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## PRESERVATION OF HOMBO BATU: BUILDING AWARENESS OF LOCAL WISDOM AMONG THE YOUNG GENERATION OF NIAS

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### **Abstrak**

*Pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesadaran kearifan lokal di kalangan generasi muda Nias melalui pelestarian tradisi Hombo Batu. Dengan pendekatan edukasi, berbagai kegiatan seperti seminar, lokakarya, dan praktik langsung dilaksanakan untuk memperkenalkan nilai-nilai budaya yang terkandung dalam tradisi tersebut. Hasil pengabdian menunjukkan peningkatan pemahaman dan partisipasi aktif generasi muda dalam pelestarian budaya. Selain itu, kolaborasi dengan komunitas lokal dan lembaga pendidikan memperkuat keberlanjutan program ini. Diharapkan melalui upaya ini, generasi muda Nias dapat menjaga dan mengembangkan warisan budaya mereka, sekaligus membangun identitas yang kuat di tengah arus globalisasi.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Pelestarian; Hombo Batu; Kearifan Lokal; Generasi Muda; Nias; Budaya; Pendidikan.*

### **Abstract**

This service aims to enhance awareness of local wisdom among the young generation of Nias through the preservation of the Hombo Batu tradition. Utilizing an educational approach, various activities such as seminars, workshops, and hands-on practices were conducted to introduce the cultural values embedded in this tradition. The results indicate an increase in understanding and active participation of the youth in cultural preservation. Furthermore, collaboration with local communities and educational institutions strengthens the sustainability of this program. It is hoped that through these efforts, the youth of Nias can maintain and develop their cultural heritage while building a strong identity amidst the currents of globalization.

**Keywords:** *Preservation; Hombo Batu; Local Wisdom; Youth; Nias; Culture; Education.*

### **A. Introduction**

In the midst of the strong currents of globalization and modernization, the young generation of Nias faces significant challenges in preserving their cultural identity. Nias, with its rich and unique traditions and culture, possesses many values of local wisdom that need to be preserved (Wibowo, A., 2022). However,

many young people are increasingly alienated from their traditions and cultural practices, which can lead to the loss of a cultural heritage that has existed for centuries (Waruwu, S., 2021).

One important aspect of Nias culture is the preservation of local wisdom values embedded in various traditions, including Hombo Batu, which symbolizes community

solidarity and identity. This local wisdom not only reflects traditional knowledge and practices but also shapes the character and morals of the young generation (Harefa, D., 2024). Therefore, fostering awareness of the importance of local wisdom among the youth of Nias is crucial for sustaining their cultural heritage and identity.

By educating and involving the young generation in cultural practices and providing opportunities to interact with local wisdom, we can cultivate a sense of love and appreciation for their cultural heritage. This initiative is expected to shape a generation that not only understands their history and culture but is also committed to preserving it for future generations (Harefa et al., 2024).

The preservation of local wisdom among the young generation of Nias is not just an individual responsibility; it is a collective effort that involves the community, government, and educational institutions. Therefore, through various supportive programs and activities, we can ensure that the values of local wisdom remain alive and

relevant in the daily lives of the youth of Nias.

Expanding awareness of local wisdom has become increasingly important in facing the challenges of globalization that can threaten local cultures. On Nias Island, Indonesia, one of the rich cultural heritages is Hombo Batu, a tradition that reflects the social, spiritual, and identity values of the Nias community. However, with the passage of time, many young people are beginning to lose their connection to this tradition.

Hombo Batu is not merely a game or ritual; it is an integral part of the life of the Nias community, encompassing educational, social, and spiritual aspects (Suharto, E., 2020). In this context, the preservation of Hombo Batu is crucial for fostering awareness of local wisdom among the young generation. By understanding and appreciating this tradition, it is hoped that the youth can develop a strong cultural identity while also contributing to the preservation of Nias culture.

However, with social changes and technological advancements, many young people are becoming increasingly alienated

from this tradition. A lack of understanding and involvement in the preservation of Hombo Batu can lead to the loss of the values it embodies. Therefore, the preservation of Hombo Batu is crucial not only for protecting cultural heritage but also for strengthening the sense of identity among the youth (Munthe, R. A., 2021).

The preservation of Hombo Batu can serve as a bridge to teach local wisdom values that are highly relevant in today's context. Through these efforts, it is hoped that the young generation will come to appreciate and understand their cultural heritage more deeply and play an active role in maintaining and developing existing traditions. Thus, the preservation of Hombo Batu is not only the responsibility of the Nias community but also part of a collective effort to safeguard Indonesia's cultural diversity (Nias Cultural Heritage Institute, 2022).

Awareness of local wisdom is becoming increasingly important amidst the strengthening currents of globalization. In Indonesia, diverse cultures and local traditions hold values that can provide identity and strength for communities.

However, in this modern era, many young people tend to forget or have a limited understanding of the local wisdom present in their surroundings (Rahman, A., 2017).

Local wisdom encompasses knowledge, practices, and values that are passed down through generations, serving as guidelines for everyday life. It plays a crucial role not only in preserving cultural identity but also in fostering social cohesion and environmental sustainability. According to Abdurrahman, M. (2018), by nurturing awareness of local wisdom, we can encourage the youth to appreciate their cultural heritage while also understanding the importance of maintaining a balance between tradition and modernity (Silalahi, J., 2019).

Through education, training, and community activities, efforts to build awareness of local wisdom can be carried out more effectively. By involving young people in the preservation and practice of local wisdom, we not only preserve cultural heritage but also strengthen their sense of identity and social responsibility (Hasibuan, R., 2019).

Therefore, it is important to explore and document existing local wisdom and promote it as an integral part of education and daily life. With the right approach, we can create a generation that is not only aware of their cultural wealth but also prepared to preserve and develop it in the future.

The importance of preserving Hombo Batu aligns with efforts to maintain cultural diversity in Indonesia. Therefore, this research aims to delve deeper into how to enhance awareness and participation among the young generation of Nias in the preservation of Hombo Batu, as well as how this tradition can serve as an effective educational tool in teaching local wisdom values.

## B. Implementation Method

The method of this service focuses on the preservation of Hombo Batu through a literature-based approach. This method emphasizes the use of written sources to develop programs that can enhance awareness of local wisdom among the young generation of Nias (Harefa et al., 2024).

### Steps of the Service Method

1. Literature Review: Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on Hombo Batu and local wisdom to identify key values and practices.
2. Program Development: Design programs and activities based on the findings from the literature that aim to engage the youth in the preservation of Hombo Batu.
3. Community Engagement: Collaborate with local communities, schools, and cultural organizations to implement the programs effectively.
4. Workshops and Seminars: Organize workshops and seminars to educate the youth about the significance of Hombo Batu and local wisdom.
5. Hands-on Activities: Facilitate practical activities where young people can actively participate in traditional practices related to Hombo Batu.
6. Feedback and Evaluation: Collect feedback from participants and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs in raising awareness and involvement.

7. Documentation: Document the processes and outcomes of the activities for future reference and further research.

By following these steps, the initiative aims to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of local wisdom among the youth of Nias. Through this literature-based service method, it is hoped that the young generation of Nias will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Hombo Batu tradition. This effort focuses not only on cultural preservation but also on fostering strong character and identity among the youth, enabling them to play an active role in maintaining and developing their cultural heritage.

### C. Results and Discussion of the Service Activities

#### Results of the Service

The service activities aimed at preserving Hombo Batu yielded several significant outcomes:

1. **Increased Awareness:** There was a marked increase in awareness among the young generation regarding the significance of Hombo Batu and its cultural values. Participants expressed a

newfound appreciation for this tradition and its relevance to their identity.

2. **Active Participation:** The programs successfully engaged the youth, with many actively participating in workshops, seminars, and hands-on activities related to Hombo Batu. This involvement fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility towards cultural preservation.

3. **Strengthened Community Ties:** Collaborating with local communities and cultural organizations helped strengthen community ties, creating a supportive environment for cultural activities and mutual learning.

4. **Documentation of Practices:** The process of documenting the activities and feedback from participants contributed to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities in preserving local wisdom.

5. **Development of Educational Materials:** Educational materials and resources were developed based on the insights gained from the literature and the activities, which can be used in future programs to

further educate the community about Hombo Batu and local wisdom.

These results demonstrate the effectiveness of a literature-based approach in promoting cultural awareness and engagement among the youth of Nias. The initiative not only highlights the importance of Hombo Batu but also paves the way for continued efforts in cultural preservation and identity formation.

#### Recommendations for Follow-Up

Based on the results obtained, several recommendations for follow-up include:

- a. **Regular Cultural Activities:** Organize periodic cultural preservation activities to maintain momentum and youth engagement.
- b. **Development of Learning Programs:** Implement a curriculum that incorporates aspects of local wisdom into both formal and non-formal education.
- c. **Youth Empowerment:** Establish youth groups or communities focused on the preservation and promotion of Nias culture.

With these steps, it is hoped that the preservation of Hombo Batu and other local

wisdom among the young generation of Nias can continue and thrive.

## Discussion

### 1. Relevance of Hombo Batu Preservation

According to Barus, H. (2020), Hombo Batu is a tradition that embodies profound local wisdom values and is integral to the identity of the Nias community. The preservation of this tradition is highly relevant in the current context, where the youth are often influenced by foreign cultures that can obscure their identity. Through this service, we aim to revive interest and awareness of Hombo Batu as a cultural symbol that needs to be preserved.

### 2. Strategies for Involving Youth

One successful strategy in this initiative was the active involvement of young people in the learning and preservation processes. By providing opportunities for them to interact with the tradition, we were able to foster a greater sense of ownership over their cultural heritage. Discussions and hands-on activities, such as Hombo Batu demonstrations, allowed them to

experience and understand the tradition more deeply.

### 3. Development of Educational Materials

The educational materials developed based on literature review proved effective in conveying local wisdom messages. By introducing stories, moral values, and the historical context of Hombo Batu, the youth not only gained information but also contemplated the meanings contained within. This material can serve as a model for developing curricula that are more oriented toward cultural preservation.

### 4. Collaboration and Synergy

Collaboration with various stakeholders, including local communities, educational institutions, and cultural organizations, played a significant role in the program's success. This synergy created broader support, enabling sustainable preservation activities. Additionally, such collaboration enhanced solidarity among the youth and the community, strengthening the social networks that support cultural preservation.

### 5. Challenges Faced

Despite the program's success, several challenges need to be addressed. One challenge is the lack of access to adequate information and resources for young people to explore local traditions. Furthermore, some may hold skeptical views toward traditional values in the face of modernization. Therefore, a more inclusive and innovative approach is necessary to engage their interest.

### 6. Recommendations for Sustainability

To ensure the sustainability of Hombo Batu preservation and other local wisdom, several recommendations can be made:

#### a. Enhancing Access to Information:

Establish digital platforms that provide information and resources related to Hombo Batu, making it easily accessible for the youth.

#### b. Development of Creative Programs:

Create programs that integrate modern technology with tradition, such as social media content creation that promotes Hombo Batu.

#### c. Facilitating Community Activities:

Organize cultural festivals or

community events that showcase Hombo Batu and other local traditions to strengthen community engagement.

Through these steps, it is hoped that awareness of local wisdom will continue to grow and that the preservation of Hombo Batu will become an inseparable part of the lives of the young generation of Nias.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The service project titled "Preservation of Hombo Batu: Building Awareness of Local Wisdom Among the Young Generation of Nias" has demonstrated a significant positive impact on enhancing the awareness and engagement of young people with local wisdom. Through various educational activities, the active participation of the youth has increased, reflecting their interest and commitment to preserving the Hombo Batu tradition.

The educational materials developed systematically based on literature reviews proved effective in providing a deeper understanding of the values and meanings associated with Hombo Batu. Additionally,

collaboration with local communities and educational institutions has created a synergy that supports sustainable cultural preservation.

Although challenges such as access to information and skeptical views towards traditional values remain, the recommendations outlined provide a clear direction for ensuring the sustainability of preservation efforts. With innovative and inclusive approaches, it is hoped that the youth of Nias will continue to actively engage in maintaining and developing their cultural heritage.

Overall, this service initiative not only succeeded in building awareness of local wisdom but also fostered a sense of pride and ownership of Nias cultural identity among the youth, making it a valuable asset for the future.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the results of the service activities, here are several suggestions to enhance the effectiveness of preserving Hombo Batu and raising awareness of local wisdom among the young generation of Nias:



1. **Regular Cultural Activities:** Organize periodic cultural events or festivals that showcase Hombo Batu and other local traditions. These activities can provide a platform for young people to interact with and learn about their culture.
2. **Development of Digital Platforms:** Create an online platform that offers information about Hombo Batu, including its history, values, and practical tutorials. This platform can engage the youth who are more familiar with technology.
3. **Innovation in Education:** Integrate local wisdom into school curricula in engaging and interactive ways. This approach can help students understand and appreciate their traditions from an early age.
4. **Facilitating Creative Activities:** Encourage young people to create innovative content that promotes Hombo Batu through social media, art, and technology. This can enhance the appeal of the tradition among their peers.
5. **Training and Mentorship:** Provide training for youth on how to implement and promote Hombo Batu, including techniques for teaching or demonstrating the tradition to others.
6. **Strengthening Partnerships:** Enhance collaboration with local organizations, government bodies, and educational institutions to gain broader support for cultural preservation programs.
7. **Continuous Evaluation:** Conduct regular evaluations of the implemented programs to assess their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Feedback and input from the youth are crucial for enhancing the quality of future activities.

By following these recommendations, it is hoped that the preservation of Hombo Batu and local wisdom among the young generation of Nias can be more effective and sustainable, ensuring that this culture remains vibrant and relevant in their lives.

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