



Female Reog Of Plunturan: Empowering Women Preserving Culture

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Abstract. Reog dance is a cultural product from Ponorogo, a district located in the southern part of East Java. Female Reog is the art dance of reog where all the dancers are women. Female Reog in Ponorogo are rarely found. The emergence of Female reog, raises the pros and cons in society. The object of this research is the association of female reog, namely "Ki Onggoputi Putri" from Plunturan village, Ponorogo Regency seen from the perspective of women's empowerment and cultural preservation. The problem in this study is there is no awareness in the community that women have a very important role in cultural preservation and the development of cultural tourism villages. Women have rights in the public sphere and the same competencies as men. The artistic activities of PKK members are not just to fill their spare time, it is also an effort to empower women to improve their quality of life and develop independence and welfare. The method used in this study is a qualitative method, while data collection is through observation and interviews. This study applies the theory of women's empowerment and gender equality in analyzing "Ki Onggopati Putri". The results of this study show that female reog which was originally established to fill the spare time of housewives has become an empowerment movement in preserving Ponorogo's reog art culture. It has an important role in the development of cultural tourism villages as well. The long-term goal of this research is the awareness in the community that women have a very important role as cultural preservers and the development of cultural tourism villages. Women become agents of change who are able to participate in empowering themselves. The results of this study are expected to be a model for women's empowerment in the field of cultural preservation of tourism village development.

Keywords: Female Reog, Women Empowerment, Cultural preservation, Cultural Tourism Village

1 Introduction

Talking about the art of reog, what comes to people's minds is directly focused on Ponorogo Regency. Ponorogo is a city that presents a uniqueness in performing arts. Moreover, Reog is one of the cultural heritages that has been recognized internationally and has become an icon of a city called "Bumi Reog (land of Reog)". The Reog performance is presented in the form of a ballet, a dramatic dance without dialogue.

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From the movements, it is hoped that this dance is sufficient to represent the content and theme of the dance. Only, so far the reog dance has been played by male dancers, except for the jathilan dance which is played by women.

Historically, the jathilan dance was originally performed by men dressed in women's clothing. This is a depiction of gemblak, a teenage boy who was taken care of by the Warok as his concubine, as an effort to maintain his supernatural powers. However, because the gemblak figure was not in accordance with religious norms, the Ponorogo Regency Government in 1985 made a policy and changed the jathilan dance should be performed by female dancers. The shift of the jathil dancer by the woman persists to this day.

. The art of reog is synonymous with masculinity, but this attribute has changed with the emergence of female reog in 2017. In order to empower women in the field of art where they are considered not to have fully contributed, a female reog art group named "Ki Onggowati Putri" in Plunturan Village, Pulung District, Ponorogo Regency, was established. The reason behind the establishment, according to Yayuk, the head of the group is "want to examine the lives of women in the art world, because art and women are an ambivalence that creates two different views in society. On the one hand, women are seen as victims of exploitation, on the other hand, women in traditional arts are seen as destroyer of male domination,". Bintoro, the head of the Plunturan village stated that "Reog Ponorogo is always associated with the interests of various parties outside the interests of the arts itself. And reog is in the complexity of conflict among the people of Ponorogo,"

2 Theory

This study applies the theory of women's empowerment and gender equality. The method used in this study is a qualitative method, while data collection is through observation and interviews. Empowerment is defined as a process of obtaining power, strength or ability from those who have power to those who are less or less empowered [7]. Onny. S, Prijono added that Empowerment is a process for the community to become empowered, encouraging or motivating individuals to have the ability or empowerment to make life choices, empowerment must also be aimed at groups or layers of society that are left behind.

Women's empowerment becomes important because the awareness of the role of women begins to develop which is embodied in the approach of women's programs in development. Based on the idea that women need independence, their role and positions in society must be considered. Empowerment is an important strategy to increase the role of women increasing their potential to be more independent and work. Empowerment can be done by involving women in cultural preservation. Bintang Puspayoga, the Minister of women's empowerment and child protection, in her interview with [9] stated that "Women are cultural agents, not cultural objects. Our cultural traditions tell us how Indonesian women play a role in building culture. Not only contributing to its preservation, women also play a major role in creating culture in Indonesia". As an agent of culture, women have a very important role in preserving

local cultural values and local knowledge that have long been ingrained in society. These values can always be maintained and developed into very valuable assets in development. Local cultural values and local knowledge are great assets for a nation to be able to move forward.

Empowering women as cultural preservers provides a very large role for local communities to determine their own destiny. This pattern of empowerment emphasizes the aspect of local community participation rather than introducing from outside. Women with all their advantages will be directly involved in the process of implementing sustainable development. Because it is directly involved in sustainable development, empowering women as cultural preservers is also a form of gender equality. Although culture cannot be positioned as the cause of major changes in gender relations, cultural factors inevitably influence the character and persistence of progress in the position of women. Cultural norms and values provide a framework within which changes in gender relations are interpreted and determine how different societies perceive the achievement of gender equality.

3 Methods

The methods applied in this study is observation and interview. The method of data collection is categorized as a participatory study, because the researcher has to immerse herself in the setting where her respondents are, while taking notes and/or recording. The researcher not only made observations but she also conducted interviews. Interviews were conducted to obtain facts, beliefs, feelings, desires and so on that are needed to achieve the research objectives expected by the researcher. Questions used to stimulate information are made the same as making a list of questions with various adjustments. The questions are designed by a researcher to elicit information from interview participants on a specific topic or set of topics .

4 Result and Discussion

4.1 PKK Activities

According to Yayuk the establishment of this association began with activities of family welfare empowerment which were carried out every month. PKK stands for Pemberdayaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga or Family Welfare Empowerment, is a social organization that empowers women to participate in Indonesia's development. In a Village, PKK has the task of assisting the village government and is a partner in empowering and improving family welfare. The term PKK is very broad and is usually associated with women's associations (house wives and young women) which have a variety of positive activities. Starting from how to do a Small and Medium Enterprises, conducting seminars on reproductive health, family planning, domestic violence and child health. These activities have a big contribution to help society, especially in terms of families, women and children. In addition to carrying out the activities mentioned

above, the PKK activities in Plunturan Village, Ponorogo, also empowering women in cultural preservation activities by establishing the female Reog Association.

The female reog association "Ki Onggopati Putri", based on Yayuk's story, was taken from the name of the male reog association, namely "Ki Onggopati". The word "putri" means woman or angel. It also shows that all the dancers of this association are women. Yayuk added by saying "so far the standard of reog are played by men, in this new innovation we want to show a different side from the standard of dominance, the Reog grip having been played by men, in this new innovation we want to show a different side from the dominant (male) grip"

4.2 Performing Art as a Form of Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is a person's desire to use all of their abilities to achieve whatever they want and can do. This understanding of self-actualization is a person's need to develop, use and utilize their potential, talents and capacities to produce and realize what they are. Self-actualization needs are included in the group of needs because they want to develop and change, where individuals want to experience transformation to become more meaningful.

One form of self-actualization of women in Plunturan Village, Ponorogo, is realizing and cultivating their abilities or talents. As a village full of cultural heritage, especially the Reog culture, women perform art through attractive stages or art performances. In this show, some of the characters in reog such as Barongan that depicts power and beauty and symbolized by a tiger's head and a peacock ornament, Warok depicts a violent character with his supernatural power, usually played by men having a big body wearing black clothes, Klono sewandono depicting a brave and wise king figure, the fourth, Ganongan an energetic character, funny and has martial arts skills, and jathilan, a dance depicting horsemen, are all played by women. These dances have storylines that describe people's lives or human life in general. Rules and conditions in a performance must also be met so as not to violate the standard (rules) that already exist. Women living in the rural areas, have been particularly marginalized from cultural life. They face many barriers to access, contribute and participate equally in theatre, cinema, arts, music and heritage, which prevents them from developing their full potential and impedes social and inclusive sustainable development. through reog art performances, women have opportunity to be able to actualize themselves in the form of art which is a symbol of pride for a region.

4.3 Promoting Gender Equality

Apart from being a means for self-actualization, this artistic activity is also promoting gender equality. Gender equality can also mean that there are equal conditions for men and women in obtaining opportunities and rights as human beings, so that they are able to play a role and participate in legal, political, economic, social, cultural, educational, defense and national security activities as well as equality in enjoy the fruits of development in a country.

The UNESCO report on Gender Equality, Heritage and Creativity the need to enhance debate, research and awareness-raising regarding equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys in the areas of heritage and creativity. It means that women and men have the same right to preserve cultures. The construction in society which states that women are only second class citizen in preserving the culture can be eroded through the role of women's reog.

Studying traditional arts cannot be separated from the gender aspect, but this gender aspect also leaves several problems, including internal problems, namely the emergence of psychological anxiety and uncertainty in women themselves when they actualize their public roles. This psychological problem arises when they have to seek ethical justification for their public role. They are faced with a choice whether to optimize the role of the public by freeing themselves from the views of society that have been imprisoning them or by continuing to base themselves on the ethical foundation of the beliefs they adhere to. The role of women in maintaining a culture so that their work does not violate the rules or norms of decency in customs recognized by a society as stated by Yayuk her party wants to make a new breakthrough in the Reog Ponorogo art repertoire. She wants woman's existence as a cultural heritage preserver to be noticed, even though her group does not want to go any further than men.

Culture cannot be positioned as the cause of major changes in gender relations, although cultural factors inevitably influence the character and persistence of progress in the position of women. Cultural norms and values provide a framework within which changes in gender relations are interpreted and determine how different societies perceive the achievement of gender equality.

4.4 Preserving Cultural Heritage

The role of women in maintaining local culture and wisdom cannot be separated from the aspects of society that support it. There is awareness in women of the need to study science, actualize themselves and show their role in order to create a peaceful society. Women also need opportunity to demonstrate their social and intellectual role in social life. the existence of the reog women's association "Ki Onggopati Putri" needs to be strengthened because in addition to showing its uniqueness, what women do in this association is a form of cultural preservation.

This uniqueness, if developed further, will be able to provide new cultural tourism for Ponorogo Regency, especially Plunturan Village. As a cultural tourism village, Plunturan village needs to develop Reog danced by women so that it becomes a new icon in Ponorogo. Not only, the image of reog which is usually synonymous with masculinity and power, will also get a new image, namely femininity and tenderness. As a cultural tourism village that carries cultural heritage, the female reog performance has become a new cultural tourism destination that is able to attract the attention of the public. This innovation in the arts .opens up new potential for cultural and economic tourism destinations for the community

5 Conclusion

Local culture and wisdom in a society are closely related to women as the main actors. Women have a big role in maintaining local culture and wisdom which through a series of processes will bring benefits to the community itself. This role is manifested in the social activities of a woman in society or in actualizing herself in the public environment. Women are needed so that local wisdom in society does not fade with time. The role of women in maintaining local culture and wisdom is also related to the various characteristics of women who are full of patience and thoroughness so that they become an inspiration in their own family and in the surrounding community.

The various roles of women in maintaining culture and maintaining local wisdom values do not mean that a woman is free from various kinds of problems related to gender bias. These problems can be from internal factors as well as women's problems and difficulties in intervening in public policies which sometimes do not support women's rights.

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