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Gastronomy and Community in Practice: Exploring the Tourism Potential of Pakande-Kandea in Buton Tengah, Southeast Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

This study explores *Pakande-Kandea*, a communal eating tradition practiced by Butonese communities in Southeast Sulawesi, as a form of intangible cultural heritage with the potential to support community-based tourism (CBT) in Buton Tengah. The research investigates the cultural meanings, ritual dynamics, and tourism prospects of the tradition, aiming to identify how it can be sustainably integrated into local tourism development. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with cultural figures and tourism officials, literature reviews, and site observations in Tolandona and surrounding villages. The analysis focused on themes such as symbolic performance, community participation, and ritual continuity. Findings indicate that *Pakande-Kandea* retains strong cultural relevance across five key occasions—ranging from religious celebrations to public festivals—each offering distinct opportunities for tourism engagement. The tradition's gender-inclusive structure, culinary richness, and embedded values such as *poma-masiaka* (mutual love) and *silaturahmi* (kinship) align with core CBT principles including local ownership and cultural sustainability. While the tradition has received intermittent recognition, gaps remain in institutional support, infrastructure, and youth engagement. However, with strategic planning and participatory frameworks, *Pakande-Kandea* can serve as a flagship model for heritage-based tourism in the region. The study concludes that revitalizing this tradition through CBT not only enhances tourism appeal but also reinforces identity, intergenerational learning, and pride within the community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's cultural landscape is immensely rich, with each region preserving distinctive intangible heritages that reflect local identity and collective memory (Jones, 2018; Ristawati et al., 2025). In Southeast Sulawesi, the Butonese people have maintained a wide range of living traditions, among which *Pakande-Kandea* stands out as a vibrant expression of communal celebration (Ardyati et al., 2025; Ferdayandi et al., 2021). This tradition is deeply embedded in the historical and social life of the Buton Islands, especially in Buton Tengah and Tolandona, where it remains actively practiced and symbolically potent (H. Hasan, 2025; Muh. A. Hasan et al., 2022; Inzana et al., 2025).

Pakande-Kandea, which literally translates to "eating together," is more than a communal meal; it is a ritualized performance of gratitude, solidarity, and respect for ancestors and guests (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2019). Historically, it was performed to welcome warriors returning from battle or to commemorate significant religious and seasonal occasions (Ferdayandi et al., 2021). Over time, the tradition evolved, adapting to the socio-cultural transformations of Buton society while preserving its core elements of ceremonial food sharing, female-led hospitality, and collective participation.

The tradition is known by various names among different Butonese ethnic subgroups: *maataa* among the Cia-Cia, *kafoma-foma'a* among the Muna (Pancana), and *peka kande-kandea* in Wolio (H. Hasan, 2025; Linda, 2024; Rahman et al., 2026). Despite linguistic variations, the underlying practice remains similar—emphasizing food preparation and ceremonial feeding in public spaces. This culinary dimension situates *Pakande-Kandea* firmly within the framework of intangible gastronomic heritage, highlighting how local cuisines and rituals intertwine to shape regional identity (H. Hasan, 2025).

The dishes served during *Pakande-Kandea*—such as *kasoami*, *parende*, *lapa-lapa*, and *sinonggi*—represent ancestral food knowledge rooted in agrarian and maritime traditions (Pramesthi et al., 2020; Rahmawati, 2018). These dishes not only nourish the body but also convey cultural messages of abundance, togetherness, and ecological attunement. Their presentation on *talam* (large trays), the involvement of young women in traditional dress, and the act of symbolic feeding form a unique gastronomic spectacle that encapsulates Butonese hospitality and aesthetics (Muh. A. Hasan et al., 2022).

From a tourism perspective, *Pakande-Kandea* has the potential to serve as a cultural gateway for visitors to engage with authentic Butonese life. Its open, performative nature, combined with food-centered rituals, offers experiential value highly sought in community-based tourism (CBT). When designed respectfully, such events can strengthen community pride, provide economic opportunities, and deepen tourist understanding of local traditions beyond superficial consumption (Pramezwary et al., 2024; Wulandah et al., 2024).

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Figure 1. Documentation of Festival Kande-kandea 2024
Source: Visitbuteng, 2024

At the same time, the tradition is at a crossroads. While it is increasingly used for ceremonial receptions and tourism festivals, its spiritual and ritual elements risk being diluted (Kendarinesia, 2019; Saharudin et al., 2022; Widiarini, 2017). Balancing heritage preservation with tourism adaptation requires nuanced planning that foregrounds community agency, especially from women who are central to the tradition's culinary and performative roles. Thus, any tourism development initiative must consider the socio-cultural integrity of *Pakande-Kandea* as both a ritual and a lived tradition.

This research was conducted in Tolandona and surrounding villages in Buton Tengah Regency, where Pakande-Kandea continues to be practiced as both a sacred ritual and a public celebration. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with cultural figures and tourism officials, as well as literature analysis and documentation of related events. Rather than observing a live ceremony, this study centered on the community's interpretations, values, and aspirations regarding the tradition's role in cultural preservation and tourism development.

The objective of this study is to investigate Pakande-Kandea as an example of intangible cultural heritage in the form of gastronomic ritual, and to assess its potential contribution to community-based tourism (CBT) development in Buton Tengah. By analyzing the symbolic meanings, culinary practices, and sociocultural functions of the tradition, this paper aims to provide insights into how local heritage can be sustained and meaningfully integrated into tourism, in ways that reinforce community identity, participation, and intergenerational sustainability.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Intangible Cultural Heritage and Living Traditions

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) refers to oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, and knowledge that communities recognize as essential components of their cultural identity (Budde-Sung, 2013; George, 2010; Kim et al., 2019). Unlike monuments or artifacts, ICH is living and dynamic—passed down through generations via performance, experience, and community participation (Jiang et al., 2024). UNESCO defines ICH as a vital source of diversity and creativity, which strengthens social cohesion and a sense of belonging in the face of modern pressures (Qiu et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2003a).

In the Indonesian context, ICH is formally recognized as *Warisan Budaya Tak Benda*

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(WBTB) under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Jones, 2018). It includes domains such as oral traditions, community rituals, festive events, and local knowledge systems (Paluseri et al., 2013). Among these, the category *Adat Istiadat Masyarakat, Ritus, dan Perayaan-Perayaan* encompasses ceremonial practices deeply embedded in social and spiritual life, often linked to harvests, religious observance, or transitions in life stages (Paluseri et al., 2013).

Living traditions within the WBTB framework involve more than symbolic repetition; they are expressions of shared values enacted in real settings, often blending ritual with daily life (Lenzerini, 2011; Ortiz & de Madariaga, 2022). These traditions reflect community resilience and adaptation, often involving elements like food, song, dance, and dress that create a holistic experience (Aktürk & Lerski, 2021; Wang, 2023). Preserving such traditions requires not only documentation but active community involvement to ensure their continued relevance and authenticity (Banda et al., 2024).

2.2. Rituals, Ceremonies, and Social Cohesion

Rituals and communal ceremonies play a central role in reinforcing group identity and shared values (Hobson et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2003b). Whether tied to religion, seasons, life cycles, or local history, these events are critical moments when community members come together to reaffirm solidarity, pass on norms, and perform symbolic roles (Sutopo, 2025). Ritual feasts, initiation rites, and ceremonial gatherings serve as "cultural glue" that binds individuals to collective memory and belonging (Kubal, 2008).

In Indonesia and Southeast Asia, many cultural ceremonies blend sacred and social functions (Sutopo, 2025). They may involve offerings to ancestors, storytelling, music, and shared meals, reinforcing moral principles and cosmological beliefs (Afifah & Fitra, 2026; Kabelen et al., 2025). Participation in these rituals is often multi-generational, with elders guiding the younger generation, creating continuity amid change. Such practices, though ancient, remain adaptive and responsive to contemporary community life (Viscogliosi et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, these ceremonial forms are also increasingly recognized as part of heritage-based development, including cultural tourism (Hardiman et al., 2025; Indarwati et al., 2025). Their performative and communal aspects make them ideal platforms for engaging visitors without losing authenticity (Mariana et al., 2026; Rosdahliani, 2025). When developed sensitively, rituals and celebrations can become living exhibitions of community values—serving both internal cultural goals and external outreach through tourism (Petrillo, 2025; Poort et al., 2021).

2.3. Community-Based Tourism (CBT): Culture and Empowerment

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a participatory model that prioritizes local control over tourism planning, management, and benefit distribution (Ngo et al., 2024). Grounded in principles of sustainability and empowerment, CBT promotes small-scale, culturally respectful tourism that aligns with local aspirations (Azwar et al., 2023; Nurhadi et al., 2022). Cultural traditions, local knowledge, and communal spaces are treated not as commodities, but as integral components of lived identity (de Carvalho et al., 2024).

CBT has been widely adopted in Indonesia through the *Desa Wisata* (Tourism Village) program (Yulius, 2023), which encourages rural communities to showcase their cultural assets—ranging from handicrafts and culinary practices to ceremonial dances and sacred sites (Sosa et al., 2021; Sutomo et al., 2024). These efforts emphasize local ownership, traditional knowledge, and intergenerational collaboration, helping to ensure that tourism initiatives do

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not erode, but instead enhance, cultural meaning (Manaf et al., 2018).

The model, however, is not without challenges. Power imbalances, commercialization risks, and inconsistent government support can hinder authentic development (Prakoso et al., 2020). Nonetheless, examples from Yogyakarta, Bali, and parts of Sulawesi show that with proper facilitation, CBT fosters pride in heritage, strengthens community bonds, and provides alternative livelihoods (Hermawan et al., 2024; Utami et al., 2019). These lessons are particularly relevant for culturally rich regions like Buton islands, where intangible traditions remain strong yet underexposed (Hadawiah & Zelfia, 2020).

2.4. Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development in Buton

The Buton Islands, part of Southeast Sulawesi province, form a historical and cultural region with deep roots in the former Buton Sultanate (Sulistiono & Windarti, 2026). The Sultanate, which governed a large maritime domain, left behind an enduring legacy of hierarchical social structures, Islamic-influenced rituals, and localized customary laws (Suseno, 2022). This heritage is preserved not only in physical landmarks like the Baubau fortress but also in the living traditions of the Butonese people, including festivals, oral history, and symbolic ceremonies (Munafi et al., 2015; Suseno, 2022).

The Butonese are known for their cultural diversity, with ethnic groups such as Wolio, Cia-Cia, and Muna maintaining distinct languages, beliefs, and customs (Munafi et al., 2015). Rituals, including communal meals, musical performances, and honorific ceremonies, continue to shape community identity and social norms (Bazergan et al., 2016; Munafi et al., 2015; Rahmawati, 2018). Many of these traditions are practiced in both sacred and secular contexts, linking the past with the present and embedding historical meaning in everyday life (Hadawiah & Zelfia, 2020).

Tourism development in the Buton cultural region, including Buton Tengah regency, has slowly begun to draw upon this heritage, particularly through cultural festivals and CBT programs (Bazergan et al., 2016; Ferdayandi et al., 2021; H. Hasan, 2025). However, rural districts in this region still face limited infrastructure and underrepresentation in tourism narratives (H. Hasan, 2025). Unlocking the potential of Butonese traditions for tourism requires not just promotion, but a community-driven approach that honors local meanings, fosters pride, and integrates cultural revitalization with inclusive economic opportunities (Afenyo-Agbe & Mensah, 2022; Hermawan et al., 2024; Turčinović et al., 2025).

3. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the cultural significance of a traditional Butonese food-sharing ritual and examine its potential integration into community-based tourism development (Chowdhury & Shil, 2021; Risfandini & Mustika, 2023). A qualitative design was selected to allow for in-depth understanding of the meanings, values, and socio-cultural dynamics embedded in the tradition. The case study focused geographically on Buton Tengah and Baubau, which are key areas within the historical territory of the Buton Sultanate where the tradition remains active.

Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a literature review of existing academic and institutional sources (Cuka et al., 2015; Knott et al., 2022; Unachukwu et al., 2018). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six key informants: two cultural experts (*budayawan*) from Sangia Wambulu District, one tourism planner from the Department of Tourism of Buton Tengah Regency, one head of tourism marketing from the Department of Culture and Tourism of Baubau City, and two cultural practitioners from Limbo Wolio Tourism Village in Baubau municipality. Interview protocols

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were developed to guide discussions on cultural interpretation, ritual structure, tourism potential, and community values, while allowing space for emergent themes (Dana et al., 2013).

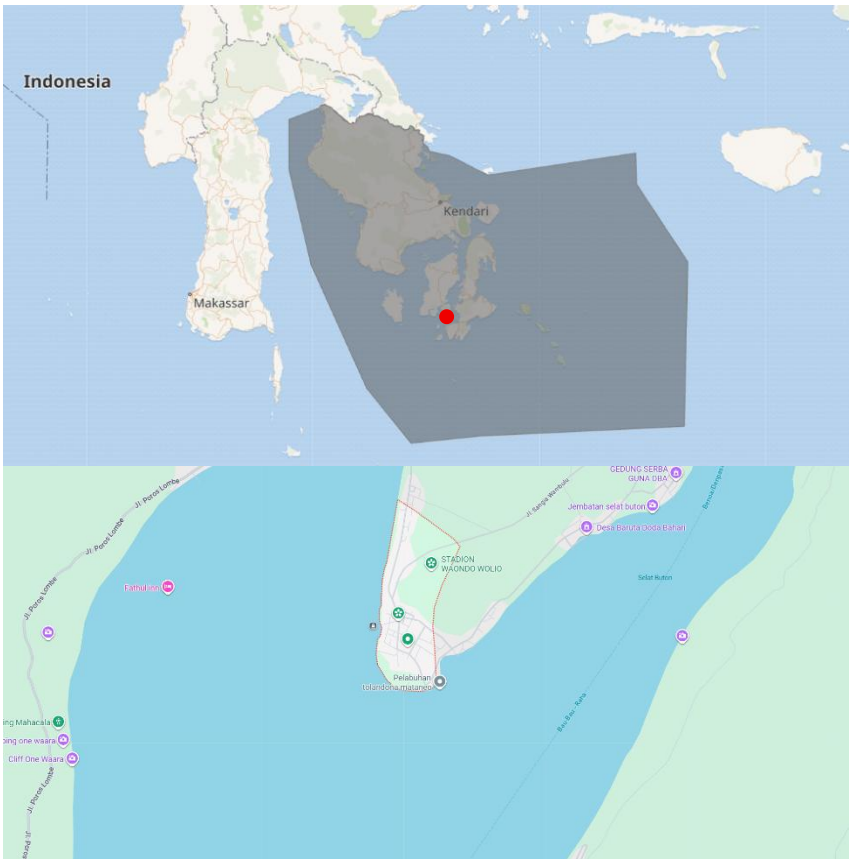

Figure 2. Approximate Location of Tolandona Village in Southeast Sulawesi
Source: Google Maps, 2026; Wikipedia, 2026

The observational component was conducted in the form of site visits and contextual observations at locations relevant to the tradition, including villages and cultural centers in Buton Tengah and Baubau. While the research did not coincide with the live performance of the tradition itself, visual documentation (such as photographs and video recordings from past events) and community-provided descriptions were used to understand the spatial layout, ceremonial elements, and participant roles. Field notes captured environmental context, cultural markers, and informal conversations with residents (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). In addition, secondary data were gathered from books, journal articles, official documents, and regional tourism policy reports to strengthen contextual understanding and support data triangulation.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following a reflexive approach to identify recurring patterns and interpret latent meanings within the narratives (Ahmed et al., 2025). Coding was conducted manually, grouping statements and field observations into themes such as ritual structure, gendered roles, hospitality practices, and tourism readiness. The research followed an iterative flow: beginning with literature exploration, proceeding to fieldwork and data collection, followed by coding and interpretation, and culminating in synthesis of findings.

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4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Ritual Dynamics and Evolving Functions of Pakande-Kandea

Pakande-Kandea is a multidimensional communal eating tradition deeply woven into the cultural fabric of the Butonese people. It serves as a living ritual and culinary expression that binds generations through shared values, including hospitality, spiritual gratitude, and communal respect. The ceremony typically begins with *Pande Wore* (male *pantun* singers) who initiate the event with poetic verses, followed by *Pande Sipo* (young women in traditional attire) who guard the food trays and feed honored guests in a highly symbolic gesture in the part called Kande Tompa (Inzana et al., 2025; Widiarini, 2017). These sequences are complemented by *Mangaru* dances and other musical performances, culminating in an immersive communal experience.

The ritual's implementation varies across different socio-religious and seasonal contexts. Based on field interviews and historical documentation, at least five major occasions for Pakande-Kandea are identifiable: the Islamic holy day of 10 Muharram, Eid al-Fitr homecomings, the public debut of marriage-age girls, the commemoration of historical heroism, and regional festivals. Each occasion serves a distinct cultural function within the community and offers specific opportunities for tourism development, as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Occasion & Context of Pakande-kandea

Occasion	Community Purpose	Potential for Tourism
10 Muharram	Religious compassion for orphans	Ritual performance, moral storytelling
Idul Fitri	Welcoming migrants returning home	Culinary tourism, diaspora engagement
Marriage-age debut	Social introduction, matchmaking	Cultural re-enactment with youth focus
Commemoration of heroism	Historical pride and identity reaffirmation	Heritage tourism and storytelling
Festival Kande-Kandea Tolandona	Public celebration and guest reception	Major tourism event, regional branding

As table 1 illustrates, the ritual extends beyond its original purpose, evolving into a flexible cultural platform capable of supporting multiple layers of meaning and use. The consistency of symbolic gestures across these events, especially the act of feeding as a blessing, suggests a ritual continuity that can be respectfully leveraged for curated tourism experiences. With different occasions highlighting various cultural dimensions, Pakande-Kandea offers scalable potential for year-round, context-sensitive tourism programming.

4.2. Community Ownership and Transmission of Heritage

One of the key factors sustaining Pakande-Kandea is the active participation of diverse community actors, from elders and religious leaders to young performers and culinary artisans. Each role carries embedded knowledge passed down through oral instruction and embodied practice. The young *Pande Sipo* girls, for instance, not only perform feeding rituals but also learn traditional food preparation, dress etiquette, and ritual decorum, the elements

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that build cultural capital while reinforcing communal identity.

Community narratives suggest that the ritual remains a living heritage, but there is concern that its practice is becoming limited to festival settings rather than remaining embedded in everyday life. Cultural figures in Tolandona emphasized that although the tradition is still vibrant, its full meaning risks dilution if reduced to staged performance. However, community elders and cultural activists agree that meaningful integration into tourism, especially if rooted in participatory models like CBT, could reinvigorate interest among youth and reaffirm its relevance for future generations.

Interviews also reveal that Pakande-Kandea has a strong pedagogical function. Local expressions such as *poma-masiaka* (mutual love), *popia-piara* (care for others), and *silaturahmi* (communal kinship) are invoked throughout the ritual. These are not abstract values, but culturally encoded behaviors demonstrated in the feast's structure. Embedding these moral teachings into tourism storytelling could enhance cultural understanding for visitors and provide a sense of pride and purpose for the hosting community.

Moreover, because women lead most aspects of Pakande-Kandea—from culinary preparation to ritual presentation—the tradition holds potential for gender-inclusive tourism strategies. It also offers space for youth participation, particularly in musical and performance roles. Such inclusive characteristics align with core CBT dimensions such as local ownership, cultural preservation, and equitable benefit-sharing.

4.3. Tourism Readiness and Strategic Positioning of Pakande-Kandea

While Pakande-Kandea has not yet been fully institutionalized within Indonesia's mainstream tourism offerings, it has received intermittent national recognition. Notably, the Kande-Kandea Festival of Tolandona in Buton Tengah was included in the 2023 *Karisma Event Nusantara* (KEN) calendar (Musyafir, 2023). Unfortunately, it was excluded from the 2024–2026 listings—an omission that raises concerns about sustainability and strategic continuity. Interviews with tourism officials suggest that this was due in part to lack of coordination and strict curation system by the ministry of tourism.

Nevertheless, the potential for tourism development remains high. Pakande-Kandea's gastronomic elements, ceremonial performances, and moral narratives offer strong appeal to cultural and experiential tourists. With appropriate curation, these elements could be organized into multi-day cultural experiences that center community engagement and education, rather than passive consumption. The annual Eid homecoming and the Muharram orphan-feeding ceremony could serve as anchor points for such programming, aligning sacred traditions with respectful cultural tourism.

Infrastructure development and capacity-building are critical enablers. At present, Tolandona and other potential host villages lack consistent access to tourism training, promotional channels, and interpretive materials. CBT frameworks suggest that these gaps can be addressed through collaborative planning between local governments, academicians, and tourism operators. Crucially, local voices must remain central to the design, execution, and storytelling processes.

Pakande-Kandea offers a compelling case for how traditional practices can be revitalized not only as heritage preservation efforts but also as dynamic vehicles for inclusive development. Its unique structure, participatory ethos, and rich moral messaging position it as a cultural asset worthy of strategic investment. The key lies in avoiding commodification

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while ensuring that tourism strengthens—rather than supplants—the tradition's community functions and meanings.

4.4. Comparison and Potential of Pakande-Kandea in Tourism

Communal eating traditions have increasingly become central to discussions in cultural tourism and Community-Based Tourism (CBT), due to their capacity to create immersive, participatory, and rich cultural experiences for visitors. Globally, traditions such as Thailand's *Khantoke Dinner*, the Philippines' *Boodle Fight*, and Chile's *Curanto* exemplify how food-based communal gatherings can function not only as culinary attractions but also as ritualized expressions of identity and hospitality. These practices are often deeply rooted in local worldviews, social structures, and environmental contexts.

In Indonesia, a wide range of communal dining customs — such as *Bedulang* in Belitung, *Bajamba* in Minangkabau, or *Ngeliwet* from West Java — show how food rituals are embedded in both ceremonial and everyday life (Hajiman et al., 2021; Pakasi et al., 2023; Pramezwary et al., 2024). These events often signify communal gratitude, intergenerational transmission of values, or reaffirmation of social status. In the case of *Makan Bajamba*, for instance, the communal meal in West Sumatra serves both a spiritual and performative role, tightly bound to Minangkabau's matrilineal heritage and *adat* ceremonies. It has been adapted for tourism in several cultural festivals and culinary trails, though with varying levels of community ownership and cultural integrity.

Pakande-Kandea, a communal eating tradition from Buton Island in Southeast Sulawesi, presents a distinctive model among these global and national examples. Historically practiced by Wolio, Cia-Cia, and Muna-Pancana communities, it has multifaceted significance: formerly as a celebratory return ritual for Butonese warriors, later evolving into a rite of passage for girls reaching adulthood, and now practiced as part of local Islamic celebrations (e.g., 10 Muharram and Eid al-Fitr). Across these variations, the central motif remains the symbolic act of feeding — performed by women — directed at male community members, reinforcing gendered social harmony and local customs.

The following table presents a comparison of prominent communal eating traditions and their applications in tourism, including Pakande-Kandea:

Table 2. Comparison of Other Communal Dining Traditions with Pakande-kandea

Communal Dining Tradition	Country/Region	Key Characteristics	Integration in Tourism	Strong CBT Dimensions
Khantoke Dinner	Northern Thailand	Seated floor dining with local dances and music	Cultural packages in tourism villages	Community participation & local performances
Boodle Fight	Philippines	Eating together from banana leaves without utensils	Adventure and military heritage tourism	Togetherness & co-creation
Injera Communal Meal	Ethiopia	Sharing a large injera, eating with hands	Culinary & cultural tourism experiences	Cultural transmission & guest interaction
Curanto	Chile (Chiloé)	Underground cooking with strong community cooperation	Local festivals & heritage tour packages	Full community participation

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Communal Dining Tradition	Country/Region	Key Characteristics	Integration in Tourism	Strong CBT Dimensions
Pamba Mesa	Ecuador (Andes)	Eating together on the ground with spiritual and solidarity rituals	Eco-cultural tourism	Cross-social and gender inclusivity
Bajamba	Indonesia (Minangkabau)	Communal rice meal in ceremonial context, performed by noble women	Culinary festivals & cultural tours	Ritual pride & matrilineal values
Pakande-Kandea	Indonesia (Buton)	Communal food sharing in socio-religious rituals across generations	Emerging heritage tourism, festival inclusion	ICH revitalization & identity reinforcement

Source: Bender & De Leon, 2018; Daughters, 2018; Kalaya, 2020; Neela & Fanta, 2020; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2021; Zurita-Gallegos et al., 2024

Compared to other traditions, Pakande-Kandea's distinguishing strengths lie in its multi-ethnic practice across Wolio, Muna, and Cia-Cia groups, its spiritual and gendered dimensions, and its adaptability for contemporary tourism narratives. Unlike *Curanto* or *Hāngī*, which emphasize environmental co-cooking, Pakande-Kandea focuses more on ritualized performance, symbolic feeding, and gendered cultural roles, embedded within Butonese Islamic syncretism and royal legacy. Its visibility through the *Karisma Event Nusantara* 2023 in Tolandona affirmed its symbolic relevance, though its exclusion from the 2024–2026 lineup signals the urgent need for reinvestment in promotion, documentation, and community capacity building.

Pakande-Kandea also offers rich potential for CBT development in Buton Tengah, especially in connecting heritage identity with participatory tourism. The communal nature of the event aligns well with CBT principles such as cultural preservation, community ownership, and inclusive benefit sharing. Unlike some Indonesian traditions that are already commodified with external handlers, Pakande-Kandea retains strong grassroots control, providing a platform for storytelling, culinary revival, and inter-village collaboration. With the right support and direction, including community training, packaging innovation, and cultural sustainability planning, Pakande-kandea can become a flagship model of intangible heritage-based tourism for the Buton Islands and Southeast Sulawesi.

5. CONCLUSION

This research explored the Pakande-Kandea tradition as a form of intangible cultural heritage and its potential to support community-based tourism (CBT) development in Buton Tengah. Through qualitative case study methods involving interviews and literature analysis, the study found that Pakande-Kandea functions not only as a ritual of hospitality and ancestral remembrance but also as a vibrant expression of Butonese identity. Its performance on various occasions—from religious observances to cultural festivals—demonstrates its flexibility and enduring relevance within the community.

The tradition's embedded values of mutual care, respect, and collective participation align closely with core principles of CBT. Pakande-Kandea promotes social cohesion, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and gender-inclusive engagement through its ceremonial roles and communal feast structure. These features position it as a culturally grounded yet adaptable asset for tourism programming that prioritizes authenticity and community benefit.

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Despite these strengths, current institutional support for Pakande-Kandea in tourism remains fragmented, as reflected in the absence of its festival from recent national event calendars. To fully realize its tourism potential, strategic investment is needed in interpretation, infrastructure, and long-term planning. If approached thoughtfully, Pakande-Kandea can evolve from a locally celebrated tradition into a cornerstone of Buton Tengah's cultural tourism identity—one that fosters pride among residents while offering meaningful experiences for visitors.

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