

Synergy of fun walk and culinary tourism in UNPAD tourism fest 2024: sustainable tourism perspective

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Abstract: This study investigates the strategic role of fun walking as a recreational sport in enhancing tourism events and its direct contribution to culinary bazaar visitation. While traditionally perceived as recreational and a healthy lifestyle, fun walks were integrated into the Unpad Tourism Festival 2024 to support its culinary bazaar activities, offering a novel approach to event management. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining observations and literature studies with a survey of 47 fun walk participants, data were analyzed using descriptive statistic. Findings from this investigation reveal that fun walk participants significantly contributed to both the increase in visitor numbers and extended visit duration at the culinary bazaar. Furthermore, the innovative packaging of fun walk activities, particularly through the incorporation of tour guides, significantly enhanced the quality of the participant experience, leading to a measurable increase in overall event visitor satisfaction. This study confirms that an interactive experience, seamlessly blending sports, entertainment, and targeted tourism promotion, provides actionable insights for committee. The results underscore the critical importance of integrating recreational sports activities with the broader objective of promoting cultural, culinary, and urban tourism attractions, offering a powerful model for enhancing event success and visitor engagement in future tourism initiatives.

Keywords: Fun Walk, Recreational Sports, UNPAD Tourism Festival, Tour Guide, Sustainable Tourism

History Article: Submitted 7 April 2025 | Revised 23 May 2025 | Accepted 25 May 2025

How to Cite: Delamontano, E., Lumongga, A. Z., Annisa, S. D., Novianti, E., Endyana, C., & Winoto, Y. (2025). Synergy of fun walk and culinary tourism in Unpad Tourism Fest 2024: sustainable tourism perspective. *International Journal of Applied Sciences in Tourism and Events*, 9(1), 16-24.

Introduction

The development of the tourism sector over the past six decades has had a real impact on the development of the world economy with more affordable transportation costs, the growth of the middle class globally, the development of types of tourist attractions, the growth of new tourism destinations that are environmentally friendly and provide jobs. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) established World Tourism Day in 1980, precisely on September 27, 2024 (United Nation, 2024). The tourism sector encourages people to enjoy the world's cultural and natural riches while strengthening human relations, highlighting the value of shared humanity.

Tourism not only plays a role in economic development, but also becomes an important instrument to promote peace. As a sector that connects different countries and cultures, tourism is a means to promote peace dialogue, strengthen tolerance and mutual understanding between nations. World Tourism Day in 2024 has the theme "Tourism and Peace" because this year there are many conflicts between countries such as between Russia and Ukraine and the conflict in Palestine. By preserving cultural and natural heritage, tourism can reduce tensions and promote peaceful coexistence in different communities. Every tourist can become an ambassador of peace by exploring the world responsibly, respecting local cultures, and promoting the human values that unite us all.

There are two types of event, traditional and niche event. The characteristic of a traditional event is that the activity is recognizable and time-honoured (Mallen & Adams, 2023). Traditional event may have adjustment for participant persona, technology implementation, but do not alter the core identity of the event. The Master of Sustainable Tourism at Graduate School of Universitas Padjadjaran has an annual agenda called Unpad Tourism Fest (UTF) to commemorate World Tourism Day, which this year has several events, namely tourism talk shows with the theme "Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Branding", video and photo competitions, mangrove tree adoption actions, fun walks and culinary bazaars. This event is a commitment from the The Master of Sustainable Tourism in showing important actions and steps in promoting sustainable tourism and peace in Indonesia and the world. Tourism villages, as the embodiment of sustainable tourism, are the main focus of this series of activities. The festival is expected to encourage the sustainable development of tourism villages, raise public awareness about sustainable tourism, and contribute to global peace. The targets of UTF 2024 activities are tourism students in West Java, academics, tourism business stakeholders, practitioners and the public.

Events that are suitable for promoting tourism villages are cultural events that showcase local food, arts, and other niche segments such as nature, spirituality, and agriculture (Ernawati et al., 2022). UTF 2024 engages tourism villages to present local food, display MSME products, and perform traditional cultural arts. Local food, increasingly favored by both domestic and international tourists, has evolved from merely fulfilling basic needs to becoming a key element of destination identity, enhancing visitor experience and serving as a unique attraction in culinary-based cultural tourism (Rizkiyah & Faridi, 2022).

The walking activity, later named the Fun Walk, was conceptualized and implemented by the researchers to support and enhance the effectiveness of the UTF 2024 culinary bazaar event. UTF 2024 was held at Dipati Ukur campus of Universitas Padjadjaran (Bandung, West Java) on Sunday. This study aims to examine the role of fun walk as a strategic element in UTF 2024 event management and analyze the impact of fun walk activities on visits to culinary bazaars. The target of fun walk participants and visitors to the culinary bazaar are residents of Greater Bandung who are interested in outdoor activities and culinary specialties of West Java. This study highlights the novelty of integrating walking exercise with communication management of culinary bazaar events and sustainable tourism within a specific case study.

Engagement in outdoor physical activities contributes significantly to enhancing community resilience to environmental stressors, while simultaneously improving physical health outcomes and promoting mental well-being among adults. Physical activity contributes to physical and mental fitness, as well as increases people's life satisfaction, building social capital when the intensity of activities is carried out regularly (Jackson et al., 2021). The current outdoor sports trend is dominated by road running with the emergence of many running events throughout 2024. Other outdoor sports are cycling and walking. People carrying out healthy walking activities also come to locations where they are favorite locations for running such as the dago area, the city square (Alun-alun), around Riau street, Saparua field and Gasibu field.

Outdoor physical activities are a preferred choice for many individuals due to their accessibility and suitability for participation across age groups, including children and the elderly. Walking for health serves as a means for communities to foster family togetherness, adopt a healthy lifestyle, visit cultural heritage sites and urban parks at low cost, and enjoy the city atmosphere without driving. The city center, as the dynamic core of urban life and growth, holds historical, cultural, and economic value. Through urban heritage conservation, particularly the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, there is potential to not only improve spatial quality but also foster cultural appreciation and restore the city's character (Lokantara et al., 2021).

The concept of tourism events, including culinary bazaars, encourages research on the character of tourism related to special events and can increase public attention before, after and during the event (Skoultos, 2014). Event campaign design according to (Ovalia & Wirasari, 2020) is the planning of communication actions that are informative and persuasive in nature to create a certain effect on a large audience in a certain time span. Communication is used to share information, knowledge (Mefalopulos, 2008) and provide education (Melkote & Steeves, 2015) in order to achieve the goal. Communication can influence and change the behavior of the target (Wardasari et al., 2021).

The event campaign utilized the fun walk activity to attract visitors to the culinary bazaar, encouraging their commitment to attend from the start of the event and to support transactions conducted by fun walk participants at the bazaar. Tourism events need to adjust the trend of the target participants, in this case residents in the Greater Bandung region so that it becomes the basis for designing communication strategies, proper scheduling, and effective promotion. The development of local marketing campaigns relies heavily on the creativity of the committee with limited human resources or funds, such as printing posters at home and utilizing email and social media for promotions (Panyik et al., 2011).

Local food culture is rapidly developing and becoming a characteristic of a region, reflecting the local cultural identity related to the environment and people's customs, describing traditions and also encompassing social, economic, and cultural values (Barriyah et al., 2020). Local food culture is promoted with the concept of non-formal education to deepen culinary technical knowledge and cultural heritage knowledge (Prahastiwi et al., 2022). In tourism, culinary is an ideal alternative attraction to a tourism event. The UTF 2024 culinary bazaar features culinary from tourist villages that are rich in local wisdom and trendy culinary trends in the city of Bandung as the selling power of the event.

Guided interpretation is to provide information through face-to-face contact and direct communication between visitors and tour guides using dialogue and tour guides (Beattie & Schneider, 2018). A tour guide is a person who guides visitors to a site and interprets its cultural and natural heritage environment (Chang, 2012). The role of the tour guide is to interpret, mediate, and navigate the traveler through an unfamiliar space and keep the group together (Farkić et al., 2020). Tour guides possess professional knowledge, strong communication skills, managerial abilities, and deep social competence to create a positive experience for Fun Walk participants. They are friendly and build deep social relationships, which are essential in group activities and enhance participants' understanding of the surrounding cultural landscape. Tour guides with an informal yet professional attitude create a comfortable environment that supports participants' psychological well-being.

The tourism sector must adopt the principles of sustainable tourism and support the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Sustainable tourism is not just a special product, but a key condition that must be applied in all tourism sectors. According to (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2013), sustainable tourism includes the optimal use of natural resources, the preservation of cultural heritage, and respect for the socio-cultural of local communities, as well as ensuring equitable long-term economic benefits for all parties. Tourism has a unique ability to connect economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects, as well as be a driver of overall sustainability improvement. Since tourism is highly dependent on the environment, culture, and intact local communities, the sector has a great responsibility to address the social, cultural, and environmental impacts of its development. Sustainability aspects in the tourism sector can be further developed and improved through various education, training, and continuous improvement of practices in the hospitality sector, collaboration between all stakeholders, and ongoing government support (Tahiri et al., 2022).

Building upon existing research in event management and culinary tourism, a notable gap persists in the empirical literature regarding the direct, strategic contribution of recreational sports activities, specifically fun walks, as drivers for co-located ancillary event components like culinary bazaars. While individual studies explore event success and visitor engagement or the dynamics of culinary tourism (Dillette et al., 2020), the integrated and quantifiable impact of a leisure-oriented sport designed (Pan et al., 2019) to directly boost visitation and economic activity within a specific, synergistic event element remains critically underexplored. This research addresses this gap by precisely examining this nuanced synergistic relationship, particularly within the context of urban tourism festivals in developing regions like West Java. The novelty of this study is multifaceted: it innovatively leverages a recreational fun walk not as a standalone activity, but as a deliberately integrated, strategic element of event design aimed at directly increasing engagement and economic activity within an adjacent culinary bazaar.

The benefit of the research is the development of literature on the integration of sports activities and culinary-based tourism events, especially in the context of sustainable tourism. Another benefit is to expand insight to culinary business actors regarding the market potential of

sports event participants. Or use sports as a tool for culinary promotion and local economic empowerment. This also opens up opportunities for exploration of sustainable tourism implementation in promoting healthy living activities for the community with fun walks or other sports.

Methodology

The research method uses a mixed method research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore the role of the fun walk activity in influencing participant engagement with the culinary bazaar during Unpad Tourism Fest 2024. The qualitative component involved direct observations of the event setup and visitor behavior, and engagement at culinary booths. The quantitative component involved a structured questionnaire distributed to fun walk participants, collected via Google Forms on the same day of the event.

The sampling method used was purposive sampling, targeting participants who registered and completed the fun walk activity. A total of 47 valid responses were collected. Participant selection criteria included individuals aged 18 and above who completed the fun walk and were present during the culinary bazaar session. The questionnaire consisted of two main variable sets, experience of the fun walk (8 items), and perceived connection to the culinary bazaar (3 items), all measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree", that can be seen in Table 1.

Prior to data collection, the instrument was reviewed by two tourism event experts and one communication lecturer to ensure content validity. A pilot test with 5 respondents was conducted to refine question clarity. For reliability, Cronbach's alpha was calculated, yielding a coefficient of 0.872.

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to assess central tendency and frequency distributions of responses. The integration of mixed methods occurred at the interpretation stage, where observational insights were triangulated with survey results to provide a holistic understanding of how fun walk participation influenced engagement with the culinary event. Ethical considerations were addressed by ensuring respondent anonymity, obtaining verbal consent at the time of the event, and allowing participants to opt out at any time without consequence. No personal data beyond general demographics and opinions were collected.

Table 1. Fun walk trails and stopping points

No.	Variables	Indicators
1	Fun walk experience	The committee organized the event very well
2	Fun walk experience	The Fun Walk path chosen is very comfortable and interesting.
3	Fun walk experience	I felt safe and comfortable during the Fun Walk.
4	Fun walk experience	The timing of the Fun Walk was just right for me
5	Fun walk experience	I feel happy with the presence of the tour guide
6	Fun walk experience	The tour guide provided information that enriched my knowledge
7	Fun walk experience	The prizes offered on the spot were appealing and made me want to join
8	Fun walk experience	Fun Walk is a way for me to stay active and take care of my health
9	Relationship with culinary bazaar	This Fun Walk increased my interest in attending Magpar Ruang Rasa
10	Relationship with culinary bazaar	Fun Walk activities are suitable in combination with culinary bazaars
11	Relationship with culinary bazaar	Culinary options are suitable to eat after the Fun Walk

(Source: Research result, Bandung, 2024)

Results and Discussions

Results

This study reveals significant findings on how fun walk activities influence participant engagement with culinary tourism during the Unpad Tourism Fest 2024. The integration of sports tourism with cultural and culinary components demonstrates a practical model for sustainable tourism event design. The tourism industry requires multisectoral integration that involves

collaboration between organizations, stakeholders and the participation of local communities in the planning and development of sustainable tourism. The participation of local communities has local and cultural knowledge that can identify important issues and manage resources effectively and positively influence their attitudes towards tourism, which is key to the success of further tourism development (Panyik et al., 2011).

In supporting the effectiveness of the activity and helping to deliver the material, the fun walk is divided into 2 groups, each group will be led by a tour guide. Tour guides play a key role in this activity, as they manage the route and designated stops while sharing stories about the history or providing information to participants that can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Fun walk trails and stopping points

No	Stopping Points	Information
1	Dipati Ukur Campus	Warming up and stretching
2	St. Borromeus's Hospital	History of the hospital
3	Dago Street	History of Dago Street
4	ITB Campus	A brief history of ITB
5	Babakan Siliwangi City Forest	History and information
6	Cikapundung Terrace	Environmental education
7	Dipati Ukur Campus	Culinary bazaar

(Source: Research result, Bandung, 2024)

At 8 a.m. Fun walk opened with warming up activities and stretching, then continued with group division. Warm-up and stretching was carried out to prepare the physical condition of the participants. Physical condition in sport is all physical abilities that determine the achievements made by personal abilities (Jamaludin et al., 2023). Both groups followed the same route, so a 10-minute interval was given between their starting times to avoid crowding at the stopping points. 59% of participants who participated in this activity had never participated Fun Walk. The participants showed great interest in the tour guide's explanations at the historical locations. Some participants were also enthusiastic about asking questions and recording this activity. Fun walk covering a total distance of 6 kilometers with a travel time of almost 2 hours. All participants returned to the Dipati Ukur campus to take part in a series of culinary bazaar activities. It can be seen in Figure 1.



(Source: Personal documentation, 2024)

Figure 1. Fun walk activities & culinary bazaar

From the 47 valid fun walk participants, the distribution was nearly balanced between Universitas Padjadjaran affiliates (55%) and the general public (45%). Notably, 38% expressed a desire to bring family members, indicating potential for expanding audience reach in future editions. The majority learned about the event through word-of-mouth (59%), followed by social media (35%), and family referrals (6%), highlighting the strength of interpersonal communication and community-based promotion strategies.

Using an 11-item Likert-scale questionnaire, participants evaluated their experiences across two main variables: the fun walk activity and its relation to the culinary bazaar. The overall average score for the fun walk experience was 3.94, indicating a generally positive perception among participants. The highest-rated item was "*Fun Walk is a way for me to stay active and take care of my health*", which received a score of 4.18. This finding aligns with (Wang et al., 2020), who emphasize the increasing importance of health-driven tourism activities as part of modern lifestyle choices.

Participant feedback on the role of tour guides also revealed a high level of satisfaction, with both relevant indicators averaging 4.06. This underscores the vital contribution of tour guides in shaping the quality of visitor experiences. Their presence and informative storytelling were well appreciated, supporting (Brochado et al., 2021), who argue that effective interpretation deepens emotional and cognitive engagement with tourism environments.

Meanwhile, the connection between the fun walk and the culinary bazaar was rated at an average of 3.84, suggesting that the physical activity successfully stimulated interest in the bazaar component. This is corroborated by observational findings, which showed that approximately 75% of culinary bazaar visitors were fun walk participants. These individuals remained at the event until at least 11 a.m., significantly contributing to foot traffic and food booth transactions, and indicating that the fun walk functioned as an effective funnel into the broader festival experience. It can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Fun walk participant experience assessment

No.	Indicators	Value
1	The committee organized the event very well	3.82
2	The Fun Walk path chosen is very comfortable and interesting.	3.82
3	I felt safe and comfortable during the Fun Walk.	3.94
4	The timing of the Fun Walk was just right for me	3.94
5	I feel happy with the presence of the tour guide	4.06
6	The tour guide provided information that enriched my knowledge	4.06
7	The prizes offered on the spot were appealing and made me want to join	3.71
8	Fun Walk is a way for me to stay active and take care of my health	4.18
9	This Fun Walk increased my interest in attending Magpar Ruang Rasa	3.76
10	Fun Walk activities are suitable in combination with culinary bazaars	3.94
11	Culinary options are suitable to eat after the Fun Walk	3.82

(Source: Research result, Bandung, 2024)

Qualitative observations during the event provided compelling contextual support for the survey results, revealing a high level of participant engagement throughout the fun walk experience. Along the route, participants showed particular interest at culturally significant landmarks such as Babakan Siliwangi and Jalan Dago, where storytelling by tour guides was met with visible attentiveness. Several individuals actively asked questions and recorded the sessions, reflecting not only cognitive engagement but also a genuine curiosity to learn, supporting the high satisfaction ratings related to the presence and role of tour guides. Upon completion of the walk, participants naturally transitioned into the culinary bazaar area, where they immediately engaged in social interactions and food consumption. This seamless shift from physical activity to culinary participation illustrates a well-integrated event design, where thematic continuity between tourism, health, and culture reinforced the overall visitor experience and contributed to the high level of engagement observed in both components of the festival.

The combination of walking activity, cultural storytelling, and environmental education through the fun walk created a holistic, low-barrier tourism experience. This aligns with sustainable tourism practices that integrate health, culture, environment, and economy. The dual function of the tour guide as both educator and facilitator, was central to this integration, acting as a bridge between physical activity and deeper destination meaning-making (Alazaizh et al., 2019).

Statistically and behaviorally, the fun walk served as a catalyst for increasing the number and engagement level of culinary bazaar attendees. The survey results and qualitative feedback

both show that the activity design promoted physical well-being, cultural appreciation, and consumer participation, key indicators of quality and sustainable tourism experience.

Discussions

The findings of this study reinforce the evolving role of integrated tourism events—particularly those that combine recreation, culture, and culinary experiences—in advancing the principles of sustainable tourism. The Unpad Tourism Fest 2024, through its innovative fun walk initiative, effectively mobilized physical activity, cultural interpretation, and local economic participation into a unified visitor experience. This is strongly aligned with the framework of sustainable tourism outlined by the (World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2013), which advocates for tourism that is environmentally responsible, culturally enriching, and economically beneficial to local communities.

The high ratings for the fun walk as a health-promoting activity (average score: 4.18) reflect a growing trend in health-oriented tourism that tourists increasingly seek wellness experiences that do not require formal medical intervention but offer physical and emotional benefits (Wang et al., 2020). The strong correlation between this physical engagement and participants' subsequent enthusiasm in the culinary bazaar suggests that outdoor, low-barrier activities can serve as effective catalysts for deeper engagement in tourism events. These results support the potential of festivals and events to extend visitor stay and spending, while enhancing cultural and social interaction (Skoultzos, 2014).

The pivotal role of tour guides in shaping positive experiences further validates the findings that guided interpretation not only enhances knowledge transfer (Brochado et al., 2021) but also fosters emotional attachment to place (Alazaizeh et al., 2019), an essential component of sustainable visitor behavior. In this study, tour guides acted as facilitators of informal education, and their strong ratings (average 4.06) indicate success in making cultural and environmental narratives more accessible and meaningful to participants. Their contribution supports one of the core elements of sustainable tourism: raising awareness and appreciation of local heritage.

Importantly, the fun walk's influence extended beyond education and exercise. The study's observational data and participant feedback demonstrate how structured physical activities can drive economic benefits for local communities. With approximately 75% of bazaar visitors originating from the fun walk, the linkage between physical engagement and local consumption was clearly evident. This validates findings how sustainable tourism models can strengthen rural economies through targeted cultural and culinary promotion (Tahiri et al., 2022).

These outcomes offer practical insights for event organizers, especially in university or community-based settings. First, designing tourism events with integrative elements of physical, cultural, and consumptive can increase both reach and impact. Second, involving local communities and MSMEs in content delivery (e.g., culinary vendors, heritage guides) ensures the circulation of economic and social value within the region. Third, the use of accessible physical activities like fun walks can serve as a gateway to wider sustainable tourism participation without requiring large infrastructure investments.

This research successfully addresses the main question of how the integration of recreational sports and culinary tourism offers a viable and replicable model for sustainable tourism. By applying an interdisciplinary lens from communication science, event management, and sustainable tourism theory, it proposes a replicable model for other educational institutions. Future research may explore long-term effects on consumption behavior, urban tourism, promoting tourism village and the development of sustainability indicators for campus-based tourism events.

Conclusions

This study concludes that trending recreational sports, such as fun walks, can serve as a powerful attractor and mobilizer of public engagement in tourism events, particularly those centered around culinary and cultural experiences. The findings demonstrate that sports-based activities can synergize effectively with culinary components, creating a holistic and accessible tourism experience that appeals to diverse visitor motivations. This supports the notion that

sustainable tourism can be enhanced not only through environmental and cultural elements but also by promoting health, well-being, and active lifestyles as part of the tourism offer.

The use of sports activities as a communication and engagement strategy highlights the potential of event design to bridge different audience segments who those motivated by wellness and those drawn to gastronomy through integrated programming. This insight has practical implications for event organizers, tourism planners, and academic institutions seeking to design inclusive, community-oriented tourism initiatives. Moreover, it contributes to the theoretical development of sustainable tourism by emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches that blend physical activity, cultural heritage, and local economic participation.

Further research is needed to examine the economic impacts of such integrative models, particularly in terms of transaction value, repeat visitation, and vendor outcomes. Future studies could also explore the effectiveness of different marketing channels and test other combinations of event formats to optimize reach, satisfaction, and sustainability outcomes. This research offers a foundation for rethinking campus-based and urban tourism events not only as cultural celebrations, but also as platforms for promoting healthier, more inclusive, and more resilient tourism ecosystems.

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