

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

Semarang is one of the cities in Indonesia that continues to develop as both a commercial center and a tourism destination. As the capital of Central Java Province, the city is supported by a strategic location and diverse geographical characteristics, ranging from hilly areas to coastal regions, which provide a distinctive appeal for tourism development (Utami & Widiasputri, 2023). These conditions give Semarang City great potential to be developed as an attractive tourist destination for travelers.

As one of the cities in Central Java, Semarang is recognized for its diverse tourism potential, encompassing historical, cultural, religious, natural, and marine tourism. Such diversity positions Semarang as a destination capable of offering a wide variety of tourism experiences to visitors. Moreover, culinary tourism has emerged as one of the prominent attractions among tourists, indicating its significant role in supporting the development of the tourism sector in Semarang. Culinary tourism in the city also holds considerable potential to be developed as a leading sector, serving as an alternative destination for both domestic and international tourists (Rahma & Purwanti, 2017). Thus, culinary tourism constitutes an important element in enhancing the overall tourism experience in Semarang.

According to Lucy (1998), an assistant professor in the field of Food and Culture at Bowling Green State University, culinary tourism is defined as an activity undertaken by both domestic and international tourists to explore the flavors of food and the eating habits that develop within a particular region. The concept explains that culinary tourism is related to tourists' activities in getting to know, enjoying, and exploring food and eating habits that have developed in a region. Hjalager and Richards (2002) also stated that culinary tourism activities cannot be separated from the existence of local foods that are part of the identity of a tourist destination. Through this experience, tourists not only taste specialties, but can also learn about the culinary traditions that have developed in a region and the

role of the local community in the serving process. The city of Semarang itself is known to have a variety of unique cuisines that attract tourists, both domestic and foreign. This culinary diversity is influenced by the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the diverse community, resulting in distinctive flavors using traditional recipes (Rahma & Purwanti, 2017).

Several foods typical of Semarang City are widely known as culinary icons, such as *lumpia*, *wingko babat*, and *bandeng presto*. However, beyond these popular dishes, there are still various other local specialties that are not widely known by the public, one of which is *nasi ayam semarang*. In addition, *roti ganjel rel* is also one of Semarang signature cuisines that is now increasingly rare to find due to its limited availability, even in traditional markets (Rochmawati, Nailah, & Oktariadi, 2013). Furthermore, based on an interview with the Head of the Marketing Division of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office, *nasi glewo* is one of Semarang traditional signature cuisines. However, it is not widely known to the public and increasingly difficult to find because few vendors sell it. These three foods, namely *nasi ayam semarang*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi glewo*, were selected in this study because they represent Semarang traditional cuisines that are less recognized by the public and therefore require greater promotional attention through more engaging promotional media. Moreover, these culinary offerings have significant potential to be developed as culinary tourism attractions (Sumastuti, Prabowo, & Violinda, 2021). This situation indicates that the promotion of Semarang traditional cuisine has not yet been optimized (Safitri et al., 2024). To further investigate this issue, the researchers conducted a preliminary survey involving 55 respondents from different regions, with most respondents coming from outside Semarang. The survey aimed to determine their familiarity with several types of Semarang signature cuisine. The results were used to support the development of a short movie as an audio-visual promotional medium for introducing Semarang signature cuisine. The findings are presented in the form of a bar chart in Figure 1.1 below.

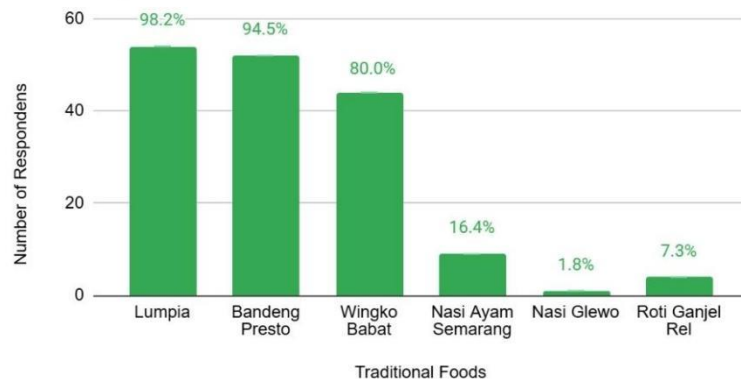


Figure 1.1 Respondents' Knowledge Level Regarding Traditional Foods of Semarang in 2026

Based on the figure above, *lumpia*, *bandeng presto*, and *wingko babat* were identified as the most familiar types of Semarang signature cuisine among respondents, with familiarity rates of 98,2%, 94,5%, and 80%, respectively. In contrast, *nasi ayam semarang*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi glewo* showed considerably lower familiarity rates of 16,4%, 7,3%, and 1,8%, respectively, indicating that these dishes are less recognized among respondents. These findings indicate that several types of Semarang signature cuisine are still less recognized by the public. The results also support the selection of *nasi ayam semarang*, *roti ganjel rel*, and *nasi glewo* as the focus of this study because they represent traditional cuisines that require greater promotional efforts. Therefore, an engaging promotional medium, such as a storytelling based short movie, is needed to introduce and promote Semarang signature cuisine to a wider audience.

This promotional issue is also reflected in the Accountability Report (LKPJ) of the Semarang City Government, which states that promotion remains one of the challenges in developing the regional tourism sector. Data from the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office shows that the promotion of various types of tourism, especially culinary tourism, has not been carried out optimally, resulting in many of Semarang's culinary specialties not being widely known by tourists. A similar point was made in a study conducted by Noviyanti, Setiawan, and Setyawan (2017), which stated that one of the Semarang City Council's Commission B assessed that

tourism promotion activities had not been a major focus and were more related to the implementation of programs that had been planned in the regional budget. The Semarang City Government has actually made various promotional efforts, such as the establishment of a Tourism Promotion Agency in 2012, the implementation of the Fam Trip program, and promotional cooperation through the “*Ayo Wisata ke Semarang*” advertisement with PT Sido Muncul. However, this promotional strategy is considered to be not entirely effective in increasing tourist interest (Putra et al., 2015). This shows that the promotion is still more focused on the tourism sector in general, while the potential of Semarang unique cuisine has not been maximized as the main focus of promotion. This situation indicates a gap between the culinary potential that exists and the promotional strategies that are being implemented, thus requiring promotional media that can convey messages in a more attractive and communicative manner.

Current technological developments have influenced the way information and promotions are conveyed in the tourism sector. Choosing the right promotional media is an important factor in attracting tourists to learn about a destination, including culinary tourism. According to Ardan (2021) in an article published by *Media Indonesia* explains that promotional media can generally be divided into three types, namely visual media, audio media, and audio-visual media. Among these three types, audio-visual media is considered to have an advantage because it combines images and sound, allowing information to be conveyed in a more interesting and easily understandable way. Research indicates that audio-visual media not only attract the audience’s attention through engaging visual presentations, but also enhance the perception of taste and sensory experience, thereby increasing purchase intention. As a promotional tool, audio-visual media are considered more effective than traditional media due to their ability to deliver messages in an interactive and engaging manner. With the increasing use of YouTube, this type of media has become more relevant in culinary promotion. Through the integration of visuals and narrative, audio-visual media can also strengthen product identity and enhance its appeal to the audience. Therefore, audio-visual media play a significant and effective role in culinary promotion,

particularly in the current digital era (Sajaroh & Imanto, 2026). However, the utilization of audio-visual media specifically designed to promote traditional cuisine of Semarang remains limited.

Based on these conditions, there is a need to develop audio-visual promotional media that specifically highlights the potential of Semarang signature cuisine. To ensure that the promotional message is delivered effectively, the development of the short movie applies the AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) model, a promotional framework that aims to attract audience attention, build interest, create desire, and encourage action. By applying this model, the short movie is expected not only to promote Semarang signature cuisine but also to increase audience interest in experiencing it directly. Therefore, this study focuses on the process of designing and producing a short movie entitled *Simpul Merekah*. The short movie presents Semarang signature cuisine through a combination of cinematic visuals, natural dialogue, and storytelling to create a more engaging viewing experience. Through this final project, *Simpul Merekah* is expected to serve as a promotional medium for Semarang signature cuisine and reach both domestic and foreign tourists.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the issue identified by the researcher, several research question are formulated to be addressed in this study, as follows:

1. How is the process of creating “*Simpul Merekah*” short movies?
2. How is the stakeholder’s feedback regarding the short movie?

1.3 Aim of the Research

Based on the research problems presented above, the objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

1. To describe the process of the short movie “*Simpul Merekah*”
2. To describe the feedback provided by stakeholders of the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism

1.4 Benefits of the Research

This final project is expected to provide benefits for:

1. For University

This study is expected to serve as an additional source of information in the Universitas Diponegoro library related to the discussed topic. In addition, the findings of this study can also support the development of academic reference materials within the university.

2. For Students

This study provides references for students in developing audio-visual promotional media and understanding the technical aspects of short movie production.

3. For Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism

To support the Semarang City Department of Culture and Tourism in promoting Semarang signature cuisine by utilizing the short movie developed in this research.

1.5 Output

The output of this research is an 18-minute short movie entitled *Simpul Merekah*, which has been uploaded to the Applied Foreign Languages YouTube channel. The short movie was created as a promotional medium for Semarang signature cuisine and is expected to attract both domestic and international tourists to visit Semarang. The story follows Galih and Karin, who unexpectedly meet again after being separated for a long time. During their journey together, memories of their past relationship begin to return. However, a message on Galih's phone reminds him of an opportunity to pursue his dream career in London. The title *Simpul Merekah* symbolizes the bond between Galih and Karin, while *Merekah* represents the feelings that bloom again during their time together.