

Research article

Challenges to Batik's Existence: Preserving Philosophical Values Against Accelerated Batik Production

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ORCIDIke Ratnawati: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6305-2842>**Abstract.**

Preservation is what maintains values and customs which have grown and developed alongside cultural practices. Values, traditions, customs, and cultures that grow in a society become important social assets or models that empower the community to understand their quality of life and welfare. People's demands on batik are increasing; therefore, there is a shift in the meaning of batik motifs from traditional ones to new creations, allowing them to follow the latest designs and developments. This article attempts to describe the challenges to the existence of batik, which needs to be preserved against mass batik production. This article emphasizes the visual aspect of batik production. The study also describes how to preserve batik in order for it to survive, and the challenges experienced by society related to the development of batik's visual aspect which will gradually accelerate batik production.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Existence is a state which contains not only several elements of survival, but it can also experience development and decline depending on the human himself as it will be meaningful if people acknowledge and place it on something of value.[1]. In an existence, there is not only an aspect of preservation in maintaining the philosophical values, but there is also a developmental aspect as an element of improvement. Aspects related to conservation are defined in order to protect from extinction and strive to keep it awake and able to thrive in the community. Preservation is carried out in order to maintain its existence along with the times. Preservation referred to in this study is the preservation of the current batik motifs. There is a collective awareness among Indonesian citizens to wear batik because, firstly, it is the ancestral heritage of the nation. Secondly, batik has a uniqueness which distinguishes Indonesia from other nations. This was evidenced by the booming batik industry in the country in the era of globalization [2].

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Traditional batik motifs contain several meanings that are considered quite meaningful for the Javanese people. Classical batik ornaments must be able to create to a sense of beauty, beautiful in the sense of providing a harmonious blend of colors and arrangement of forms in the ornaments complete with their contents. Visualization of these ornaments will provide symbols of life [3]. the art of batik must contain the beauty of the soul, arrangement and color scheme which are symbolized in the ornaments and their contents, so that it will provide a complete picture in accordance with its functions and life lessons which we can understand.

In terms of economy, batik has been widely sold all over the world, not only in Southeast Asia, but also in Europe, Africa, even America and other regions. Tourists feel proud to be able to take batik home as a gift for family, friends, and the loved ones. Batik textile industry provides many assets and benefits for the surrounding community. These extraordinary positive benefits were able to boost exports and imports which could increase the country's foreign exchange since most people tend to choose imported products over local products.[4]

2. METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on identifying the comprehension and qualitative explanations of the problems. According to [5].an art study is carried out through deep involvement in the field or real-life situations. Based on the theoretical study and the framework of thinking presented, this study uses qualitative method which requires a holistic, integrative, descriptive, and qualitative analysis of a cultural phenomenon of society.

Meanwhile, the research approach uses culture studies which covers culture, art and identity as the areas of study. Culture studies uses an interdisciplinary approach that tries to look at cultural phenomena broadly from various influencing factors. In this connection, the influencing factors are education, economy, social, politics, industry, tourism and others.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Maintaining Philosophical Values

Traditional batik has been preserved until now. It has been proven that in ceremonies, village salvation, or other religious activities, batik is still worn and present. The rules and the enthusiasm of the people still exist. Batik is present at every traditional ceremony,

either as a long cloth, *udheng* (headband), *sembong*, as well as decoration and property. The preservation of traditional batik is also maintained from how it is manufactured, which is by using the written batik technique, with scraping, and other existing techniques. The designs are also maintained to be very detailed and complicated, only a careful and patient person can make it. Rules such as calculating the size and number of patterns, performing fasting rituals and special days to start making batik are still there. These activities are still maintained in order to preserve the traditional motifs. Although the price is more expensive when sold, but people still want to buy and have it to be stored or used at certain important events.

Manufacturing traditional batik patterns still refers to the original culture, orasin Javanese culture it is known as "*nunggak semi*" (Javanese do not forget the beginning of a journey and the following journeys). Some of the reasons why traditional batik is still in demand by the Javanese people are, firstly, the community still believes in the value and status of the kingdom as a source of exaltation and is a power of cultural motivation, which then becomes the community's choice as clothing considered to have status value. Secondly, people wear traditional batik clothing for official clothes to complement ceremonies and other purposes which are considered official [3]. Maintaining traditional batik in order to maintain its sustainability is both easy and difficult. It is no wonder that there are some people who still maintain the tradition, but there are also people who don't care about the existence of traditional batik, let alone maintain its philosophical meaning.

3.2. The Acceleration of Batik Production (New Creatively-developed Batik)

An important factor to be noted in an explanation of the history of batik is the developmental points marked by the emergence of new patterns. However, it is urgently necessary to distinguish between novelty which can be seen as "to remain within a certain batik tradition", and novelty which "jumps" out of tradition. The latter group can be exemplified by the various new creations of batik designs made by "free" designers. Although they are quoting or even developing certain ideas from existing traditions, the final work cannot be said to "preserve" or "follow" the traditions.

A development is directed at revitalizing values, norms, traditions, cultures and local wisdoms so that they are in line with changing times as well as practical interests for increasing progress and community independence. On the other hand, there are novelties, both in design and coloring, in batik traditions, and are still perceived as a

continuation and enrichment of the concerned traditions. In this case, the reality of how lively the creativity is in traditions can be directly seen. The new creations appeared in terms of time and place. That is one of the most important information to be presented and highlighted in this chapter.

Development occurs starting from the craftsmen who always try to develop designs in accordance with market demands and the development of the times from motif, color and functionality. Nowadays, the public really welcome the new creative motifs because the designs are attractive and not outdated and the colors are varied. This can be proven by the number of market demands for these new batik motifs that remain stable in the market. In addition, the market share is not only inside and outside the city, but it has also been to foreign regions. The demand for new batik creations is also associated with the selling price, as seen from the fact that traditional batik is expensive because it uses written batik techniques and traditional motif designs that are full of design precision. The newly developing motifs use semi-written and stamping techniques, so the price can be cheaper and can be mass-produced according to consumers' demand. Its function can be for school uniforms, uniforms for certain events, daily clothes and so on.

The influence of modernity in the world of batik ranging from decoration, theme, color, composition, technique, planting and labeling to the characteristics of each production, motif designs are also modified for various uses [6]. From the aspect of pattern development of motifs, designers/craftsmen are more free to give various motifs and colors on a piece of batik cloth. In addition, there can be 2 to 3 motifs created by the designer and this is allowed because there are no specific standards or rules for the development of new batik creations. The motifs made can be from what is around the community, flora and fauna or what is currently trending in the community. Craftsmen/designers also develop a lot of combinations of batik motifs from the existing traditional motifs with other traditional motifs.

Creative pattern batik is in demand by the public because: (a) it ranges from low quality (mori cloth) to high quality (silk cloth), the price is relatively cheap, and affordable by the community; (b) it is used as formal clothing for everyday wear and for formal and semi-formal purposes; (c) it no longer completely refers to classical batik, coloring techniques or free batik techniques (stamp, printing) and using synthetic dyes [4]. From here, the process of accelerating batik production occurs.

Government's involvement, in this case the Industry and Trade Office in every regency, needs to be increased so that batik's existence can catch the eyes of the public and it is increasingly known and becomes more popular. The involvement of

educational institutions that have a direct relationship with the design needs to be made continuously. [7]. Moreover, there should be a synergy between PEMKAB (District Government), DISDIKPOR (Education, Youth, and Sport Office) Educational Institutions, DISPARTA (Tourism Office), so that batik can become a culture in the future and its sustainability aspects will be maintained.

4. Conclusion

It is known that the challenge of the existence of batik is worrisome. Traditional batik is supposed to exist and sustainable to keep up with the times, but we also need to accelerate batik production because the market demands are continuously increasing.

Preservation is intended to keep the values, customs and habits which have grown, lived and developed in cultural practices to remain sustainable and not lost. Values, traditions, customs, cultures that grow in a society basically also become important social assets or models in order to empower the community and to realize the quality of life and welfare. In addition, it is important to preserve tradition to eliminate access to modernization that destroys traditional values such as kinship, mutual cooperation, religious values, local customs, or cultural institutions that have actually been entrenched and rooted in the formation of social life.

With the existence of preservation aspects to maintain philosophical values and acceleration aspects to gain the speed of batik production due to the effects of high market demands, the challenge of existence can directly eliminate the preservation of its philosophical meanings.

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