

# Preserving Local Culture Through Women's Empowerment in Dharma Wanita Pariwisata Serang Regency

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## ABSTRAK

In cultural preservation activities, of course everyone needs to be involved in the process of maintaining and introducing local culture. One important role in cultural development or preservation is that of women. Women certainly need to pay attention to their existence, by providing a platform to improve their personal well-being. Women should have the same rights as men, therefore women's empowerment must be carried out anywhere and by anyone. Women who are given the opportunity to improve their quality will definitely have a positive impact on those around them. The Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita is one of the places that provides attention and opportunities for its members to learn and gain experience that can improve the quality of a woman, as well as holding programs that can preserve the local culture of the Serang Regency area. Therefore, this research was carried out to find out what programs in the Dharma Wanita Wisata Serang Regency can preserve local culture through empowering its members, and to find out whether this program can achieve its goals. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, data collection was obtained from interviews and descriptive analysis.

**Keywords:** *Conservation, Culture, Dharma Wanita*

## INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, local culture has certainly begun to be rarely seen by the wider community. The very diverse local culture in Indonesia is an important part that needs to be preserved as an effort to maintain national identity (MA Babu, 2023:2). In cultural preservation, of course everyone needs to be involved in the process of maintaining and preserving local culture. The role of women is an important aspect that can play a role and influence the empowerment and development sector, whose existence needs to be improved and paid attention to. Therefore, women should have equal rights and positions with men.

This is also emphasized by the mandate stated in the 1993 GBHN (Outlines of State Policy) which contains: " Women as equal partners to men must be able to play a greater role in development and life in society, nation and state and participate in preserving the existing social and cultural climate. supports them so that they can create and take full advantage of opportunities to develop their abilities through increasing knowledge, expertise and skills while still paying attention to the nature and dignity of women."

In order to realize and realize this, special women's organizations were created, especially those operating in the fields of health, education, and society and family. Of course, this can solve various problems as well as possible. One of the women's organizations in Indonesia is Dharma Wanita. Basically, the aim of establishing the women's dharma is so that women, especially the wives of civil servants (PNS), can participate in their dharma of service to the nation and state, apart from that, wives are also expected to be able to get involved in supporting their husbands' careers (Dade M, 2020 ).

In general, the programs in Dharma Wanita are usually activities related to improving family welfare, education for women, and activities related to the development of other women. Dharma Wanita is also a forum for women to improve their quality by getting guidance that can expand knowledge and experience among fellow Dharma Wanita members (PD Anggraeni, 2022:3). There are also quite a few Dharma Wanita who provide program services that can improve skills for women . Of course, all the activities in Dharma Wanita have a positive impact on Dharma Wanita members, husbands, and can even have a good impact on certain agencies.

As time goes by, of course the programs in each women's dharma have innovations by following current trends. The existence of contemporary innovations in the Dharma Wanita program has certainly given a new color to the activities compared to those previously carried out. This certainly provides an opportunity for women members of Dharma Wanita who were previously passive, had difficulty getting along, and had difficulty expressing themselves, can now participate in exploring themselves and their skills.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This article was written using qualitative methods, this research is descriptive analysis. The data obtained from this research is the result of direct data collection by means of interviews. According to Waruwu M (2023: 3), research that is descriptive analysis is the result of qualitative methods because the research technique uses narrative or words that describe each situation or condition being analyzed. This qualitative research aims to understand and analyze social phenomena to make them easier to understand and produce new hypotheses (Adlini, et al. 2023: 3).

In this research, the researcher went directly to the research target place to conduct a survey and provide a letter of permission for observation. Next, the researcher received approval to conduct a direct interview session by the Dharma Wanita Serang Regency Tourism Office with the Dharma Wanita secretary, Mrs. Wiwin. Interview sessions were conducted directly and indirectly, to fill in missing information. Researchers provide several interview instruments,

The first interview session was carried out by meeting Mrs. Wiwin directly at the agreed place, namely campus C FKIP Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University. After that, because it was felt that there was still some information missing, the researcher conducted a second interview session which was conducted indirectly. The second interview session was conducted via short message via *WhatsApp*. The following is the interview instrument that the researcher asked about;

1. What is women's dharma?
2. What is the main function of female dharma?
3. How does women's dharma play a role in empowering women?
4. What programs are available at the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita?
5. How does the program work?
6. What obstacles did you experience while running the program?
7. Is the program effective in empowering efforts?
8. What impact does the program have on female dharma members?
9. How to overcome obstacles in implementing the program?
10. Does women's dharma play an important role in empowerment efforts?
11. How does the Dharma Wanita program of the Serang Regency Tourism Office influence the preservation of local culture?
12. What are the objectives of organizing this program?
13. Does the program meet the needs of the female dharma members?

After conducting the interview session, the researcher continued the data analysis method from the data that had been produced. This data analysis process aims to interpret data generated from the field, so that the data becomes new ideas or theories (Adlini, et al. 2023: 5 -6). After conducting the interview session, the researcher conducted a documentation session with Mrs. Wiwin as secretary of the Dharma Wanita Serang Regency Tourism Office.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dharma Wanita Serang Regency Tourism Office (DW Dinpar Kab Serang) is an association organization that accommodates the wives of civil servants (PNS) of the tourism service. From the results of interviews conducted with Mrs. Wiwin as the secretary of the Dharma Wanita of the Serang Regency Tourism Service, in fact the main function or goal of the Dharma Wanita of the Serang Regency Tourism Service is so that wives can support and know in depth about their husbands' careers. Women who are members of Dharma Wanita can also be directly involved in helping with tasks in each

area of their husband's work. Apart from supporting her husband's career, Dharma Wanita also plays a role in empowering women, especially its members.

Women's empowerment is actually one of the important programs carried out by the government or other organizations outside government authority (Asmira A, et al. 2023: 2). Women's empowerment at the Serang Regency Tourism Service's Dharma Wanita focuses on activities that can improve the skills and self-confidence of the mothers there. According to Lubis H, et al (2022) the dominant role of women in a work system, the more structured and directed the system is. This is proven by the activities at the Serang Regency Tourism Office's Dharma Wanita, where wives are given the opportunity to participate in their husband's work. Mrs. Wiwin explained that, one of the activities to preserve or introduce culture, language and tourist attractions in Serang Regency is one of the jobs at the tourism office. Therefore, Dharma Wanita there created a program that could empower its members while preserving local culture so that they could participate in their husband's work.

There are several programs organized by the Dharma Wanita Serang Regency Tourism Office which support the skills and self-confidence of its members, and can introduce the local culture of Serang Regency to a wider realm. Serang Regency itself is one of the regions in Banten Province which has various kinds of diversity, starting from tourist attractions, language, and other cultural characteristics of Serang Regency. According to Fauzan A, et al (2022: 5) The local culture of Serang Regency is a regional wealth that has great potential to be preserved and needs to be introduced so that the public can know its various types. From this opinion, it can be stated that the program organized by the women of the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita was appropriate and of course had a tremendous impact on the Serang Regency Tourism Office and its members. With this program, the women's empowerment process in Dharma Wanita Serang Regency can provide more points for the goals achieved.

One of the programs organized by Dharma Wanita Wisata Serang Regency as a form of effort to preserve local culture in Serang Regency is to introduce something that is characteristic of Serang Regency by using or making it more interesting so that it is widely introduced. The fashion show program uses various kinds of batik, one of which is Banten Batik. This program aims to show the public so that they can know the patterns on Banten Batik and show how the use of batik is not considered old-fashioned, in fact batik can add more aesthetic value to a person's appearance. Apart from that, of course this program can give confidence and opportunity to the women members of the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita to appear in front of an audience.

The next program held in the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita was an effort to introduce the characteristics of Serang Regency, namely *handcraft training*. The *handcraft* training organized by Dharma Wanita Wisata Serang Regency aims to be a continuous learning process for the mothers who are members of Dharma Wanita. This is in accordance with the opinion of Rosmilawati I, et al (2023: 2) that every learning process should be able to provide opportunities and activities that are useful for anyone. With this handicraft training, of course the mothers who are members of the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita will benefit for themselves in the form of new skills, business opportunities and meaningful experiences.

The handicraft training carried out by the women of Dharma Wanita Serang Regency usually makes decorations from carved wood or key chains from knitting. Handicrafts are made in the form of lighthouses or Banten mosque domes, which can provide aesthetic value that can attract people's interest with their distinctive characteristics. Mrs. Wiwin also explained that the purpose of making handicrafts in the form of lighthouses and Banten mosque domes was one way for women members of the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita to participate in introducing regional characteristics in Serang Regency.

In preserving the local culture of Serang Regency, this can provide opportunities for mothers, where as we know, women are often given less attention in providing opportunities to learn and gain wider experience. This is one of the objectives of the programs organized by the Dharma Wanita Wisata Serang Regency, where the program preserves local regional culture through empowering women. According to Rani MC (2021: 37-38) the aim of empowerment is to show a result to be achieved and can be used as an indicator of achievement. It can be seen that these programs provide benefits and advantages for various parties at once.

## CONCLUSIONS

Women certainly play an important role in all aspects in contributing to an ongoing development system. One of them is in activities to preserve local culture through empowering women. The Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita has a fairly complex functional role. Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita is a forum for its members to be able to explore experiences that can produce skills or experiences that are beneficial for the survival of themselves and their families.

The program organized by Dharma Wanita Pariwiata Serang Regency is of course a program of choice that has objectives that suit the needs of its members, of course it can also provide self-development for its members as well as taking part in helping to introduce and preserve Indonesian culture, especially the characteristics of the Regency area. Attack. Researchers hope that the Serang Regency Tourism Dharma Wanita can improve the quality of the programs held, so that the members therein can have the opportunity to learn new things that are broader and better, and the role of women can be a big influence on the preservation of this local culture.

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