

# The Local Culture Wisdom of the Kali Loji Festival in Maintaining the Sustainability of the River in Pekalongan

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**Abstract--Local wisdom is the values contained in community that are carried out for generations or remain in maintaining environment. Kali Loji Festival is tool that was initiated to restore local wisdom the people of Pekalongan City in preserving the river. Research Objectives to find out, analyze efforts river festival's local cultural wisdom in preserving rivers in communities around Loji River. Research method is qualitatively. Results showed local wisdom Kali loji Festival teaches community to preserve river for human survival fostering community awareness. Local wisdom that has existed since the days of our ancestors teaches noble values in maintaining relations between humans with humans and humans with natural environment. Kali Loji Festival has impact community and government, to return values that have been applied by their ancestors, government has been helped in dealing with adverse effects of Kali Loji pollution. Local wisdom of the Kali Loji festival increases public awareness river sustainability.**

**Keyword: local cultural wisdom, festival, river sustainability**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Living environment is a unity of all living things and inanimate object. According to Bintarto (1984), environment is everything around us, be it objects or living things that is affected by human ac One of the living environments is river. River water is considered as the surface water commonly used by people. In rural communities, it is still used for washing, bathing, drinking water sources and irrigating rice fields.

There must be an applicable solution to manage natural resources without damaging the environment. Therefore, we need to know local natural resources and its environment that is managed by people's behavior following the norms in it (Triastianti, dkk (2017).

The household waste thrown by the people living around the river may affect the water quality.

People's role is necessary to this environmental pollution for their ignorance will make a negative impact to the river water (M. Dawud, 2016).

Living environment problems increase as the population is growing and natural resources are constantly exploited in order to fulfil human needs. Environmental pollution is one of environmental problems, be it air, water or soil pollution. Water pollution usually happens in the river, sea and lake; they are all related. As rivers are the closest to people, it gets polluted easily by people's activities.

Various river basin development planning and management have been applied in many countries. However, the result is often disappointing (Christopher, 1998). The poor quality of river water will impact to the decrease of river biota and generally will decrease the water quality in the downstream that flows to the sea (Ekha, 2015).

Local Wisdom deals with ethical principles of the Living Environment. Nature has the right to be respected, not only because human life depends on it, but mainly because of the ontological reality that humans are an integral part of nature (Setyowati 2012).

This local wisdom discussion is regarding the Loji River Festival in Pekalongan. The description commences with the definition of local wisdom that focuses on the river sustainability proposed by KPKL (Loji River Community) to attract the people in order to keeping the river sustainability through the local wisdom in volatility. It is proceeded with the description of government's opinion about the Festival of Loji River Festival. Then, it continues with the driving factor of how Loji River Festival came up as an attempt to attract people's interest on preserving the sustainability of river environment.

The purposes of the study are: (1) To know and analyse the attempt of local culture wisdom on keeping the sustainability of river to the local people around Loji River Pekalongan; (2) To analyse the government's point of view and opinion to the local

culture wisdom in Loji River Festival; (3) To analyse the factors that affect the implementation of Loji River Festival.

**II. METHOD**

This research uses qualitative method that holds into Structural Functionalism by Talcott Parson and habittus. This research focuses on the local wisdom of Loji River Festival; it analyses the local culture wisdom in the people in preserving rivers in Pekalongan City.

The data sources of this study are, (a) informant, i.e. the chairman of KPKL, people, festival participants, government: (b) supporting documents concerning this study.

Data were collected by interview, observation and documentation. Interview was conducted by the researcher to the chairman of KPKL, the chief of Klego village, people, festival participants, river-cleaning student-participants and government. The documentation in this study is more on gathering supporting documentation of research data needed such as the condition of Loji River, interview activities, festival activities, river clean up events. The validity test of the data in the study was carried out through source triangulation techniques, namely by comparing the results of interviews with the results of observations and documentation.

This study uses the data analysis technique of Miles and Huberman (2009: 56), which inductively analyses data. It starts from data collection, reduction, presentation and verification.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Loji river festival is Pekalongan people’s attempt to maintain, keep and preserve the rivers. Preserving the rivers should be the obligations to all people since rivers are the life source. Rivers are flowing natural resources, therefore it needs to be preserved from the upstream to the downstream for the bad treatment in the upstream will affect the downstream.

Local wisdom will play the role drawing the people’s interest to environmental sustainability; people’s awareness to the environment will increase due to the Loji River Festival. The festival will get people aware more of Pekalongan rivers sustainability.

Picking up local wisdom seems enthralling for the people, especially the youths who are expected to pay attention more to their environment. The government and KPKL are expected to be able to

work in synergy in order to build the people’s awareness. People who are aware to maintain their environment are those who can let go their bad habits. People who used to throw the trash into the rivers and the open areas start to learn how to properly dispose the trash in the right place.

The pollution exists in Loji River, Pekalongan is not only caused by the downstream pollution, but also the textile industry in the upstream of Pekalongan Regency in which their jeans industry throws their waste into the upstream, hence it impacts the rivers sustainability in the downstream.

The activities in Loji River Festival that involve the people and government in cleaning the rivers as well as planting the trees inspire people to be more aware of rivers sustainability. It also instills norm values to the people that have been corrupted by globalization era. The people realize the importance of river sustainability by doing mutual cooperation to preserve the rivers, not throwing the trash or any waste to the rivers as well as planting river borders.

Table 1. Loji River Festival 2018 (Source: Research Source 2019)

No.	Activities	Local Wisdom
1.	Cleaning the river	Mutual cooperation
2.	Planting trees	Awareness
3.	Recycling	Reuse

**Government View of Local Culture Wisdom of Loji River Festival**

Local wisdom is the habits carried out by the people where mutual cooperation is a moral value that begins to disappear in the community; cultivating the moral values is necessary so that people do not forget about togetherness in protecting the environment.

Nowadays, people start to lose the sense of mutual cooperation in preserving the environment, and it is different from the former time when people would voluntarily do the work in maintaining the environment and so on. As the time fades the local wisdom among the people, people start to get individual.

In fact, the village and government were not directly involved in the Loji River Festival; they were merely participants and the parties that allow the implementation of the activities. Maintaining the ancestral tradition in preserving the rivers may increase the people’s awareness of the river sanitation and preserve it.

According to the interview with the village officials, it is stated that they were only participants

who got the invitation from the committee of Loji River Festival and did the activities based on the program, such as planting on the land that has been plotted and becoming a part of each village that will be scored by the committee.

Based on the interview with the Environmental Services, the government of Pekalongan really appreciated the people that are aware of the environment sustainability especially the rivers sustainability. The problems of rivers have been complex by the trash and the waste. The waste itself is the result of various industry in Pekalongan as it has many *batik* industries. Moreover, as the rivers flow from the upstream to the downstream, the treatment from the upstream impacts to the rivers sustainability. The upstream in Pekalongan Regency has got many jeans industries that dispose their waste into the rivers and get the rivers darkened. The treatment of the waste by industries must be appropriate by *IPAL* (Wastewater Treatment Plant) that has been provided by the government or each industry needs to take the responsibility of the waste they have disposed. If all industries pay no heed of the rivers sustainability, the rivers quality will get worsen.

Fortunately, Siti Nurbaya, the invited minister of environmental services in the first Loji River Festival had built an *IPAL* in Pekalongan with the central government funds to facilitate the industries. Farid as the chief of Klego Village stated: “The village officials were only participants. We’ve got the invitation and do the activities in the event. We’ve been provided with the plotted land and then we clean to be scored later by the committee of Loji River Festival. City government is only the one who gives the permission to the event and sometimes help us by providing the tool, such as heavy equipment and garbage truck to load the trash from the river.”

It is in accord to what Dion, the staff of Environmental Services Pekalongan, said: “Pekalongan government through the environmental services pays so much attention to the rivers preservation in Pekalongan. The existence of the community who is aware of the environmental sustainability is really good and it helps the government to improve the rivers condition that get cloudier. The government really appreciates the idea of Loji River Community (interview in 26 March 2019).

**Factors Affecting the Implementation of the Loji River Festival**

The condition of the rivers in Pekalongan have been miserable, as the rivers are polluted by the trash, discoloured, smells foul and severe siltation that causes the sea water flooding (*rob*) in Pekalongan. The position of Pekalongan city that is close to the coast makes it frequently get sea water flood. Hence, based on all the river issues, the idea was founded from the member of *KPKL* that started from facebook group to increase the people’s awareness by holding the Loji River Festival. The execution of the festival can unite the City, Regency, Province and Central Government in rescuing the rivers sustainability.

The condition of the rivers that has been miserable with expansive pollution such as trash, industrial waste and hyacinth and years of neglectation.

This concern of the environment issue has driven up the *KPKL*. This community next holds Loji River Festival to persuade the people to be more aware of the rivers sustainability in volatility.

Unite the Central, Province and City Government to see the condition of Loji River in order to find the solution to make it less miserable and improve the quality of Pekalongan rivers sustainability as well as regain the good quality of Loji river.

The people’s awareness of the environment is regained, especially the rivers sustainability that lie in the center of Pekalongan so it will return to its main function.

Table 2. Factors that affect the condition of Loji river (Source: research data 2019)

No	Factor	Obstacles
1.	People	-not aware -do not know the effects of pollution
2.	Government	-Fund -Understaffed

**IV. CONCLUSION**

The Loji River Festival makes the people more concerned about the environment, so that the people are more likely to preserve the river by not throwing garbage into the river, cleaning the river and planting trees on the banks of the river so the river can function properly. The government supports the Loji River Festival and has put it as the annual agenda of Pekalongan City government. However, the

government still does not support the seriousness of the festival because this activity has only been running four times. The community is concerned that the condition of the river in Pekalongan will worsen, and the public awareness about the environment will decrease.

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