie Chart on Awareness on Eggs as Local Resource of Blitar Region (Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

The figure 4 lack of awareness among local Blitar residents regarding the potential of their region's resources has resulted in a relatively low appeal of egg-based processed products. This is evidenced by the respondents' preference for other traditional foods over egg-based processed products, although modern-inspired egg-based products such as egg white brownies were also quite popular among respondents show in figure 5 below.

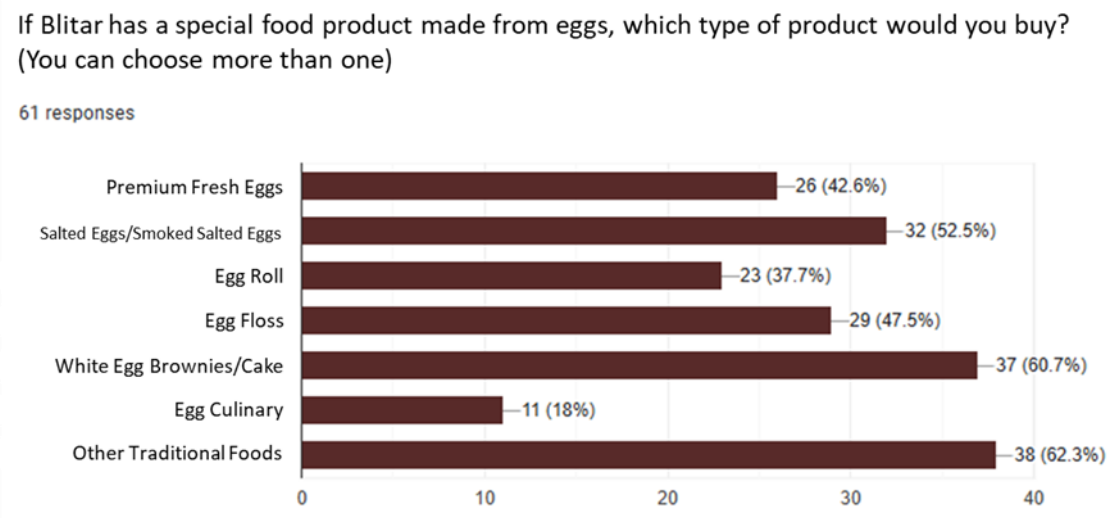


Figure 5. Bar Chart per Favoured Food SouvenirSupporting Factors in Determining Tourist Location of Blitar Region (Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

Furthermore, respondents in the Blitar region showed a greater preference for products with delicious and varied flavors, as well as competitive prices, compared to nutritional quality and product uniqueness, as illustrated in the figure 6 below:

What are the main factors for you in choosing food products made from processed eggs? (You can choose more than one)

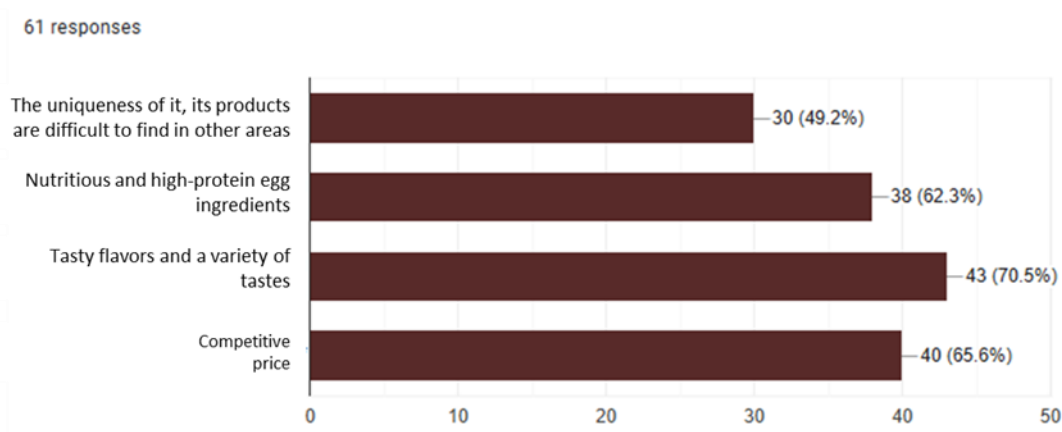


Figure 6. Bar Chart per Factor in Choosing Food Souvenir of Blitar Region
(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

This finding aligned with previous research which indicated that taste, price, nutritional value, and emotional factors influence tourists' preferences for souvenirs (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2020).

Based on the findings, there is a tendency for egg-based products with unique qualities and high nutritional value to not align with the preferences of the Blitar market, which leans towards products that are delicious, diverse, and affordable. While this is a common challenge, consumer perceptions can be shifted to create new demand through effective branding strategies.

One framework that can be employed to develop such strategies is the VRIO analysis. VRIO analysis helps identify key resources and capabilities that can be leveraged for branding strategies, including human resources, facilities, location, and technology, which were used to develop strategies for promotion and branding (Astana, 2021). VRIO analysis can be instrumental in creating brand differentiation by focusing on unique and valuable resources. For example the nutrition quality of eggs as main ingredients can be identified as valuable and rare resources. Based on the interview results from several SME actors engaged in egg processing businesses, the VRIO table 2 below was obtained:

Table 2. VRIO Analysis

Is it valuable	Is it rare?	Is it hard to imitate?	Is the organization organized to?	Conclusion
Yes Reason: - Nutritional value - Abundant, easy to get, and cheap raw materials	Yes Reason: - Products are not easy to find outside the area - limited availability and high prices of raw materials outside the region	Yes Reason: - Secret recipe - Traditional tools and materials that are not necessarily easy to obtain outside the region	No Reason: - There is no organization and human resources capable of producing it - Most of them are still informal sector businesses	Unused Competitive Advantage

(Source: Data Analysis, 2024)

The VRIO analysis reveals a gap between the potential competitive advantages of Blitar processed egg products and the market reality. Despite having unique value-added features, organizational factors remain the main hindrance in achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Weak organizational structure and limited resources allocated for product development and marketing are the primary contributing factors. To address this, integrated strategic efforts are necessary to position Blitar processed egg products as a high-value local product capable of competing in a broader market. The findings from (Sutiadiningsih et al., 2023) also highlight the importance of understanding consumer's behavior in relation to food tourism. Therefore, marketers should promoting local foods effectively to enhance tourist interest and engagement. Strategies could include leveraging positive value from previous consumers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research highlighted local consumer interest in egg-based products as potential distinctive souvenirs from Blitar. The findings indicate that consumers are looking for tasty flavour and competitive price while also considering the nutrition value of the products. This insight provides a solid foundation for developing effective branding strategies for local and tourist markets.

However, to capitalize on this interest, it is important to make organized efforts to enhance the value of the product in the market. The branding narrative used should also be tailored to consumer expectations, which include delicious and diverse flavours, as well as competitive pricing. Additionally, employing marketing strategies that highlight the health benefits and versatility of these products can further enhance consumer appeal.

Overall, by aligning product development with consumer expectations and preferences, stakeholders can effectively position egg-based souvenirs as a prominent feature of Blitar's culinary tourism, contributing to both economic growth and cultural preservation in the region. Future research should continue to explore the perspective of customers who come from outside the region, compare both perspectives, and monitoring consumer trends and preferences to ensure that branding strategies remain relevant and impactful.

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