

## Dieng Culture Festival as a Reinforcement of Local Cultures in Globalization Era

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**Abstracts:** Dieng Culture Festival (DCF) is an event that offers a variety of traditional arts initiated with performance of Kuda Lumping (leathered horse dance), Rampakyaso Dance, Wayang (shadow puppet), and finalized with dreadlock hair cutting traditional ceremony. Local wisdom in Dieng plateau is closely related to the local wisdom which is associated to God through a range of traditional ceremonies available (Suyatno, 2011).

The unique and varied cultures in Dieng certainly become pride and challenge that must be faced in order to maintain the cultures and inherit them for the next generation. Thus, the rapid changes and development of this era also result in changes on people's life into a more modern way. Therefore, people tend to choose new culture for it is considered more practical than the local one (Effendi, 2017).

DCF aims the construction of new concept which is the acculturation of culture and natural tourist destination. Its missions include the enhancement of economic level of local people, preservation of Dieng cultures, and information spread about local cultures and customs in Dieng into broader community. This should be able to distribute the attractiveness in Dieng to potential visitors both local and international. Moreover, DCF is well-scheduled and published through any media (printed, sites, or social media). The event involves modern arts and music (Jazz and lantern festival) that attract more visitors to come (Diengnesia, 2017).

Hence, this writing is descriptive analytics and discusses the purpose of Dieng Culture Festival as an encouragement towards local or traditional cultures through culture preservation as an effort to maintain Dieng's identity in this rapid development in technology and modern world. The outcome of this research includes the description on how DCF could be an essential magnet to attract more visitors so they can learn Dieng and its cultures deeply.

**Keywords:** *Dieng, Dieng Culture Festivals, local cultures, tourists*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural value shifting has become a noteworthy issue to discuss today since it is an important process people cannot easily create or even force. Gradually, the cultural value shifting is surely able to alter national mindset. Nevertheless, a superior nation is the one that can preserve and protect its cultures in order to strengthen the national characteristics.

With the aim of maintaining or preserving available cultures, citizens of one

nation are obligated to involve in this effort. Cultural preservation can be accomplished through a variety of strategies to invite people's attraction. People who are curious about particular culture tend to want to learn more and have further interest. One of strategies can be mentioned is by establishing a well-managed tourism program. Therefore, in this technology era, making use of the product of technology can help to expose cultures and tourisms to the world. On the other hand, globalization

indeed contributes unexpected impact such as the erosion of local cultural values.

As one of potential tourism destinations in Central Java, Wonosobo is also unable to avoid the impact of globalization era. Today's period offers a highly global communication which unpredictably can eradicate the cultural boundary among nations. It becomes a major cause for the adoption of foreign culture by young generation whereas it is learned that many new western cultures are incompatible with Indonesian established cultures and norms. How western lifestyle has influenced today's generation can be recognized through fashions, hair styles, and daily behavior which cannot be stated as the reflection of Pancasila values (Nafisah, 2015).

Recently, incoming and accessible information available for people is affected by foreign culture. Television and other media have been sharing information which is considered more modern and advance without taking into account the existing norms and regulations.

In particular, the strength of local culture in Wonosobo, mainly in Dieng Plateau, is presented through its history and tradition. Thus, in order to extensively introduce its potential and preserve Dieng cultures, local government has created a cultural festival entitled *Dieng Culture Festival* (DCF). DCF is designed to stay harmonious with modern cultures. When this festival is held, several attractive events are included such as modern arts, green walks, tree planting, lantern party, and fireworks. These events aim to attract more visitors especially young ones. DCF is expected to be able to become one of local culture representations to arise the soul of Wonosobo culture. Thus, young generation will learn to love their original cultures as well as to build resistance toward negative impacts of globalization era. As a result, this background helps to formulate the problem

statement of this study as follows: what is expected goal from *Dieng Culture Festival*?

## 2. CONCEPT AND THEORY

Local culture is a tradition emerging from original culture of particular community in certain society which characterizes the community of this particular society (Mulyadi, 2012). Local cultural wisdom is local knowledge that merges with patterns of faith, norms, and cultures which afterward these transform into behavior or habits as well as beliefs that are understood and conducted in a long period of time (Wilda, 2015).

*Dieng Culture Festival* (DCF) is a festival that offers traditional arts such as performance of Kuda Lumping (leathered horse dance), Rampakyaso Dance, Wayang (shadow puppet), and finalized with dreadlock hair cutting traditional ceremony. Local wisdom in Dieng plateau is closely related to the local wisdom which is associated to God through a range of traditional ceremonies available (Suyatno, 2011).

The unique and varied cultures in Dieng certainly become pride and challenge that must be faced in order to maintain the cultures and inherit them for the next generation. Thus, the rapid changes and development of this era also result in changes on people's life into a more modern way. Therefore, people tend to choose new culture for it is considered more practical than the local one (Effendi, 2017).

Globalization is a process aims to transform the behavior of society, individual or particular object into precise characteristics or it becomes a signifier to everything without regional boundaries. Also, cultural globalization is a process to share ideas or thoughts, meanings, and values to more global world through determined strategy in order to expand and

strengthen social relationship. This process is marked by the consumption of shared culture assisted by information access like technology, social cultural media, and overseas travel (Suparman, 2013).

This study applies analytical descriptive theory which is a method to describe an object by making use of collected data or sample as it is without analyzing and making general conclusion (Sugiono, 2009). It is also explained that analytical descriptive research takes samples (focus) on matter as it is when the research is conducted, afterward the result of the research is processed and analyzed in order to generate conclusion.

Theory of Cultural Contact. This theory bases on Malinowski's theory (1983) which exposes definition that an active, higher culture may influence passive and lower culture through cultural contact. The reflection of this theory is able to be viewed through the alteration of local culture which tends to adopt foreign culture. The information globalization today plays important role in affecting general human's mindset. Foreign culture is considered similar to modernism, thus local culture is then assumed as obsolete customs. Local people do not merely adopt foreign knowledge or technology as part of culture, they even join in the lifestyles, and moreover foreign cultures which are irrelevant toward local norms and rules are completely adopted (Nagara, 2012).

### 3. METHOD

This research collected data in Dieng Plateau, a location where DCF is regularly held. In this study, qualitative data is used and this data is narrated or presented in sentences. The source of data is primary data generated from several interviews and interviewees were randomly selected. The

secondary data is library data, journals, published news that are relevant.

The method of collecting data applied *purposive sampling* and the samples were selected based on defined criteria to achieve the purpose of study. Samples of these criteria are local people who comprehended and actively participated in *Dieng Culture Festival*.

The technique of collecting data was conducted by holding in-depth interviews and literary study. The technique of analysis applies qualitative descriptive which is a procedure to produce descriptive data in the form of written words or verbal data from respondents in which their behavior were observed. This approach is directed to the background and individuals in a whole manner (Lubis, 2013). This method is social and humanities study, and also specifically a cultural study.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*Dieng Culture Festival* (DCF) runs by combining cultural concept and natural tourism. The mission is that this event can be well-established in any aspects and beneficial towards tourism.

### 4.1 Socio-Economic Mission

*Dieng Culture Festival* is idea produced by *Kelompok Sadar Wisata Dieng Pandawa* (community for tourism awareness) with a mission to empower community resources especially youth of local area (western Dieng) to join in the development of local economy. Prior to DFC, there was a cultural event *Pekan Budaya Dieng* (Dieng Culture Week) which was then changed into DCF on its third year in 2010. This changing was a result of cooperation between *Pokdarwis Dieng Pandawa*, *Equator Sinergi Indonesia* and *Dieng Ecotourism*.

DCF initiates further changes especially for tourism economic elements such as home stay owners, local crafts, tour guides, agro-tourism, arts and cultures. *Pokdarwis*

*Dieng Pandawa* had set its purpose which is to achieve tourism-conscious society and economic-independent society. *Dieng Culture Festival* is proven to improve people's financial ability through tourism. Not only playing role to introduce art and tourism potential to society, DCF is also mending their economy inability caused by massive land exploitation for farming in the past times. Therefore, tourism becomes a major solution for them to support their needs apart from agricultural sector.

#### 4.2 Cultural Preservation Mission

Three categories of dance and cultures presented during the festival include local dance, traditional music performance, and traditional martial art. The event regularly takes place in *Arjuna Temple Complex*. The traditional dances performed include *Tari Topeng*, *Tari Lenggani*, *Tari Wakayum*, *Tari Gendek*, *Tari Gobyok Jaranan*, *Tari Topeng Ireng*, *Tari Lenger*, *Sri Aji Senggani*, *Tari Anggok*, *Cepin Tambak Sari*, and *Kubro Siswo* (mystic dance narrates a story about the struggle of Kiai Kolodete as he opened perdikan land in Dieng). The peak of event is a dance performed by children with dreadlocks that visualizes the origin of dreadlocks myth in Dieng. Furthermore, the traditional martial arts carried out include *Rampak Yakso* and *Rodhad*. The event is also completed with drama performance of *Kuda Kepang* and *Panji Cakil*.

Besides presenting traditional dances and martial arts, *Dieng Culture Festival* offers one performance that becomes a major characteristic for Dieng or local potential in preserving its culture namely Ruwatan. Generally, Ruwatan is also held in other regions in Central Java and Yogyakarta. Nevertheless, Ruwatan in Dieng gives a unique attraction. Ruwatan in Dieng is a sacred ritual that involves children with dreadlocks called *Bocah Gembel* and Dieng is the only place that has such remarkable ritual. Thus, DCF strengthens the idea to keep carrying out Ruwatan.

#### 4.3 Mission of Local Tourism Promotion

Local government in Dieng has been creatively assisting the effort to promote the tourism potential by providing ideas of creating festival to hold Ruwatan for children with dreadlocks. This event is designed to create more attractive outcome by keeping the original purpose of why this event takes place. The effort to promote DCF includes a massive socialization, and professional publication through many media and means of technology. DCF owns unique event throughout Ruwatan as well as other performances mentioned previously to attract more visitors, especially foreign tourists. Consequently, it highly supports in popularizing Dieng and its tourism objects both nationally and internationally.

### 5. CONCLUSION

*Dieng Culture Festival* has proven itself as a medium to promote tourism and it gives positive impact toward society, especially Wonosobo people. The event initiated by youth in Pokdarwis has become a magnet for young generation to participate in the effort to improve local attraction. Not only to preserve Dieng local culture and change social stratification as well as local people's mindset, DCF has successfully improved the economic stability of local people by inviting them to participate in the event. Additionally, this celebration can also be considered as promotional effort for local business owners or sellers to expand their entrepreneurship.

In cultural sector, DCF protects local culture and tradition which nearly fade away. It recreates and presents the local culture especially for local people to make them remember easily for further preservation. Mutual and significant cooperation between local people and local government contribute the success of this event so cultural recognition in Dieng is

achieved from local, national and international audiences.

In addition, *Dieng Culture Festival* has become major attraction to promote Dieng plateau. The regular performance of this festival has brought proofs that Dieng is one of the potential tourism destinations to visit by the increasing number of visitors during the weekend.

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