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ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF CULINARY TOURISM LEISURE ACTIVITIES ON DECISION MAKING IN CHOOSING STUDENT HOUSING AT UPI IN BANDUNG CITY

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Abstract

Choosing a student boarding house is an important decision influenced by various internal and external factors. One aspect that is often overlooked is the presence of culinary leisure activities as part of the urban tourism environment. This study aims to explore how these factors affect the boarding house selection process of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) students in Bandung City. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through semi-structured interviews involving five students living in boarding houses. The results indicate that comfort, affordability, proximity to campus, and health considerations are the main factors influencing students' choices. Meanwhile, culinary leisure activities do not play a significant role in the initial decision-making process, but they contribute to students' satisfaction after settling in, especially among those with an urban-exploratory lifestyle. These findings offer insights for boarding house managers, educational planners, and future research on the relationship between student housing and urban tourism dynamics.

Keywords: *Culinary Tourism, Student boarding houses, Decision-making process, Urban Tourism.*

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INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan cities are generally understood as urban leisure spaces that provide a variety of entertainment and recreational options for their communities. Ashworth and Page (2011) explain that cities not only function as places to live and work, but also as spaces for tourism and leisure consumption that are integrated into the daily activities of urban communities. Activities such as visiting cafes, enjoying culinary tours, and utilizing public spaces are part of the routine of city

residents. In this context, Bandung, as one of Indonesia's major cities, demonstrates these characteristics through its easy access to cafes, culinary districts, and city parks that are accessible to both students and tourists.

In this context, Bandung also plays a role as an educational city that attracts students from various regions. The Indonesian University of Education (UPI) Bumi Siliwangi is one of the largest state universities in Bandung, accommodating tens of thousands of students from various regions (UPI, 2023). This condition makes leisure activities inseparable from the lives of migrant students, including in the process of choosing boarding houses. In addition to price and proximity to campus, students also consider access to culinary, public spaces, entertainment, and creative activities in the surrounding area. The Bandung City Government (2022) notes the Setiabudi, Dago, and Cihampelas areas as centers of shopping and consumption for young people. This approach is thought to influence the decisions of UPI students (Ompusunggu, 2015). Nurfadila's (2021) findings show that pull factors such as malls, culinary options, and entertainment play a role in choosing housing in tourist cities, while Pratiwi & Firmansyah (2020) emphasize the preference for housing near cafes to support socialization and lifestyle. Previous studies on UPI student boarding houses have focused more on aspects of price, security, and distance from campus (Dzikri, 2017; Sartika, 2018), without linking them to the context of urban leisure.

Students studying in big cities are part of an urban community with distinctive patterns of activity. Student life in urban areas is not only centered on academic activities, but is also colored by social and leisure activities as part of everyday life. STIEPARI (2021) states that urban students often make eating out, relaxing, and exploring cafes and culinary areas part of their social identity and lifestyle. In line with this, Ompusunggu's (2015) research on students at the Indonesia University of Education shows that student activities mostly take place around the campus and residential areas, which also serve as spaces for social interaction. This condition shows that UPI students play an active role as urban actors who utilize city facilities, including the culinary sector, as part of their daily leisure time.

Leisure time is defined as free time that a person uses to engage in activities outside of their main obligations, such as studying or working, with the aim of obtaining satisfaction and relaxation. In an urban context, culinary tourism has developed as a popular form of leisure time activity, especially among students. Abduh (2024) explains that urban culinary tourism is not only oriented towards food consumption but also involves interaction with local spaces, societies, and cultures. Bandung has strong culinary tourism potential with a wide variety of food and cafes that are easily accessible to students (Fernanda & Hidayanti, 2023). The findings of Kristanti et al. (2018) also show that culinary experiences influence individual attitudes and behaviors, confirming that culinary activities play an important role in shaping the preferences and consumption habits of urban communities.

Decision making in choosing boarding houses is a process that involves rational considerations as well as personal preferences of students. Aspects such as location, accessibility, environmental conditions, and proximity to supporting facilities are important considerations in determining the choice of accommodation. Acheampong and Agyemang (2024) state that students tend to choose accommodations that are easily accessible to urban facilities, including culinary centres and social spaces. Pratiwi's (2019) research conducted on UPI Bandung students also shows that the availability of facilities around boarding houses, such as eating places and commercial areas, affect the demand for student houses. This confirms that students' choice of boarding houses is not only based on academic aspects but also on the convenience of carrying out daily activities outside of lectures.

Previous studies such as Ompusunggu (2015) highlight price, parental income, and lifestyle, while Pratiwi (2019) emphasizes facilities, accessibility, and safety. This study integrates decision-making theory with urban leisure tourism for a comprehensive analysis of boarding house choices around UPI, viewing boarding houses as consumption of urban space and student lifestyle patterns, as well as their impact on leisure patterns. This study aims to identify culinary-based leisure factors in urban tourism that influence the boarding house choices of UPI Bandung students, as well as analyze their behavior as consumers of urban space through push-pull theory. Specifically, it examines the extent to which the appeal of culinary tourism shapes preferences for residential locations near the campus.

METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of exploring in depth the influence of culinary *leisure* activities on UPI students' decisions in choosing boarding houses in Bandung. This approach emphasizes understanding subjective experiences and the daily life context of participants. In this study, the researcher acts as the main instrument that analyses data to find patterns and themes that emerge from the field (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The participants in this study were UPI students living in boarding houses around the UPI Bandung campus, to determine the factors influencing their choice of boarding house based on their individual culinary preferences. The study was conducted in November-December 2025, involving preparation of tools, semi-structured interviews, observations, and additional data from articles and journals on urban leisure (Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative data collected consisted of stories about experiences, views, and habits related to culinary preferences and boarding house selection. The research tools used included interview guides and observation notes. Data analysis followed the model (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in three steps: summarizing the data by selecting important information, presenting it in stories or tables, and drawing conclusions.

Tabel 1. Research Participants

No	Initial	Age	Study Program	Access to Food Areas (Easy/Moderate/Difficult)	Frequency of Dining /Hanging Out per Week
1	KL	20 years	Psychology	Moderate	2x/week
2	HA	19 years	Tourism Marketing Management	Easy	1x/ week
3	AL	19 years	Education in Sociology	Easy	1x/ week
4	AF	20 years	Islamic Religious Education	Moderate	3x/ week
5	RN	21 years	Communication Studies	Easy	1x/ week
6	RE	20 years	Tourism Education	Easy	4x/ week
7	FT	18 years	Resort and Leisure Management	Moderate	1x/ week
8	HM	18 years	Sport Science	Easy	4x/ week
9	VY	20 years	Geography Education	Easy	1x/ week
10	JL	19 years	History Education	Easy	4x/ week

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The city of Bandung exhibits the characteristics of a dynamic urban community with a high intensity of activity and a diverse social background among its residents. Urban life in Bandung is not only centered on work and study, but is also marked by the use of urban space as part of daily routines. The urban community in Bandung shows increasingly flexible activity patterns that are oriented towards lifestyle. Butler (2019) explains that urban tourism activities are no longer indirect but are

integrated into the daily lives of city dwellers. In the context of Bandung, activities such as hanging out at cafes, trying various culinary options, and utilizing public spaces have become routine habits. Richards (2022) adds that leisure activities also play a role in shaping the social identity of urban communities. Thus, the activity patterns and habits of the people of Bandung reflect an urban lifestyle that integrates recreational activities into everyday life.

Students at the Indonesia University of Education (UPI) who live in the city of Bandung as part of the urban community are seen as a group that actively utilizes urban spaces, both for academic purposes and for leisure activities, especially culinary tourism. The presence of migrant students in Bandung has helped shape new patterns of activity and habits in line with the dynamics of urban life.

This study involved ten UPI students who were selected based on specific criteria. The participants were active students who lived in boarding houses around the UPI Bandung campus, came from outside the city of Bandung, and had experience in culinary activities while living in this city. These criteria were set so that the study could describe in greater depth the patterns of student leisure activities and their relationship to preferences in choosing boarding houses in urban environments.

Based on the interview results, we obtained an overview of students' daily activities, how they spend their free time, and the considerations behind their choice of boarding house location. The findings show that UPI students have diverse routines, influenced by their class schedules, academic needs, and personal preferences in living in the city of Bandung.

To facilitate analysis, the results of this study were grouped into following main themes.

Visiting Cafes

Visiting cafes is one of the most prominent forms of leisure in the lives of UPI students living in Bandung. Based on the results of interviews, cafes are not only places to enjoy food and drinks, but also spaces to rest, do assignment, and socialize with friends. According to one informant, RE, the presence of cafes around his boarding house makes it easier for him to fill his free time after lectures. "When I'm tired after class, I usually hang out at a cafe near my boarding house to do my assignments. The atmosphere is more pleasant than at the boarding house" (RE, 2025). In addition, hanging out at cafes is also considered part of the urban student lifestyle. HM said, "I visit cafes 4 times a week because I feel more motivated to do my assignments at cafes and often do assignments with friends at cafes." Several informants also revealed that these activities are carried out regularly, although with varying intensity, depending on their financial conditions and free time. This indicates that cafes function as leisure spaces integrated into students' daily lives, not merely as occasional recreational activities. In line with Richards' (2022) findings, leisure activities such as hanging out contribute to the formation of students' social identities as part of urban society.

Increasing Boarding Costs

The interview results also show that the increase in boarding house costs is one of the consequences of choosing accommodation that is strategically located and close to urban activity centers. Several informants realized that boarding houses close to campuses, culinary areas, and cafes generally have higher prices. However, this condition is still considered to be in line with the ease of access obtained. JL stated, "The rent here is quite expensive, but it's close to everywhere, so it saves time and energy." The increase in rent is not entirely perceived as a burden, but rather as part of students' adaptation strategy to urban life. Students tend to weigh the costs of housing against the convenience of daily activities. This finding indicates that the decision to choose a boarding house is not based solely on economic factors, but also on mobility efficiency and quality of life in an urban environment.

Access to the Food Court

Access to culinary areas is an important factor that influences students' preferences in choosing boarding house locations. Based on the interview results, most informants stated that the availability of eating places around the boarding house was very helpful in meeting their daily needs, especially

for students who rarely cook. One informant said, "I rarely cook, so it's really important to have a boarding house that is close to eating places." (HA, 2025). AL also said, "I chose that boarding house because it is close to the faculty and close to places to buy food or goods. "So, it can be concluded that access is one of the important factors in choosing a boarding house. The level of access to culinary areas also affects the intensity of students' culinary activities. Students who live in areas with easy culinary access tend to eat out more often, both for practical needs and as a form of leisure. Conversely, students with limited culinary access show a lower frequency of culinary activities. This shows that the environment surrounding the residence plays a role in shaping students' leisure activity patterns, especially in the context of urban culinary tourism.

From the results we obtained during the interviews, we gathered information about daily activity patterns, culinary habits, and preferences in choosing boarding house locations while living in Bandung. We can conclude that the students we interviewed had different daily routines.

Students with low activity levels, such as HA, RN, FT, VY, and AL, rarely engage in culinary activities outside and prioritize saving money and basic routines. Conversely, RE, JL, HM, and AF actively explore cafes and culinary areas as a form of leisure, relaxation, and social life. KL shows a fairly balanced condition, with light culinary activities around the boarding house and campus environment

Discussion

The result show that students' culinary leisure activities are closely related to their lifestyle preferences and how they utilize urban spaces in their daily lives. However, in the process of deciding on a boarding house, all informants consistently prioritized internal factors as the main considerations. These factors included the comfort of the boarding house, the cleanliness of the environment, the affordability of the rent, and the proximity of the boarding house to the campus. These findings indicate that students tend to make rational decisions by prioritizing basic needs before considering other supporting aspects.

When viewed from their lifestyle, students demonstrate different decision-making styles. Students with a functional orientation prioritize efficiency, ease of mobility, and fulfilment of daily needs. Meanwhile, students with a more active and changeable lifestyle still prioritize comfort and accessibility, but also pay attention to the quality of the environment surrounding their residence. In this context, the appeal of culinary delights is interpreted differently by each informant, depending on their individual needs and preferences.

Several informants, such as RE, JL, FT, VY, and AF, stated that the diversity of culinary options around their boarding houses was an important consideration in their decision-making process. For them, a residential environment surrounded by various dining options is seen as supporting an urban lifestyle and social activities. Informants AL and RN also considered the location of boarding houses close to culinary areas to be important, even though their frequency of culinary activities was not particularly high. This shows that the availability of culinary facilities is not always directly related to the frequency of consumption, but rather to the ease and comfort of daily life.

On the other hand, informants HA, KL, and VY did not consider the availability of culinary options as a major factor in choosing boarding houses. They placed more emphasis on the functional aspects of the accommodation and considered culinary facilities as an additional feature that did not significantly influence their initial decision. This difference confirms that the decision-making process of students is individual and influenced by a combination of practical needs and lifestyle preferences.

Furthermore, the results of the study show that the role of culinary leisure activities becomes more apparent in the post-decision stage, namely after students settle down and live their daily lives in boarding houses. At this stage, students begin to evaluate the decisions they have made, including assessing the level of comfort of their stay, satisfaction with the surrounding environment, and the ease of meeting their daily needs. The existence of culinary areas around boarding houses contributes to a more positive living experience and can strengthen students' confidence in their choice of accommodation.

Thus, culinary leisure activities are factors that indirectly and progressively influence the decision-making process. Although not always the main determinant in the initial stage of choosing boarding houses, the availability of culinary facilities plays a role in enhancing the living experience and quality of life of students, as well as influencing their tendency to stay or choose the same boarding

house again. These findings indicate that students' decision-making process in determining boarding houses can change over time and according to their living experiences in urban environments.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of our research and discussion, it can be concluded that culinary leisure activities are not a direct determining factor in the decision-making process of UPI students when choosing boarding houses in Bandung. In the initial stage of decision making, students prioritize basic functional factors, such as the comfort of the accommodation, affordable prices, and proximity to the Bumi Siliwangi Campus. These factors are the most dominant in driving initial decisions in choosing a place to live.

However, the role of culinary leisure shows a stronger influence the longer students stay in a particular residence. Students with active urban lifestyles who explore cafes, especially in the Setiabudi-Dago area, tend to feel a higher level of satisfaction with their boarding house experience when supported by a dynamic culinary environment. This level of satisfaction not only impacts the comfort of daily activities but also strengthens students' attachment to their residential location and encourages them to stay for a longer period of time. From a practical perspective, the results of this study can be used as a basis for boarding house owners and managers in designing differentiated residential strategies, including by improving access to culinary areas, developing collaborations with culinary businesses around the residence, and providing communal spaces that support student leisure activities. Furthermore, these findings also contribute to urban planners and educational area developers in designing student housing environments that are functionally connected to culinary-based urban tourism activities.

For future research, it is recommended to involve a more diverse number and characteristics of informants, as well as to combine qualitative approaches with quantitative methods in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture. Future research could also examine other factors, such as lifestyle, income level, and length of stay of students, and further explore the role of culinary leisure activities in supporting urban sustainability and improving the quality of life of students.

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