



FOOD AS IDENTITY AND VILLAGE BRANDING OGAN ILIR

Case Study of Pindang Pegagan in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes food as the identity and becomes village branding of Ogan Ilir by taking a case study of *Pindang Pegagan* in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra. The relationship between food identity construction and village branding is investigated based on the identity theory and village branding theory. From this analysis, the research findings show that the construction of identity and village branding of Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra towards *Pindang Pegagan* is specifically built through the history of the existence of its community originating from *Pegagan* Tribe with the natural conditions of the village flowing through it. Ogan River produces a lot of fish to be processed into a variety of foods such as *Pindang Pegagan*. This affects the social behavior of the people of Meranjat III Village in everyday life, especially in the culinary aspect, and the reciprocal binding relationship between residents and immigrants to introduce the village through food which at the same time to love Ogan Ilir Regency itself.

Keywords: *Identity Construction, Village Branding, Ogan Ilir, Pindang Pegagan*

INTRODUCTION

Anthony Reid (2011:33) stated in his book, entitled *The Southeast Asia In the Commerce Period 1450-1680 Volume 1: Land under the Wind*, that in Southeast Asia, besides rice and salt, fish is an important and widely traded main food ingredient. Likewise, people who live in South Sumatra with the Musi River (750 km) and its eight tributaries, the Komerling River, the Ogan River, the Lematang River, the Lakitan River, the Batanghari Leko River, the Kelingi River, the Rupit River, and the Rawas River, place fish as ingredient food that is

more often eaten than other animal proteins. Fish is the main menu of the people of South Sumatra. Besides being fried, fish for South Sumatrans are also often cooked with other variations, such as *dipindang*, *dibrengkes*, smoked, salted, pickled, or made into new snacks, such as pempek and kemplang (Anita, 2014:5).

Ogan River is the third longest river in South Sumatra, flows on the border or cuts through the OKU, South OKU, OKI, and Ogan Ilir regencies. The Ogan, Penesak, and *Pegagan* tribes live along the Ogan River and its tributaries. This is also what underlies the emergence of various naming of *pindang* in South Sumatra. That the mention of tribal identity is an element of its naming, as is the case with *Pindang Pegagan*, where *pindang* itself is made by the *Pegagan* Tribe who live around the Ogan River flow. *Pindang* itself means a protein-based food (side dish) with simple processing, namely fish that is boiled with a mixture of various spices so that it produces a sour, spicy and fresh taste. *Pindang* continues to grow, in addition to fresh fish, there are also *salai* fish *pindang*, chicken *pindang*, meat *pindang*, bone *pindang*, shrimp *pindang*, cracker *pindang*, and so on.

The variety of *pindang* names in the archipelago creates uncertainty over the identity of a food so it becomes one of the problems in culinary identity. The absence of a standardized reference causes the understanding of the culinary called *pindang* to be ambiguous. If we googling on the internet about *pindang*, then the mention of *pindang* is not only for culinary originating from South Sumatra. There are also typical *Pindang* Lampung, Jambi, Banyuwangi, and others. This diversity may be the same as soto and soup which are also owned by various regions in the archipelago. Therefore, this research was conducted to emphasize the difference between *Pindang Pegagan* and others. Especially, to make *Pindang Pegagan* becomes the construction of identity and village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra. So based on the background above, the problem formulation in this study is "How is *Pindang Pegagan* constructed into the identity and village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra?"

Literature Review and Theory

Food as a form of identity, as written by Maryetti (2007) in Weichart (2004), Mintz and Du Bois (2002), Caplan (1997), Foster and Anderson (1986), and Messer (1984). Some studies raised about culinary, one of which is thesis research that the researcher has previously written about Pempek Palembang from the Cultural and Media Studies of Gadjah Mada University in 2012 which was later recorded in 2014. Apart from departing from the thesis research, the theory used in this research is a theory related to food and identity construction and village branding in the context of the research methodology is communication ethnography.

Identity Theory of Food

According to Lévi-Strauss food occupies an essential place in the human mind for two reasons. "Human existence and all its attributes can be defined using cooking. And, cooking and eating food marks the transition from nature to culture" (Anita, 2014:20). Marcel Danesi (2011:223-234) also says that food is a sign that is infiltrated with meaning. We eat, first and foremost, to stay alive. However, in a social setting, food acquires a significance that goes beyond this function and influences the perception of whether something can be eaten. Denotatively, food has become the element for survival. However, in the semiosphere, food and the act of eating always have a broad connotation. In relation to Danesi, the term that

is often used to refer to the connotation system formed by food is cuisine (cuisine). From cooking, we can find out what certain groups of people eat, how they are made, and what the food reveals about them.

In his book *The Collective Search for Identity*, Orrin Klapp pointed out that identity is not a function of each person’s material possessions, but rather, identity is associated with symbolic form and the way one person is perceived by others (Berger, 2005: 107). Klapp wrote:

Strictly speaking, identity includes anything that a person can legitimately and reliably state about himself—his status, name, personality, and past. But if the social context is unreliable, this means that he cannot say anything legitimately and reliably about himself. Statements of identity cannot be trusted more than a currency that depends on people’s willingness to recognize it and accept it.

Other people must interpret the signs of a person’s identity correctly because a person’s identity is understood and validated. However, as stated by Chris Barker (2009:174), subjectivity and identity are cultural products that are specific and not eternal. So, identity is entirely a social construction and cannot possibly ‘exist’ outside of cultural representation and acculturation. The following is a list made by Arthur Asa Berger of some of the common identity marks we use to create the various aspects of our identity:

Table 1: List of Common Identity Marks Berger

No.	Sign	Identity
1.	Personal	Clothing, Hairstyle, Type of Glasses, Body Language, Stature, Facial Expressions, Use of Language
2.	National	Flag, Symbol, Food, Architecture, Music
3.	Work	Uniform work, tools and facilities (stethoscope/doctor), atmosphere
4.	Legal Entity	Company Logo, Type of Advertising, Headquarters Building, Production Area
5.	Gender	Clothing, Hairstyle, Voice, Body Structure
6.	Religion	Symbols, Clothing, Goods, Languages, Sacred Figures, Architecture

(Source: Berger, 2005:108)

Besides having a symbolic meaning, food also has symbolic roles. Foster and Anderson (1986) suggest that there are four symbolic roles of food (Maryetti, 2007), namely:

1. Food as an expression of social bonds. This can be seen in the habit of sending food to each other between neighbor in a community. Sending or offering food means that the giver is offering affection, attention, and friendship.
2. Food as an expression of group solidarity. This is manifested in the form of eating with family members. Usually, the food served on that occasion is the typical food of the family or ethnic group.
3. Food as a giver of peace in situations that cause stress. Certain foods that describe group identity can restore peace of mind to people who are experiencing stress.
4. Symbolism of food in language. In many languages of the world, the nature of a person’s mood is often compared to the quality or state of food.

In the book *Identity and Difference*, Kathryn Woodward (2002) states that identity is formed through ‘the marking of difference’. This marking of differences occurs either

through a symbolic system called representation or through certain forms of 'social exclusion'. Therefore, identity is not the opposite of difference but depends on difference. Every culture has its way of classifying the world. Through the means of classification systems, culture provides us with the tools to make the social world understandable and to construct meanings. However, an agreement must first be reached between community members on how to classify this or that matter so that the social order is maintained. These 'shared meaning systems are what we call 'culture':

...culture, in the public sense, (and the framework) of values that are used as standards of reference by a community, mediate the experiences experienced by the individuals within it. Culture provides several basic categories, a positive pattern in which ideas and values are neatly organized. Above all, culture has authority, because each is invited to agree on something because of the approval of others (Douglas, 1966 in Woodward, 2002:30).

What we eat can show who we are and what kind of culture we live in. Food is a medium to say something about ourselves. Food also represents changes that occur over time and are cross-cultural. For Lévi-Strauss, how we organize (organize) food is just as important—appetizers, snacks, desserts, and so on; raw and cooked. The definition of traditional food does not only include basic ingredients but also includes processing and serving procedures, links to socio-cultural values, processing equipment used, and the characteristics of the taste of the food (Iljas, 1995: 6). Thus, even though both are made from raw jackfruit, they can become different traditional foods in various regions, depending on how they are processed, served or tasted. In Yogyakarta, raw jackfruit can become gudeg, while in West Sumatra it is cooked using curry. Likewise, *Pindang Pegagan* which is the object of research here, although South Sumatra has many types of *Pindang*, *Pindang Pegagan* can construct its identity as a culinary specialty of Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency in the classification of side dishes.

Village Branding Theory

Like cities, villages are also starting to focus on becoming tourist village destinations. Currently, the competition to make the good name and image of the village to be superior is also more attractive and has grown to attract more tourists or investors, and even to attract educated people to stay comfortable in their village and work to build their village with passion and love. Tourist villages do need to build a "branding" of their village. Not only city branding, but villages also need to do village branding. As with city branding, country branding, or place branding in general, village branding is a series of efforts to make a village more attractive, more visible to have a distinct advantage, which is unique and distinctive, with a strong identity, so that it can display her own charm. Branding is the same as for brands of tangible goods or services, basically to create an emotional connection (to create an emotional connection) with the target market and other stakeholders.

Focus on exploring these advantages in order to gain a competitive advantage, an advantage that has a superior, different value, which is only owned by a handful of villages, if possible, only one, not owned by other villages. These advantages can then become the village's core competencies which are characteristic, differentiators and have a strong attraction for external target markets (tourists, investors) and internal (residents and their communities) or even increase their bargaining position, positive image, or make the educated people who belong to the village stay at home and want to build their village. Successful village branding can improve the image and reputation of the village to be more positive,

more attractive, superior, more valued by stakeholders. and admired by the wider community.

In some villages, unique characteristics can be found. The efforts to explore and build the attractiveness of this village are also part of village branding. It could be found that there is a village that is superior and different because of its distinctive cultural arts, or its beautiful and unique natural panorama, or its culinary delights, or it could be because of the attractions of the tourism program packaging, or even because of the unique, authentic and unique customs of the people, making it fascinating. From several leading tourist villages in the country, it can be seen that there are differences in characteristics, differences in basic capital so that they have a strong identity, which distinguishes one from another, but each has its own charm, because it is unique, different, distinctive, interesting. There are authentic values, authentic values that are only owned by nature or the community in the village. In the study of Meranjat III Village in South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, it appears that the area crossed by the Ogan River is very rich in river products which are then processed into *Pindang Pegagan* to become the daily culinary of the people or also sold as is done by the *Pindang Pegagan* Senna Restaurant. who is also in the village. Meranjat III Village is also known for its rice production which then processed into rice and accompany eating *Pindang Pegagan*.

The above conditions are interesting to be studied to find out whether *Pindang Pegagan* is worthy as the identity and village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency by using the description of the village branding theory which is summarized in the following city branding concepts. Simon Anholt (2007) himself defined city branding as the management of the image of a destination through strategic innovation and coordination of economic, commercial, social, cultural, and government regulations. City branding generally focuses on image management, precisely what and how the image will be formed and the communication aspects carried out in the image management process (Kavaratzis, 2008: 8 in Mantiri, 2018: 45). Therefore, city branding is an identity, symbol, logo, or brand attached to an area. An area or city can have a strong brand by forming these items. However, these items must first be conceptualized by the objectives and potential of the existing area. City branding itself is a development of the place branding concept introduced by Philip Kotler (2009).

Kavaratzis (2004:66) stated that city branding is in the context of communicating the image of a city through three stages of communication, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary communication refers to the impression of all aspects of an area. Primary communication consists of landscape, infrastructure, behavior, and structure. Secondary communication refers to intense formal communication carried out by communicators such as advertising, public relations, graphic design, and logo creation. Tertiary communication refers to the word of mouth and competitors' income regarding city branding which is shown through media exposure. There are several criteria in making city branding that must be met according to Yuli (2011) including:

1. Attributes. City branding can describe a city's character, attractiveness, style, and personality. The Big Indonesian Dictionary explains that attributes as complementary signs of an object are the same as cities. The city must have an image of a character or feature that belongs to it.
2. Messages. Describe a story in a smart, fun, and easy way, or always remember. City branding is not only a slogan or logo but also must have the meaning and

- significance of a logo and slogan.
3. Differentiation. Gives a unique and different impression from other cities. City branding is made unique and has meaning according to its potential. What are the characteristics that are different from other cities and make people want to come and see the uniqueness it has.
 4. Ambassadorship. Inspire people to come and want to live in the city. A city that has ambassadorship criteria describes a good city so it is very attractive for everyone to want to come and live in the city.

Positioning. Like a product to form a strong brand. A city needs to first determine the positioning it wants to establish. Positioning that is right on target and supported by solid differentiation will also be strong. The economy and culture of a society are important for the residents of a city. Meanwhile, for an investor, government regulation is an important criterion for a city. In contrast to the criteria assessed by tourists who look at the cultural side of the community and the environment.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the research approach proposed by Creswell (2010), this research is included in research with a qualitative approach because researchers want to understand how *Pindang Pegagan* is constructed as an identity and village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra. As for the straightforward, research design, namely: (1) the assumptions of the philosophical worldview are constructivism, (2) the research strategy related to these assumptions is communication ethnography, and (3) methods or procedures Specific factors that can translate these strategies into practice are literature studies and participatory observation.

The place and time of this research was in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra within one month because it coincided with the Thematic Real Work Lecture (KKN) activity at the Candradimuka College of Social and Political Sciences (STISPOL). Palembang to XXVI 2022 on 1-31 August 2022. Researchers also assist KKN students to become Field Supervisors (DPL) directly so that this research can be carried out in a participatory observational manner and conduct interviews with competent sources in their fields.



Figure 1: Students of KKN STISIPOL Candradimuka in front of Meranjat III Village Signboard

(Source: Researcher Documentation)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the theoretical explanation above, the discussion of the results of this research will be carried out in three stages, namely first understanding regional conditions such as the Lévi-Strauss expression between cooking and eating food marking the transition from nature to culture through the theory of food identity construction, then understand the feasibility of *Pindang Pegagan* as village branding Ogan Ilir through village branding theory, then the last discussion of researchers to draw conclusions from the findings in the field.

1. Identity Construction of *Pindang* Culinary in South Sumatra

The development of Indonesian culinary treasures cannot be separated from its contact with various cultures (Rahman, 2011: 7). Society is in between two conditions: retaining the original cultural elements or accepting new elements and adapting them into their own culture. In this case, local genius plays an important role. In the city of Palembang, the culinary history of the city follows the development of the successive periods of power with various cultural touches. The cultural influences of those times crossed, especially when other nations came to Palembang such as India, Arabia, China, and the Netherlands as well as the presence of other indigenous peoples such as Java. In Palembang, the culinary history that took place here did not involve many Europeans in it. In fact, other nations, such as China (pempek), Arab (rice kebuli/samin), and India (martabak HAR) who came as traders to Palembang had more influence on culinary development in Palembang (Anita, 2014: 90). As for *pindang*, it is a local genius food native to the Malay people in Palembang, which is also found throughout South Sumatra with various name variants according to the tribe that made it or the area where the *pindang* is made.



**Figure 2. Local Culinary Genius in Palembang
(Source: Anita, 2014:90)**

Pindang is fish that is cooked into a soup form with a gravy taste that has a unique and delicious blend of flavors with the dominance of sour, spicy, fresh, and savory flavors. *Pindang* fish cooked together with special spices that match the tastes of the people of South Sumatra. The basic spices of *pindang* include onions (red and white), ginger, turmeric, galangal, lemongrass, bay leaves, chili, shrimp paste (calok), cherry tomatoes (cungkediro), tamarind, pineapple, and so on. These seasonings are used according to the type of *pindang*. *Pindang* will be more delicious when combined with warm white rice with chili sauce or fruit sauce and green vegetables (round eggplant, long beans, carrots, cucumber, basil leaves, pumpkin pieces and so on) which are raw or boiled for breakfast, lunch, as well as dinner. Each region has its own type of *pindang* with different character, both ingredients

and cooking techniques. Some are boiled directly with the basic spices. Some of them are sauteed first, then boiled with fish. However, the ingredients still refer to the basic ingredients without using a mixture of coconut milk while still prioritizing the sour and spicy taste. Judging from the tribe of making, *pindang* in South Sumatra, is divided into several classifications as shown in the following table:

Table 2: *Pindang* Variety in South Sumatra

No.	Name of <i>Pindang</i>	City/Regency
1.	<i>Pindang</i> Palembang	Palembang City
2.	<i>Pindang</i> Pegagan	Ogan Ilir Regency & Kabupaten OKI Regency
3.	<i>Pindang</i> Meranjat	Ogan Ilir Regency
4.	<i>Pindang</i> Musi Rawas	Musi Rawas Regency (MURA)
5.	<i>Pindang</i> Sekayu	Musi Banyuasin Regency (MUBA)
6.	<i>Pindang</i> Pagaralam	Lahat Regency

(Source: Processed by researchers)

The varieties of *pindang* in South Sumatra above show the diversity of the *pindang* process itself. Initially, the seasoning for *pindang* was very simple, namely shallots, lemon-grass, galangal, chilies, tamarind. All the spices are just crushed. While the tamarind juice is taken. All ingredients are boiled. When the gravy boils, add the fish meat. When cooked, add basil leaves. In further developments, began to add pineapple. In fact, one of the sub-ethnic groups in Palembang, namely Burai, in addition to adding pineapple slices, also adds grated pineapple. Some people add shrimp paste as a flavoring (finally, most of the *pindang* in South Sumatra use terasi). How to cook spices was then developed. Especially for Palembang Arab community, in addition to sauteing the spices, they also add finely sliced honje or kecombrang. Dutch residents who lived in Palembang during the colonial period, also made a variant of *pindang*. *Pindang* fish, fried before being added to the sauce. In addition, palm sugar is reproduced and added with soy sauce. The people of Palembang know it as *Pindang* Serani (Serani from the word Christian, which is the religion of the majority of Dutch citizens).

The types of fish that are usually cooked in *pindang* in South Sumatra are Patin (*Pangasius djambal* or *Pangasius nasutus*) and Baung (*Bagrus mestirus*). However, other types of fish, especially river or swamp fish, can also be processed into *pindang*, namely betok, sepat, corks, toman, jelawat, juaro, persuasion, lais, tapah, and so on. Apart from fish, the development of *pindang* processing can also be made with various other main ingredients. So that the *Pindang* Salai fish, *Pindang* chicken, *Pindang* bird, *Pindang* meat, *Pindang* bone, *Pindang* anchovy, *Pindang* eggplant, *Pindang* shrimp, *Pindang* shellfish, *Pindang* fish eggs, *Pindang* crackers, *Pindang* tempoyak and so on were born. This diversity shows that the cultural development of the people of South Sumatra in processing their culinary continues to grow from time to time. The food that used to be just a daily meal later emerged as an identity food which was also introduced outside the South Sumatra region. This also underlies the importance of the role of local governments in maintaining the characteristics of the region to be constructed as an identity that distinguishes the region from other regions.

Deputy Governor of South Sumatra H. Mawardi Yahya who is also known as the Father of the Expansion of Ogan Ilir Regency received a certificate of determination of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (WBTH) of Indonesia in 2018, covering 7 Cultural Works in South Suma-

tra Province at the Appreciation event for the Determination of Intangible Cultural Heritage (WBTB) Indonesia in 2018 at the Jakarta Arts Building, Wednesday night (10/10/2018), one of which is *Pindang* Palembang which is a traditional skill and craft with Registration Number: 201800617 (Perdana, 2018). At Sriwijaya XXX Festival in 2022 which was focused on the yard of the Badaraddin II Museum in Palembang, 29th of June – 6th of July 2022, there were also 43 exhibitions of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (WBTB) of the wealth of South Sumatra Province (Apriani, 2022).



Figure 3: South Sumatra Deputy Governor Receives 2018 WBTB Indonesia Certificate
(Source: <https://sumsel.tribunnews.com/2018/10/11/pindang-palembang-ent-7-karya-kultur-sumsel-menjadi-warisan-kultur-takbenda-indonesia>)

The struggle to register the WBTB variety is indeed not easy. *Pindang* Palembang itself is known to have been registered since 2013 by the South Sumatra Arts Council on the website list <http://www.balitbangnovdasumsel.com> owned by the Regional Research and Development Agency of South Sumatra Province which only in 2018 received an Indonesian WBTB certificate. Especially for *Pindang Pegagan* and others, of course, it requires the same process and patience as well as the same tenacity as its predecessor, *Pindang* Palembang, if you want to be listed in the WBTB Indonesia. Statement from the Head of the South Sumatra Province Culture and Tourism Office, Dr. Aufa Syahrizal, S.P, M.Sc when interviewed by researchers stated that the Regional Government always supports *Pindang Pegagan* as a village branding for Meranjat III Village to attract tourists to come to their village.

"Regional food is a tourism potential of an area to attract people to come to the location, such as *Pindang Pegagan* for Meranjat III Village in Ogan Ilir Regency which later became an iconic and missed attraction. Therefore, we from the Provincial Government of South Sumatra, through the Department of Culture and Tourism will always promote the culinary specialties of the South Sumatra region, especially *Pindang Pegagan* in Meranjat III Village to become village branding for the region." (Dr. Aufa Syahrizal, S.P, M.Sc, personal interview, 19 August 2022)

2. *Pindang Pegagan* as Village Branding for Ogan Ilir Regency

It is understood that village branding is a series of efforts to make a village more attractive, more visible, and has a distinct advantage, which is unique and distinctive, with a strong identity, so that it can display its own charm. Ogan Ilir is one of the regencies in South Sumatra Province which is on the eastern route of Sumatra and its administrative center is located about 35 km from Palembang City. This district is a division of Ogan Komering Ilir (OKI) Regency with the legal basis being Law Number 37 of 2003 concerning the Establish-

ment of East OKU Regency, South OKU Regency, and Ogan Ilir Regency in South Sumatra Province which was ratified on 18 December 2003. Geographically, the term Ogan Ilir, is associated with the existence of its territory located in the lower reaches of the Ogan River. The population in Ogan Ilir Regency comes from the Malays with 3 (three) sub-tribes, namely: Ogan, Penesak, and *Pegagan* with the majority of the population working as farmers.

During the Dutch colonial period, around 1931, it was recorded that in *Staadblad* No. 352 Ogan Ilir was no longer *Afdeling* but changed to *Onder Afdeling* Ogan Ilir whose center of government was in Tanjung Raja, precisely on the banks of the Ogan River, with 19 clan governments, with three in Among them are the *Pegagan* Ilir Tribe 1, the *Pegagan* Ulu Tribe 2, and the *Pegagan* Ilir Tribe clan 2. These three clan names indicate that *Pegagan* has been the name for the tribe that has existed in Ogan Ilir since ancient times. The clan is led by a *Pasirah* who is determined based on the results of direct elections by the people similar to the election called *Mancang*. The clan government oversees several hamlet governments. The village government is led by a *Kerio*. In 1983 the term *Dusun* was replaced with *Desa* and the term *Marga* was abolished. Ogan Ilir Regency now has 16 sub-districts, 14 sub-districts, and 227 villages. As for the South Indralaya District itself, there are 14 villages, with one of them being Meranjat III Village.



Figure 4: Logo of Ogan Ilir Regency
(Source: <http://oganalirkab.go.id>)

Those explanations show an image of the logo of Ogan Ilir Regency which has a special meaning to become the identity of the Ogan Ilir Regency area itself. Quoted As'ad Mukti's statement in sumsel.tribunnews.com as the originator of the logo, stated that:

"The light blue base color on the shield indicates clear water because Ogan Ilir, especially in the past, used to have a lot of swamp water. While the roof above the shield is the roof of a typical Penesak house. Inside the shield symbol just below the roof, there is a design of six water waves which shows that up until the 90s, residents still used the river as transportation access. Under the design of the book, there are ripples of water showing the rivers in Ogan Ilir, namely the Ogan and Kelekar rivers. The entire design above is decorated with 18 grains of rice and 12 cotton buds symbolizing prosperity and prosperity as well as the date and month of the birth of Ogan Ilir Regency on December 18, 2003. And at the bottom of the shield is written the motto "Caram Seguguk". "Caram comes from the Penesak language, which means compact. A bunch or a stick or a big family. So this motto reveals that we in Ogan Ilir are family, brothers and sisters living together." (As'ad Mukti, in *Dwipayana*, 15 September 2021)

From the understanding of the identity of Ogan Ilir Regency that emerged from the logo design above, it is known that Ogan Ilir Regency is very close to the river which is a

characteristic of the geography and topography of the area. Some of the icons of the logo depart from the existence of rivers in Ogan Ilir Regency, namely the Ogan River and the Kelekar River. It is understood that several sectors in Ogan Ilir Regency also arise because of the presence of the river. One of them is the variety of tourism and culinary variety in Ogan Ilir Regency. Specifically regarding the variety of culinary tourism, Ogan Ilir Regency has a variety of culinary tours that have been introduced by the local government through the Ogan Ilir Regency Tourism Object Profile Book (2014) as shown in the following picture:

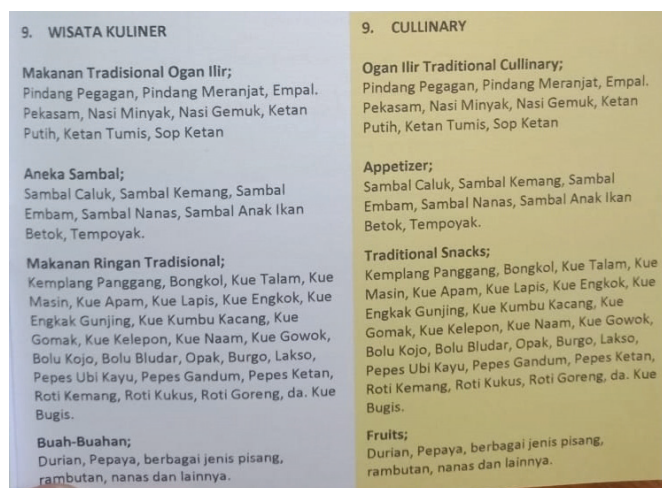


Figure 5: List of Culinary Tourism in Ogan Ilir (Source: Ogan Ilir Regency Government, 2014)

From the picture above, it is known that *Pindang Pegagan* is the first in the list of culinary tourism in Ogan Ilir Regency. *Pindang Pegagan* is a typical cuisine of the *Pegagan* Tribe, the Ogan sub Tribe. The *Pegagan* tribe is a tribe that lives in Tanjung Raja Barat Village, Ogan Ilir Regency, South Sumatra Province. *Pegagan* settlements are also located in Sirah Pulau (SP) Padang District, Jejawi District, Kayuagung District, Pampangan District and Pangkalan Lampam District, all of which are also in Ogan Komering Ilir District (Kurniati, 2018). This tribe lives on the coast of the Musi River which is a habitat for Patin, Baung and Gabus fish. The fish are the main ingredients of the traditional *Pindang Pegagan* recipe which has its own characteristics. This culinary is one of the favorites in South Sumatra. The spicy sauce is slightly sour with a slightly reddish color served with tender fish. Plus, the distinctive aroma of shrimp paste and Javanese tamarind makes it even more delicious. The taste of *Pindang Pegagan* has indeed succeeded in inviting culinary lovers to like it. Restaurants that sell *Pindang Pegagan* menus are in fact not only in Ogan Ilir Regency but spread throughout the province of South Sumatra. The following is a table of several restaurants that sell *Pindang Pegagan* which is quite famous in Ogan Ilir Regency, namely:

Table 3: Variety of *Pindang Pegagan* Restaurants in Ogan Ilir

No.	Restaurant Name	Address
1.	RM Pindang MOK	Ruko Taman Permata Indah Complex (TPI), in front of the Indralaya gas station
2.	RM Pindang Bu Sri	Side of the road to the Government Office Complex Ogan Ilir Tanjung Senai
3.	Pondok Pindang Mantap	Steady Next to the Indralaya Koramil, before the Tanjung Senai Bridge

4.	Istana Pindang Pegagan	Jl. Lintas Sumatra No.16, Indralaya Mulia, Ogan Ilir
5.	RM Pindang PAS	Jl. Lintas Sumatra, Indralaya Indah, Ogan Ilir
6.	RM Pindang Senna	Jl. Lintas Timur, Desa Meranjat III, Indralaya Selatan, Ogan Ilir

(Source: Processed by researchers)

From the data above, most restaurants that sell *Pindang Pegagan* are located in office centers or commercial/tourist centers in Ogan Ilir Regency. RM *Pindang Senna* is the only restaurant that sells *Pindang Pegagan* located in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency. During field observations, we found several restaurants that also sell *Pindang*, but not the *Pindang Pegagan* variant. It is known that the name of the owner of RM *Pindang Senna* is Mrs. Rusmiati who is a local resident as well as from the descendants of the *Pegagan* Tribe who exist or live in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency.

"This *Pindang Senna* Restaurant was established in 2015 which specializes in the type of *Pindang Pegagan* because I am a native there. As for the variants of *pindang* fish that are sold, namely catfish, tilapia, cork, baung, toman, and gunshot." (Rusmiati, personal interview, 21 August 2022)

By seeing the statement of Rusmiati above, it can be said that *Pindang Pegagan* has got special position for Ogan Ilir people. It can show the identity which should be maintained and constructed. It can be concluded that wherever they are, their love for local culinary skill become their priority. Their love of *Pindang Pegagan* will become part of themselves. This is illustrated as follows:



Figure 6: *Pindang Pegagan* as a Market Product vs. Cultural Product
(Source: Processed by researchers)

From the varieties of those existing skills, *Pindang Pegagan* has become a village branding for the people in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya, Ogan Ilir that it is not only a cultural product but also a market product. *Pindang Gotu kola*, tastes sour and not too spicy. The sour taste comes from tamarind or pineapple, the taste of the calok is soft, not greasy because the spices are not stir-fried first but are immediately boiled. The broth is yellowish red in color which comes from a combination of turmeric and chili. The nutritional content of catfish in *Pindang Pegagan* is very high and the fat content of catfish is lower than other types of fish. Based on the results of the study, the nutritional content in catfish is in the form of unsaturated fat (50%) which is very good for preventing the risk of cardiovascular disease and is useful for reducing cholesterol levels so that it can prevent and reduce coronary heart disease (Saputra, 2021). The potential for increasing creativity and selling power by making village brands at *Pindang Pegagan* in Meranjat III, South Indralaya, Ogan Ilir is professionally able to provide a sense of empowerment for villages to become creative communities. In

addition, if it continues to be accompanied by the possibility of explosive sales for nearby businesses because it has a strong place identity, it can also be built with the support of various parties, both the government, investors, and the community itself.

As a cultural product, *Pindang Pegagan* has become a part of the material culture of Ogan Ilir culture, namely the form of objects that are usually the result of the behavior and work of the stakeholders of the culture concerned, which experts call physical culture and material culture (Hanafiah, 1995:1-2). Further from the realm of history, from the realm of sociology, *Pindang Pegagan* as a cultural product is by giving the fact that *Pindang Pegagan* is often used as a liaison for social ties for the *Pegagan* Tribe or people who now live around the Ogan Ilir and Ogan Komering Ilir areas to their acquaintances and families. In other areas. This is as stated by the community in Meranjat III Village who is also the Manager of the Youth Organization of Meranjat III Village, that:

"Socially, *Pindang Pegagan* can be a liaison for friendship. The Ogan Ilir people often send *Pindang Pegagan* to their acquaintances or family who are outside Meranjat Village or even outside Ogan Ilir Regency. *Pindang Pegagan* can be a souvenir to take out of Ogan Ilir and become a local culinary specialty." (Riska Fujianti, personal interview, 20 August 2022).

Whereas ethnographically, communication, apart from being a unifier, *Pindang Pegagan* can also be used as a construction in building their local identity as well as village branding for their place of residence. The following is an assessment of the criteria for creating city branding that must be met according to Yuli (2011) with a focus on *Pindang Pegagan* in Ogan Ilir Regency, namely:

Attributes. *Pindang Pegagan* as village branding is able to describe the character, attractiveness, style and personality of Ogan Ilir Regency, which is the area that flows the Ogan River as a large river in South Sumatra which is rich in fish (nature) to be processed into *Pindang Pegagan* (culture).

Messages. Describe a story in a smart, fun and easy way or always remember. That *Pindang Pegagan* was born from the *Pegagan* Tribe who lives on the banks of the Ogan River in Ogan Ilir Regency. They live as farmers who go to the fields every day and bring practical snacks, namely *Pindang Pegagan* and rice.

Differentiation. Gives a unique and different impression from other cities. That Ogan Ilir Regency is considered unique because it gave birth to two types of *Pindang* in an equally well-known area, namely *Pindang Pegagan* and *Pindang Meranjat*.

Ambassadorship. Inspire people to come and want to live in the city. It is understood that Ogan Ilir Regency has a tourist destination that continues to grow to this day. Besides *Pindang Pegagan* in the culinary aspect, there are also various inspirations in various areas of Ogan Ilir Regency, such as Burai Village, Tanjung Senai, Ancol Tanjung Atap, Teluk Seruo Lake, and others.

Positioning. Like a product to form a strong brand. A city needs to first determine the positioning it wants to establish. The right positioning for Ogan Ilir Regency is to ensure *Pindang Pegagan* becomes a village branding in the culinary realm that enriches the repertoire of characteristics in Ogan Ilir Regency.

From those explanations above, it will be important to study the understanding of *Pindang Pegagan* as a cuisine that constructs the local identity of the Ogan Ilir community because it can be a way to understand various culinary localities of other regions.



Figure 7: Pindang Pegagan as Village Branding for Desa Meranjat III
(Source: Student Documentation of KKN STIPOL Candradimuka, 2022)

Figure 7 above shows a logo or brand proposed by STIPOL Candradimuka Palembang students for village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency by placing *Pindang Pegagan* as a village icon for its culinary aspects. With the tagline “LEMAK NIAN” and bright colors, it is hoped that it will attract tourists to try it. Through *Pindang Pegagan*, the people of Ogan Ilir Regency are understood to have an open attitude and really appreciate their guests.

Therefore, the socialization of *Pindang Pegagan* as an identity and village branding in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District, Ogan Ilir Regency can be reached by continuing to develop the *Pindang Pegagan* business throughout the Ogan Ilir Regency itself. In addition to selling, socializing about the positioning and differentiation of *Pindang Pegagan* with other *Pindang* is also appropriate. Among others, by conducting socialization about (1) the *Pegagan* Tribe as or the person who made *Pindang Pegagan* originally from Ogan Ilir Regency and spread throughout the Ogan Ilir area, including in Meranjat III Village, South Indralaya District; (2) The materials used to make *Pindang Pegagan* are prioritized from rivers in South Sumatra (Batanghari Sembilan); and (3) Processing standards or methods of making *Pindang Pegagan* using the custom as practiced by the *Pegagan* Tribe people in Ogan Ilir Regency.

CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, it can be identified that *Pindang* is a culinary category of side dishes that exist throughout the South Sumatra region with various names according to ethnicity and region as well as various content/protein variants used as the main ingredient. Although it is generally agreed that the main ingredients of *Pindang* South Sumatra are fish from rivers in Batanghari Sembilan, namely Patin fish and Baung fish. *Pindang Pegagan* itself is one of the *Pindang* variants which is originally made by the *Pegagan* Tribe who live along the Ogan River which enter the Ogan Ilir Regency and Ogan Komering Ilir Regency. *Pindang Pegagan* with its uniqueness has now become one of the culinary tours of Ogan Ilir Regency which has proven not only to be a cultural product for its people but also as a market product. *Pindang Pegagan* is a food that has become a national identity, in this case, a cultural identity or culinary icon, especially for the people of Ogan Ilir Regency which is continuously

being constructed and very worthy of being village branding in the culinary aspect for Ogan Ilir Regency itself.

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