

Cultural Branding Strategy of Kirab Budaya 1 Suro at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya as an Effort to Preserve Ancestral Culture by Local Communities of Kediri Regency

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Abstract

In the era of globalization, various international cultures have entered Indonesia. However, the tradition of cultural carnival is still one of the prides of the local people of Kediri. It is evidenced by the implementation of the ritual tradition of the *Kirab Budaya 1 Suro* in memory of *Sri Aji Jayabaya* which is carried out every *1 Suro* in the Javanese calendar at *Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya*, Menang Village, Kediri Regency to appreciate the services of the ancestors. This qualitative - descriptive study examines the cultural branding strategy by the local community and local government in introducing the *Kirab Budaya 1 Suro* to the outside community using a case study method. The strategy regarding the cultural branding of *Kirab Budaya 1 Suro* uses the Social Capital theory proposed by Robert D. Putnam as an analytical tool. Primary data collection was carried out by direct interviews with local communities, namely the *Jayabaya* and *Inu Kirana* Associations, Kediri Regency as one of the important elements of the Kediri Regency Tourism Office to promote cultural tourism assets. The results show that the role and strategy of the government and local communities in a collaborative manner is able to make the *Kirab Budaya 1 Suro* in *Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya* become one of the regional cultural assets that is preserved for its nobility and is able to survive in the current era of globalization.

Keywords: *Kirab Budaya 1 Suro*, cultural branding, local governments, local communities

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country which various in cultural diversity. Ralph Linton mentions that this culture does not only refer to the way of life, but there are many aspects of life that are considered higher and more desirable in life such as beliefs, attitudes and manners, to human activities that are specifically carried out by certain groups (Siregar, 2002). Various interesting regional cultures are still being carried out in Kediri Regency such as the Ruwatan tradition, Larung Sesaji on Mount Kelud, Slametan, Clean Village, and Kirab Budaya 1 Suro. One of the regional cultures that is still being developed and preserved by the local community in Kediri Regency is Kirab Budaya 1 Suro which was held at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya, Menang Village, Kediri Regency. This carnival is held every 1st of the month of Muharram or the month of Suro on the Javanese calendar (Juliati et al., 2021). Kirab Budaya 1 Suro is also a symbol of the

Javanese people in preserving culture, character education for the younger generation, and a form of respect for the ancestors, especially the King of Kediri, namely Prabu Sri Aji Jayabaya.

Modernization is currently a major challenge for local communities, especially in Javanese culture. Kirab Budaya 1 Suro at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya is one of the cultures that must be preserved by the general public as the largest regional cultural heritage asset in Kediri Regency along because of its value that influence local community to preserve their traditions. M.J Herskovits classifies society itself as an organized group of individuals who can follow a certain way of life (Supriatna, 2012). Kirab Budaya 1 Suro as a form of community actualization in cultural traditions that are organized every year and a form of community adaptation to culture that creates certain lifestyles in community groups.

Kirab Budaya 1 Suro at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya is a cultural tradition by the local area as a form of respect and preservation of the services of the ancestors, namely Prabu Sri Aji Jayabaya which has been carried out since 1975. Kirab Budaya 1 Suro is the largest regional cultural tradition in Kediri Regency which every year every year it is attended and participates by local communities and people from outside Kediri to foreign countries. However, Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya which is the location of Kirab Budaya1 Suro still has an evaluation in the development of cultural tourist attractions such as facilities and visitor care. This is certainly not a big obstacle for the community so that the government carries out a cultural branding strategy as a form of collaboration between the Regional Government and the Local Community so that Kirab Budaya1 Suro continually to be carried out for future generations and become a regional cultural heritage.

Thus, this study aims to analyze in depth the strategies carried out by the community and the government in introducing the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya as an effort to preserve ancestral culture by local communities in Kediri Regency. This study uses social capital theory in carrying out the strategy of cultural branding. Social capital according to Robert Putnam has characteristics of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation to achieve common goals (Putnam, 1993). There are three important things in the theory of social capital given by Putnam, first there is a social network that allows communication to foster trust in every member of a community group. Second, the existence of a strong sense of trust in a social network can strengthen related norms to create empathy or help each other. Third, the various successes achieved through cooperation in the past in this network will encourage the continuity of cooperation in the future. Putnam further said that social capital can even bridge the gap between groups with different ideologies and strengthen agreement on the importance of community empowerment. So this theory is relevant to prove the collaboration between local communities and local governments as an effort to introduce and preserve Kirab Budaya 1 Suro at Petilasan Sri Aji Jayabaya.

2. METHOD

The type of research that will be conducted is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a type of research that aims to explore and understand meaning with the subject of a group of individuals who experience social problems (Creswell, 2016). In the context of this study, qualitative research was used to explore the use of social capital as a cultural branding tool by the local people of Kediri in promoting Kirab Budaya 1 Suro. In the context of this research, researcher uses a case study approach. Case studies are used to understand specific phenomena that are currently happening in a community group, which in this study is the local community. At the data collection stage, researchers conducted observations, interviews, and documentation. The parties who became informants in this study were determined using purposive sampling with the criteria, that the local community of Kediri

took a role in preserving the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro. In addition, during the documentation process, researchers collect secondary data in the form of journal articles and news relevant to the research.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Kirab Budaya 1 Suro is a tradition carried out by the residents of Menang Village, Pagu District, Kediri Regency that have been pioneered by one of the Kings of Kediri, namely Sang Prabu Sri Aji Joyoboyo (Juliati et al., 2021). This ritual has been going on for 46 years, starting from the restoration of the Petilasan on February 22, 1975 by the Hondodonto Foundation of the Yogyakarta Palace. This carnival is held specifically in Kediri and takes place every year on the 1st of Muharram or 1 Suro on the Javanese calendar. In addition to being carried out as a form of respect for the ancestors, namely Sri Aji Jayabaya for his privileges and courage, he is known as Jangka Jayabaya (people who can predict future events). This ritual carnival also contains the meaning of gratitude to God for the diversity of knowledge, manners, and treasures that we already have.

The ritual procession must be carried out by teenage boys and girls who have not or are not menstruating because they are considered sacred. Therefore, every year the officers who carry out the ritual will continue to be replaced by younger teenagers in the hope that this tradition will continue and can be preserved. Kirab Budaya 1 Suro in Menang Village has become a big event that is attended by institutions and associations from various cities every year (Juliati et al., 2021). Based on an interview with a member of the Jayabaya community as well as the caretaker of Sendang Tirta Kamandanu, Mbah Suratin, he explained that Sri Aji Jayabaya was highly respected by everyone because he could reach out to things that would happen in the future so that his story was so memorable. The 1 suro ritual at Sendang tirta kamandanu is also special because it is carried out to appreciate the privileges of the ancestors of Prabu Jayabaya so that until now it has been preserved as a tradition of pride for the local community.

Some efforts such as policy making and cooperation between governments and local communities to preserve and brand this tradition are not only carried out by the Jayabaya Association and the Hondodonto Foundation, but in the process there is the participation of the youth of Menang Village and Inu Kirana as tourism ambassadors of Kediri Regency. The Jayabaya Community takes care of the ritual location, namely Sendang Tirta Kamandanu and continues to facilitate visitors who want to know the history of the ritual or the location. The Hondodonto Foundation, which initiated the ritual due to receiving supernatural promptings through dreams, then held an annual pilgrimage every 1 Suro in Menang Village and has maintained the ritual to this day. The organizers of the carnival by the younger generation or representative teenagers from each Neighborhood Association aged 6-17 years at the elementary, secondary, high school education levels as an effort to inculcate culture so that it can be accepted and preserved (Juliati et al., 2021).

According to Levi-Strauss, in Western Europe culture changed from cold to warm to hot during the period between the Middle Ages and early modern times, when stabilizing influences such as religion and tradition increasingly gave way to dynamic movements of science, technology, and economics, thus being sucked into in the general process of change incorporated into the metaphysical concept of 'progress' (Assmann, 2019). Likewise, the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro tradition which tries to compete with the times but still tries to maintain recognition from the community for its sacredness so that we classify this culture in the category of warm culture. During this pandemic, we found that every party involved in preserving this culture tried to carry out the branding of the location and the tradition of the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro, although in their own ways and abilities.

In preserving Kirab Budaya 1 Suro, the local government of Kediri Regency is involved. The collaboration between the government of Kediri Regency and the local community can be proven by the existence of a cooperative coordination system. This proves that the creation of social networks between the government and local communities is a crucial aspect in cultural branding. In line with the concept of social capital which was coined by Putnam in his book entitled *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* where Putnam defines social capital as characteristics of social organizations such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation to obtain social capital mutual benefit (Putnam, 1993)

There are three important reasons to prove that social capital in the form of norms and networks is related to efforts to promote a particular culture. First, the existence of social networks allows the formation of coordination and communication that can foster mutual trust among members of the community. Second, trust has positive implications in social life, as evidenced by the fact how the interconnectedness of people who have mutual trust in a social network strengthens norms regarding the necessity to help each other. Various successes achieved through cooperation in a certain period will encourage the continuity of cooperation in the next period. So that social capital can erode the gap between groups with different ideologies and strengthen agreement on its importance.

In the context of the branding of Kirab Budaya 1 Suro in Kediri, the government and local communities occupy an equally strategic position. First, the government's role as a policy maker will shape public awareness to have the same goal. Based on the Strategic Plan of the Department of Tourism and Culture of Kediri Regency for 2016-2021, regardless of the culture and culture of Kediri, the government will work together with stakeholders that are important in certain cultures. For example, providing more appropriate facilities in the petilasan which is the place for the cultural carnival to take place. It is necessary to preserve and develop various types of arts, traditional values, cultural heritage as a means for the community to appreciate local culture and deepen regional arts and culture as part of the life of the community itself from generation to generation. The basic principles brought by the Kediri Regency Government through the strategic plan show that the government's awareness is high enough to internalize traditional values in the Kediri community. In addition, at the village level, based on the results of interviews with Inu Kirana, Kediri Regency, it shows that there are strategies that have been carried out as a form of promoting sustainable culture. The strategy that has been implemented by the Kediri Regency Tourism Office in doing so is participating in events and festivals held at the provincial and national levels, so that the introduction and process of branding the potential of Kediri Regency such as Kirab Budaya 1 Suro can be carried out more effectively with the target market segment. from other areas. Meanwhile, Inu Kirana as the Tourism Ambassador of Kediri Regency participates in promotion and branding through optimization of Social Media in the digitalization era, making creative videos on YouTube, and participating in events at the Provincial and National levels. Such as the Majapahit Travel Fair Festival, Matta Travel Fair, Creative Arts Industry Exhibition, East Java Tourism Exhibition, Election of Raka Raki East Java Province, and Travex as events that are used to optimize tourism potential in Kediri Regency.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1 Conclusions

The use of social capital in an effort to carry out cultural branding at the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro is a way for the local community and the government of Kediri Regency to work together. The local community and the government of Kediri Regency have a strategic role in cultural branding efforts. This is evidenced by the synergy between local communities

and the Kediri district government, for example, cooperation in promoting Kediri culture through the election of Raka Raki, optimization of social media, to the formation of policies in the form of RENSTRA based on demands from local communities.

4.2 Suggestions

The government should be more concerned with maintaining the facilities for the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro, namely in Sendang Tirta Kamandanu, Menang Village, Kediri Regency by conducting periodic controls on the infrastructure that supports the Kirab Budaya 1 Suro. The cooperation efforts from each party would be better if it is maximized by expanding networks with other communities in Kediri Regency who have the same concern so that this tradition can be more accepted by all audiences, and being maintained so that it remains sustainable and not only become the pride of the people of Kediri, but all Indonesian people.

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