

EXPLORATION OF BATIK MOTIFS IN ARTISAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO ENHANCE PRODUCT VALUE

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Abstract

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creative industry,
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The creative industry plays a crucial role in boosting economic growth and creating job opportunities. One tangible manifestation is artisan entrepreneurship, which focuses specifically on handmade products such as batik. Batik holds not only aesthetic value but also philosophical meaning, reflecting culture and local wisdom. This community service program was carried out to enhance the marketing skills of the batik community in Tanjungbuni, Bangkalan, Madura. The goal is for artisans to gain a deeper understanding of the philosophy behind the batik they produce. As a result, artisans can increase the market value of their batik products. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) method was employed, actively involving artisans in the educational process. The results show that the ability to understand and convey the meaning behind batik motifs can enhance the value and competitiveness of batik in the market. Therefore, it is essential to continuously develop artisans' communication skills and knowledge.

Abstrak

Kata kunci:

industri kreatif, batik,
artisan
enterpreneurship

Industri kreatif berperan krusial dalam meningkatkan pertumbuhan ekonomi serta membuka lapangan kerja. Salah satu perwujudan nyata adalah artisan entrepreneurship yang memberi perhatian khusus pada produk buatan tangan seperti batik. Batik tidak hanya memiliki nilai keindahan, namun juga terdapat makna folosofis dibaliknnya mengenai budaya dan kearifan lokal. Pengabdian masyarakat ini dilaksanakan guna meningkatkan kemampuan pemasaran kepada komunitas batik di Tanjungbuni, Bangkalan, Madura. Tujuannya agar artisan memiliki pemahaman terhadap filosofi batik yang mereka produksi. Dampaknya, artisan dapat menaikkan nilai jual batik tersebut. Metode Participatory Action Research (PAR) digunakan dengan melibatkan artisan secara aktif dalam proses edukasi. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan memahami dan menceritakan makna dibalik motif batik dapat meningkatkan nilai jual dan daya saing batik di pasar. Sehingga, penting kiranya untuk terus mengasah kemampuan komunikasi dan wawasan bagi artisan.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the role of the creative industry has expanded significantly within the global economy. The creative industry refers to the businesses whose economic activities originate from creative processes (Bakas et al., 2019). This situation suggests that creativity plays a significant role in driving employment, innovation, and economic growth. Summatavet and Raudsaar (2015) define the creative industry as a financial sector based on individual and collective creativity, skills, and talents, as well as the ability to generate prosperity and employment through the creation and utilization of intellectual property. The key characteristic in this sector is entrepreneurship.

The creative industry plays a crucial role in building, sustaining, and developing artisanal businesses. Various enterprises can be classified as artisan businesses, including art,

design, information technology, music, performing arts, and publishing, each with its own uniqueness. It highlights the importance of examining each artisan business on a case-by-case basis, rather than relying on stereotypical assumptions. In this context, artisan entrepreneurship serves as the primary implementation of the creative industry, with a primary focus on handmade products of cultural and aesthetic value.

Artisan entrepreneurship in the creative industry mainly emphasizes handmade goods (Hill, 2021). Many artisans develop their skills through cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation (Fillis, 2006). By producing products, artisans often add personal touches, with most of their work being handcrafted. Artisans usually produce items in small batches, known for their unique styles (Hoyte, 2019). This contrasts with mass-produced items that are not individually made. As a result, many artisan products are one-of-a-kind, a trait that sets them apart in the market (Igwe et al., 2019).

Artisans operate in industries like brewing, food production, glassmaking, and pottery. Recently, there has been a rising interest in artisan entrepreneurship due to increased attention to handmade goods (Marques et al., 2019). Artisans dedicate more time to creating handcrafted items, thus helping the growth of the handicraft sector. A prominent example of this industry is batik.

Batik is a hand-dyeing technique that has been practiced for centuries, utilizing wax to create intricate patterns. Many Indonesian people wear batik daily, and it is considered a part of their cultural identity. Batik has been inscribed on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage due to its cultural importance in Indonesia. Indonesia's cultural heritage continues to evolve and adapt to meet changing societal needs. In batik production, a pen-like tool or stamp dipped in wax is used to apply patterns, with the process repeated multiple times to create detailed designs (Ratten, 2021). This process involves using different colors or designs in each layer. Batik production is regarded as an artisanal craft due to the specialized knowledge it requires. Batik patterns often symbolize various motifs or stories; some are created purely for visual appeal, while others carry specific meanings and may be worn only by certain individuals (Ratten, 2021).

As a cultural product, batik is deeply embedded in human life. The local wisdom lies in batik inherited from ancestors (Nurcahyanti et al., 2021; Suleman, 2017). It is not only used as clothing, but also fulfills broader human needs. According to Yunia et al. (2019), batik has a strong connection with human life, symbolizing events such as birth and death (Masiswo, 2011). Its spiritual value is strongly preserved, as the detailed motifs serve specific purposes and convey unique meanings. Each region in Indonesia has distinctive batik motifs with profound meanings, often named after their place of origin. The development of batik as part of community life can also be observed through the characteristics and cultural backgrounds of each producing region, such as Tanjungbumi in Bangkalan.

Tanjungbumi is widely known as the batik-producing area in Bangkalan. Administratively, Tanjungbumi is a sub-district in Bangkalan Regency, located along the northern coast, where most residents are fishermen. Historically, women engaged in batik-making while waiting for their husbands to return from fishing, a practice that later became the foundation of coastal batik traditions. The motifs are influenced by coastal life. Its patterns, symbols, and colors have been shaped by foreign cultures such as Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese cultures. The domination of foreign cultural influences results in a wide variety of colors and motifs (MZ et al., 2017). Beyond the diversity of motifs, each batik pattern embodies a unique philosophy and meaning.

Batik with deep and unique meanings tends to be more highly valued by consumers, both in local and international markets. Understanding the meanings behind batik motifs enables artisans to convey stories and context for each piece, thereby increasing its value and expanding market reach. Research by MZ et al. (2017) indicates that South Korean consumers may show greater interest in batik when it offers added value, such as the integration of traditional elements, eco-friendly production, and compelling narratives behind the motifs.

These findings suggest significant opportunities to market Indonesian batik in South Korea through persuasive storytelling.

In reality, most artisans have not fully understood the meanings behind the batik they produce and are primarily involved in technical aspects such as pattern-making, dyeing, and drying. Thus, the community service targeting artisan entrepreneurs or batik artisans within batik-producing communities in Bangkalan is necessary. This community service focuses on training in the social marketing of batik products through storytelling that highlights the meaning behind batik motifs. It is expected that this approach will enhance the selling value of batik fabrics

METHOD

The method used in this community service was Participatory Action Research (PAR). In its implementation, the team actively involved participants throughout the program. This community service aimed to boost awareness among the batik community in one of the batik-producing areas, namely Amin Al-Jabir. Two steps were taken to succeed in this program. The planning step was the first stage, which was done by communicating with the batik artisan community to determine the time and location of the educational activities while considering the artisans' availability. The next step was implementation, which included socialization and educational sessions for batik artisans, as well as a question-answer session regarding the philosophical meanings of batik motifs in the region. The activity was conducted in November 2024 and involved 20 batik artisans who are members of the community.

This program was designed to enhance artisans' understanding of the diversity of batik motifs and their underlying philosophies. Thus, the artisans recognize the meanings rather than merely producing without cultural meaning. Consequently, when consumers inquire about the batik, artisans can provide meaningful explanations and increase the selling value, as each motif carries historical significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service was supported by a Community Service Grant from the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) Universitas Trunojoyo Madura. The education related to motifs and philosophes of batik involved 30 artisans from a community in the Tanjungbumi area, Bangkalan Regency. The activity was conducted from 09.00-11.00 a.m. at one of the artisans' residences. The community service team was fully responsible for the implementation, including planning, coordination, and implementation.



Figure 1. Explanation of Batik Motifs

This program was conducted through face-to-face interaction to ensure optimal comprehension of the material and to encourage discussion among participants. Otherwise, the speaker demonstrated various batik motifs and their philosophical meaning. The participants were shown the batik from Tanjungbumi and asked to identify one of the motifs and interpret the philosophical meaning of it. During the activity, participants were allowed to directly deliver their thoughts and explain the meaning of the displayed motifs. This community service program was made possible through collaboration between the community, lecturers from Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, and MBKM KKNT students.

The session began with the presentation of core material delivered by Dr. Uswatun Hasanah, SE., M.Sc., as a lecturer in the Management Study Program and a batik entrepreneur. She explained the different types of batik and the meanings embedded in their motifs. Therefore, the participants were asked to guess the motifs and their meanings and followed by a question-and-answer session. The speaker explained the philosophy and description of 10 motifs, such as batik sabut, besabe, carcenah, tesate, sekar bejit, daun kerang, alas-alas gegeh se kerrang, lopulo, sekbuluh, and tulip londo.

The activities conducted by the community service team align with the findings of (Kusumojanto et al., 2022), who emphasized that empowering batik artisans through training can foster independent entrepreneurship and contribute to the development of Indonesia's creative economy. There are numerous motifs, one of which is cercenah, a coastal batik pattern. This motif reflects the Peranakan influence in Madurese batik, as cercenah is a plant originating from China. Producing a piece of batik with a cercenah motif measuring 250x105 cm requires approximately ten weeks and involves five artisans. Within the community, batik with the cercenah motif is typically worn during celebrations and major events.



Figure 2. Cerenah Batik Motif

Another motif that existed was sekbuluh. This motif has coastal characteristics as well. Its colors are inspired by the sea. In the Madurese language, the sea is referred to as *tasek* or *sek*. The philosophical meaning of this motif represents the concept of providing benefits to life. A piece of batik with this motif by measuring 250x105 cm, requires approximately 40 weeks to complete and is usually produced by five artisans. This motif is commonly worn during major ceremonies such as weddings.



Figure 3. Sekbuluh Batik Motif

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this community service show that introducing and explaining the philosophical significance behind the motifs created by artisans to potential customers can increase the selling value and is an effective strategy. The storytelling related to the historical culture of each motif is one of the key factors behind the increased selling value they have achieved so far. Previously, artisans were only focused on producing batik and expected customers to be captivated by the beauty of the motifs they created. Now, they have added value. When customers visit, artisans can share the historical meaning of the batik motifs, engage in interactive communication, and boost sales. Through this workshop, artisans can become more effective in promoting their masterpieces.

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