

REGIONAL CULTURAL PILLAR AS AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE CIANJUR'S LOCAL WISDOM

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ABSTRACT

Culture is a crucial aspect of human life, reflecting the identity of individuals and their actions. Formed from ideas, concepts, habits, and customs, culture becomes an integral part of people's lives. However, there needs to be more understanding in some communities regarding local wisdom in society, especially in Cianjur. This study focuses on the pillars of Cianjur culture, describing the identity of the community. Unfortunately, the proverb "Where the earth is stepped on, there the sky is upheld" has not been fully applied in Cianjur. The purpose of this study is to describe the knowledge, understanding, responses, and expectations of the community regarding the pillars of Cianjur culture. The research methodology uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods and questionnaires as data collection techniques. This study concludes that public awareness of local wisdom or pillars of Cianjur culture must go through socialization and coaching. Increasing public knowledge and understanding will contribute to efforts to preserve the pillars of Cianjur culture as an inseparable part of local cultural wealth.

Keywords: Cultural Pillars, Preservation, Local Wisdom, Cianjur Community.

Article Info:

Received: 8 December 2024
Revised: 17 Desember 2024
Accepted: 18 December 2024
Publish: 30 December 2024

Tauco:
International Journal
of Social Sciences and
Humanities
Vol. 01, No.02 2024
Page 78-87

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the development of science and technology is growing rapidly (Oktaviani et al., 2020). Information and communication technology has infected various aspects of human life (Zhang et al., 2022). Cultural exchanges between regions, even between countries, have become easier and faster without certain

boundaries. In this context, every individual needs to have a solid identity as a defense, especially against the negative impacts that may arise due to the mixing of cultures through technology. Local culture identity is important as an individual identity (Kuswanto, 2023).

As stated, "The topic about regional culture, national culture, and global culture are the main of the problem of national identity." (Indrawati, 2022). Although technological development brings positive impacts, the preservation of regional or local culture is crucial (Habsy et al., 2024). However, today, Cianjur society tends do not have deep understanding regarding to the Cianjur's cultural pillars.

Cianjur's cultural pillars reflect the basic philosophy of human life in living life (Solihah et al., 2020). Within these pillars, there are characteristics that are expected to grow in the community, such as honesty, bravery, patience, strategic ability, perseverance, discipline, and so on. Understanding the pillars of Cianjur culture is expected to shape character and personal qualities in accordance with local values.

Culture and character are correlated, where culture can shape a person's character and vice versa (Lestari & Kurnia, 2022; Rony, 2021). The values implied by culture shape the basis of an individual's character. On the other hand, individual character can also influence the surrounding culture. Therefore, both character and culture play an important role in shaping personal and group identity (Ajda Khoiriyah & Zein Tarsidi, 2023; Hadian et al., 2022).

Cianjur's cultural pillars, known as "ngaos" (reading), "mamaos" (reciting/singing), and "maenpo" (silat/martial arts), are recognized in the Cianjur Regency Regional Regulation No. 10 of 2020. Through this regulation, the Cianjur Regency Government is committed to preserving, maintaining and developing the values of these cultural pillars. However, despite the existence of supporting regulations, there are still many people who do not fully understand these cultural pillars.

If we look at it, there is a need for a policy that advocates the cultivation of culture as a vital pillar in sustainable development. It is important to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and promoting cultural diversity. It is align with Keith Nurse in her book entitled *Culture as the Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development* (Nurse & Nurse, 2007)

This research aims to explore the information, understanding, skills, responses and expectations of the Cianjur community regarding the Cianjur's cultural pillars. Although regulations already exist, community understanding is key in maintaining and preserving local wisdom. The information gained from this research can serve as a basis for formulating a more effective preservation strategy, involving the active participation of the community in maintaining and developing regional culture.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used qualitative approach. Qualitative approach was chosen regarding to the objectives of this research to explore Cianjurs' community perception towards Cianjurs' cultural pillars. This research involved several aspects such as community's background knowledge, understanding,

skills, respons, and expectations towards Cianjur's cultural pillars. Descriptive method was chosen to give more detail about the current phenomenon. According to Sudjana, descriptive methods are used to describe symptoms, events, and phenomena that occur at the current situation (Rukajat, 2018). In order to gain the data, the researcher used a questionnaire. This research collects qualitative data described through several research techniques. The research techniques were including questionnaire and interview. Questionnaire questions were given to Cianjurs' community from different layers of society including school students, college students, teachers, lecturers, and general public. For the respondents were classified into several grups based on age including less than 20 years old, 21-30 years old, 31-40 years old, 41-50 years old and over 50 years old. The used of questionnaire questions were to measure communities' background knowledge, understanding, perception, dan their future expectation towards Cianjur's cultural pillars. This research is involving both women and men of Cianjur's community. Meanwhile, in order to gain the data from interview the researcher gain the data by sampling techniques towards certain groups such as students/college students, teachers/lecturers, and general public.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to William in Nurse (Nurse & Nurse, 2007), culture can be culture can be understood as 'a whole way of life', 'a system of signs' through which social order is upheld, communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored. It aligns with Ki Hajar Dewantara on Reed & Adams (2011) culture means everything that is associated with culture. Culture in foreign language 'kultur' is fruit of human wisdom. 'Kultur' is coming from 'cultura' (Latin) changes from 'colere' which means nurturing, promoting, and worshiping (Dewantara, 1967: 82). Culture preservation can be done by upholding, maintaining, and advancing the existing pillars of regional culture.

A regional cultural pillar is a heritage that require to be preserved, especially by the people in the place where the culture develop, as we all know because it has a very important role for people's lives in it (Akhmad, 2019). A cultural pillar give a colour and a unique identity for people lives in the places where the culture is born, grow and develop. A regional cultural pillar is become an essential local wisdom that need to be acknowledged, understood, and respected by the local people (Pajariantto et al., 2024).

Every region has their own pillars which shape the basis and reflect their cultural identity (Fadri et al., 2024). This involved several aspects such as language, tradition, art, culinary, music, custom, and social value that has been hold by the local people. A cultural pillar can be interpreted as operational meaning within the society that have a coherent and strong structure (Reed & Adams, 2011). Nowadays, Cianjur has three cultural pillars that reflected Cianjur's people: "ngaos, mamaos, and maenpo". The understanding and appreciation towards the pillars is being important in order to strengthen and maintain Cianjur's local wisdom and building social awerness towards cultural identity for Cianjur's people.

Cianjur's Cultural Pillars has been arranged in a Cianjur Regency Regional Regulation. Unfortunately, this cultural pillar is not acknowledged yet by all

Cianjur people, even though the local government has supported it with existing regional regulations. These pillars are not distinguishing one region with another. But also, creating a strong cultural identity and becoming priceless heritage that preserved by the local people. Besides of those pillars, Cianjur also has lampu gentur hand craft and its speciality food which is called tauco. The pillars adding to the rich of Cianjur culture and becoming a local wisdom for local people.

A local wisdom is the result of human cognitive to act and behave towards something, including an object or an event that happen in a certain room (Diem, 2012). On the other hand, *wisdom* can be defined as a person's ability to use his mind in acting or behaving as a result of an assessment of something, object, or event that occurs. As a term, *wisdom* more often is defined as 'kearifan/kebijaksanaan'. Sartini (2004) stated "Exploration of the noble wealth of the nation's culture is very necessary to do, as well as very important to foster and develop its existence".

The preservation of local wisdom is a necessity that is the responsibility of all parties where the community is located (Aulia & Maharani, 2023; Fathorrahman & Syamsuddin, 2023; Hakim, 2021). Community means the people who are living where the culture exist, grow, and develop. A local wisdom is a concept that refers to the existence, resources development, culture, and the regional or community potential (Adamowicz & Zwolinska-Ligaj, 2020; Ramdiah et al., 2020). It can be including local products, local wisdom, tradition, foods, arts, and every aspect. Maintaining and promoting local wisdom can help preserve cultural heritage and support the local economy.

Table 1. Based on the result, the number of questionnaires collected as follows:

No.	Ages	Occupations			
		Students	Teachers & Lecturers	Artists	General Public
1.	30 >...	51	6	2	4
2.	31-40	0	16	0	6
3.	41-50	0	14	2	9
4.	> 51	0	6	0	8
Total		51	42	4	27
		124			

Description:

A = Students and College Students

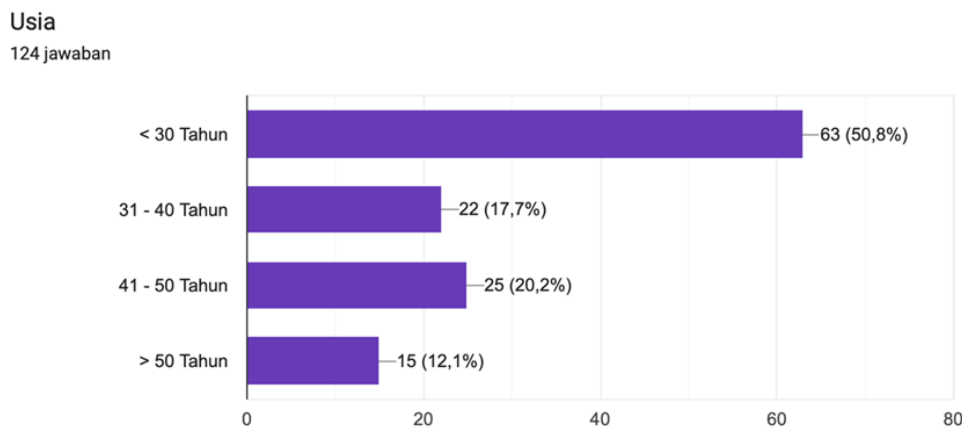
B = Teachers and Lecturers

C = Artists

D = General Public

Based on the data, we can see for total 41,5 % is students and college students in the group of under thirty years old. On the other hand, teachers and lecturers are have a total percentage for approximately 34,1% which spread widely from age under 30 years old up to above 51 years old. For artists only reach 3,3% in the age of under 30 years old and among 41-50 years old. The remaining 21.1% of respondents were members of the general public other than students, teachers and artists, with the age range spreading between under 30

years old and over 51 years old. This data is needed to see the condition of respondents' attention to the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar.



Picture 1. the condition of respondents' attention to the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar

In line with that, there has been a lot of research regarding to the same topic, one of them conducted by Fajarini which revealed that "Local wisdom will only last if it is implemented in concrete daily life so that it can respond and answer the changing times" (Fajarini, 2014).

The data shows that the number of total men is about 37,9% and the total number of women is about 62,1%. In accordance with knowledge of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar, approximately of 96% people have heard about Cianjur's Cultural Pillar, and only approximately 4% of people who do not know about Cianjur's Cultural Pillar. The number of 58,9% of people are regularly attend the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar show. Meanwhile, 41,1% do not like the show. In line with that, out 81,5% of Cianjur people have known about 'papatat' and 'daweung' as a term to start a Sundanese traditional song. In terms of their understanding of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar, a total of 79% of people have already understood "Ngaos" as one of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar. Then, a total of 71% of people also understood about "Mamaos" is a Cianjuran Sundanese song. Meanwhile, a total of 45,2% of people understood that "Maenpo" means the human's ability to keep up beyond the rapid development time and place.

Background Knowledge, Understanding, and Community Skills about Cianjur's Cultural Pillar

Having a good understanding of something will shape a good character/personality, including the knowledge of culture. Knowledge as one of the character builders is described by (Lickona, 2022) who explains that good character includes having a good knowledge or understanding, feelings, and actions. Thus, it means that having a good understanding, feelings, and action will impact to a good character as well. All of them are correlated. Lickona explains three of a good components, they are: Moral Knowledge, Moral Feelings, and Moral Action. **First**, Moral knowledge consists of moral awareness, moral values, perspective determination, moral thinking, decision making, and personal knowledge. **Second**, Moral Feelings consist of conscience, self-esteem,

empathy, love of good, self-control, humility. **Third**, Moral Action consists of competence, desire and habit. The three components are correlated with each other. Therefore, the community's knowledge of cultural pillars is one of the aspects studied in this research.

The data collected from respondents shows their level of knowledge, understanding, skills, responses and expectations of the three pillars of Cianjur culture. Their answers as a reflection of their knowledge, understanding and skills about the Cianjur's Cultural Pillars were very diverse, although the author looked at the answers by listing the respondents based on age and occupation. The knowledge that was asked to the respondents was related to:

1. The terms of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar;
2. Cianjur's Cultural Pillar performance;
3. Papatat Cianjuran;
4. Daweung recitation of Mamaos;
5. Preservation of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar;
6. The effort to preserve Cianjur's Cultural Pillar;
7. Participation in the preservation of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar;
8. Interest in the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar;
9. Social value consisted in the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar; and
10. Lyrics of Tembang Sunda Cianjuran.

The author examines the community's knowledge of the Cianjur Cultural Pillars because it is very important as a first step in the process towards preservation that is right on target, and directly useful to the community. It is also important to know as an effort towards strengthening it. This will form the basis for the need for appropriate follow-up as an effort to defend the identity and wealth of existing cultural heritage. The actions taken are in accordance with existing needs that have referred to the community's current state of knowledge.

Besides knowledge, the thing that was researched was also related to the Cianjur community's understanding of the Cianjur cultural pillars. Understanding the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar for Cianjur people in particular is very important to foster and strengthen character. Their understanding of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar depends on various factors such as the history, education, environment and personal experiences of the respondents. Some respondents are well aware of cultural values and practices, while others may pay less attention to them or even lose touch with the cultural pillars themselves. Globalization, social change and technology can also affect the way people understand and maintain these cultural pillars.

The Cianjur community's understanding of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar relates to the substance contained in the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar of "ngaos, mamaos, and maenpo". Respondents also said that 94% of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillars have a strong appeal in the preservation of Cianjur culture, and they even said that the Cianjur's Cultural Pillars have a universal appeal so that they have the potential to reach the level of society not only locally, but also more broadly both nationally and internationally, especially with regard to the philosophy of life regarding human relations with humans, humans with nature, and humans with God. In the preservation process, there are also community groups that support the efforts to preserve the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar by participating in

activities or organizations that support the preservation of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar. They also knew (93.5%) that the Cianjur's Cultural Pillar describes the value of the Cianjur people, the customs of the Cianjur people, and life advice, especially those found in Sundanese Cianjuran songs.

Most of Cianjur people believe that Cianjur's Cultural Pillar is culture that develops in Cianjur. On the other hand, the numbers of 37% of Cianjur people disagree with this statement. From the three pillars, the community understanding of "ngaos" and "mamaos" is on average (75%) higher than the community understanding of maenpo. In terms of understanding the pillars of culture, only (0.01%) were able to explain the pillars of Cianjur culture, while the rest (99.09%) did not understand, but they could mention the three pillars of culture. The purpose and substance of the Cianjur's Cultural Pillars are not yet understood by the Cianjur community.

Community's Responses and Expectations towards the Preservation of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar

In nearly 94% of people consider that Cianjur's Cultural Pillar needs to be implemented in daily activity, whether in government institutions or other related institutions. Therefore, the respondents considered that community involvement in the preservation of Cianjur's Cultural Pillar is necessary. They also stated that the government as well as related institutions has an obligation to preserve Cianjur's Cultural Pillar through community empowerment.

Some people assume that the preservation of Cianjur culture is carried out by artists, and only develops among the Cianjur elite people. On the other hand, in nearly 82,1% of people understand that the value within Cianjur cultures are implemented in daily life. Another way to preserve it according to 96,8% of Cianjur's people statement is by their creativity. Their respond towards government awareness towards the preservation of Cianjur culture is different, some people said it was a good way and some people said it was a bad way. Because the government introduces these cultural pillars to the community and there are some who say it is not good, it has not been seen in the community. Therefore, their opinion is that preservation can be done by:

1. Must be regularly performed;
2. Required socialized;
3. Need to be hold massively;
4. Must be build a cultural heritage;
5. There should be competitions and events that are given extra attention by the government.

In terms of its existence, some people are do aware about Cianjur's Cultural Pillar existence. Meanwhile, some people do not aware. Even, there are some people who do not know about it at all since they have less information exposure about it. In terms of preservastion and sustainability of Cianjur culture by young people, community revealed that it is really important to be done. Henceforth, young people should be involved in every event that bringing Cianjur's Cultural Pillar to taking up space in order to preserve their local wisdom.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of this research about Regional Cultural Pillar as an Effort to Preserve Cianjur Local Wisdom, it can be concluded that: a) Community's Background Knowledge about Cianjur's Cultural Pillar: Most of the Cianjur people have already known about Cianjur culture, but some of them have limited background knowledge. While interested and supportive of its preservation, there is a need to improve the understanding of Cianjur's cultural pillars, as they are the foundation of the community's culture. b) Public Understanding of Cianjur's Cultural Pillars: In terms of understanding, there are still a number of Cianjur people who do not know exactly what the Cianjur cultural pillars are. They stated that the information they received was limited. Therefore, further research is needed to spread more detailed and in-depth information about Cianjur's cultural pillars to the community. c) Cianjur Community Responses and Expectations about Cianjur Cultural Pillars: The Cianjur community believes that the preservation of these cultural pillars needs to be done through regular performances and intensive socialization. In addition, it is necessary to hold various activities that can promote the cultural pillars of Cianjur, such as competitions through special programs from the government.

In order to follow up on existing policies, especially regarding the development of Cianjur's cultural pillars, special attention needs to be given to the development of these cultural pillars. Besides, it is necessary to continue to improve the development of human resources both qualitatively and quantitatively. Based on this research, it can be indicated that Cianjur's Cultural Pillars need to be preserved in order to achieve a "Cultural Resilience". Align with Sedyawati who revealed about "Cultural Resilience" concept is not something static but it is dynamic. This sustainability is required in order to avoid a negative impact from inside or outside. Dynamization in cultural preservation is important to overcome the saturation of the culture itself. Externally, external cultural influences also need to be anticipated. Therefore, the preservation of the Cianjur Cultural Pillars is an important step in strengthening "cultural resilience."

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