SHOULD IT BE LEFT EXTINCT OR SAVED? A CASE STUDY ON THE EXISTENCE OF SUKAPURA BATIK, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research aims to assess the viability of Sukapura handwritten batik in the global market and its potential contribution to a sustainable economy in Sukapura Village and Janggala Village, located in Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency.

Method: A qualitative case study approach was employed, utilizing the Miles-Huberman analysis model. This methodology was chosen to ensure the acquisition of valid and reliable results.

Results: Sukapura's handwritten batik possesses the necessary potential to thrive amidst the challenges posed by global competition. Furthermore, it has the capacity to contribute to the development of a sustainable economy. However, for this potential to be fully realized, it is imperative that the government extends support in terms of human resource development, as well as marketing and promotion through online channels.

Conclusion: The continued existence of Sukapura batik hinges upon the proactive involvement of the government and policy makers. It is crucial that they devise and implement strategies that enhance promotion and marketing efforts, particularly targeting the younger generation. By attracting and engaging the youth, Sukapura Village and Janggala Village can secure a new generation of batik makers, ensuring the longevity and prosperity of this traditional craft in Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency.

Keywords: Batik Sukapura, promotion, online marketing, sustainable economy.

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DEVE SER DEIXADO EXTINTO OU SALVO? ESTUDO DE CASO SOBRE A EXISTÊNCIA DE SUKAPURA BATIK, NA INDONÉSIA

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RESUMO

Objetivo: Esta pesquisa tem como objetivo avaliar a viabilidade do batik escrito à mão de Sukapura no mercado global e sua contribuição potencial para uma economia sustentável na Aldeia de Sukapura e na Aldeia de Janggala, localizada no Distrito de Sukaraja, Regência de Tasikmalaya.

Método: Foi utilizada uma abordagem qualitativa de estudo de caso, utilizando o modelo de análise Miles-Huberman. Esta metodologia foi escolhida para garantir a aquisição de resultados válidos e confiáveis.

Resultados: A batik manuscrita de Sukapura possui o potencial necessário para prosperar em meio aos desafios colocados pela competição global. Além disso, tem capacidade para contribuir para o desenvolvimento de uma economia sustentável. No entanto, para que esse potencial seja plenamente realizado, é imperativo que o governo amplie o apoio em termos de desenvolvimento de recursos humanos, bem como de marketing e promoção por meio de canais online.

Conclusão: A existência contínua de Sukapura batik depende do envolvimento pró-ativo do governo e dos políticos. É fundamental que elaborem e implementem estratégias que aumentem os esforços de promoção e marketing, visando especialmente as gerações mais jovens. Ao atrair e envolver os jovens, a Aldeia de Sukapura e a Aldeia de Janggala podem assegurar uma nova geração de criadores de batik, garantindo a longevidade e prosperidade desta arte tradicional no Distrito de Sukaraja, Regência de Tasikmalaya.

Palavras-chave: batik sukapura, promoção, marketing online, economia sustentável.

1 INTRODUCTION

Batik is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages spread across the archipelago. UNESCO has designated batik as the Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity on October 2, 2009 (Galih, 2017). Almost every region in Indonesia has batik with motifs that depict the local wisdom of the local community. One of them is Sukapura batik, written batik produced by batik craftsmen in Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency. The characteristics of this batik are in the colors which are dominated by maroon, dongker blue, brown and white, as well as patterns or motifs that depict the surrounding natural environment (Ramdhani, 2022).

However, despite its long existence, the existence of Sukapura batik has not been widely recognized by the Indonesian people and seems to be less famous than batik from other regions (Adj, 2021). People are more familiar with Solo batik, Pekalongan batik, Garutan batik, and Cirebon batik than Sukapura batik. This condition needs attention from the local government to introduce Sukapura batik to the public.

Sukapura batik, as a work of high artistic value, has become part of the culture of the people of West Java, even recognized nationally (Syarifuddin, 2017). The development of Sukapura handmade batik, which has existed since the 1900s
(Herlinawati, Heryana, & Erwantoro, 2019), has experienced ups and downs due to various factors, including the lack of batik resources, marketing, capital, batik quality and batik patterns produced. The current batik makers are mostly over 40 years old and the regeneration process is not going smoothly, as few young people are interested in working as batik makers and choose other jobs that are considered more promising.

The focus of this research is “How is the marketing and promotion of Batik Sukapura in maintaining business and developing local wisdom-based tourism potential in Tasikmalaya Regency, West Java?”.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The history of Sukapura batik in Tasikmalaya began around the XVIIth century. The story of the beginning of Batik in Tasik is when Prince Diponegoro fought colonialism. Because the Central Javanese felt unsafe there, a number of people migrated, fleeing to the West Java area. It was these migrants who, according to the story, began to develop batik cloth. These migrants began to develop batik in the Ciamis and Tasikmalaya areas. The batik developing areas in Tasikmalaya are Wurug (Urug), Sukapura, Mangunreja and Manonjaya.

The culture of batik making in the Sukapura community already existed before the arrival of the refugees. The arrival of the refugees had an impact on the development of Sukapura batik. The community began to be influenced to use Soga (a tree capable of producing batik colors) after the arrival of refugees from Central Java. This made the development of Sukapura batik even more rapid because it was easier and faster. Sukapura batik experienced a very rapid development, even the official website of the West Java Provincial Government noted that Tasikmalaya was once the center of the West Java provincial batik industry.

Batik Sukapura is a batik center in Tasikmalaya Regency, located in Sukaraja Subdistrict, Sukapura Village. This center produces batik cloth with a wide variety of workmanship, batik cloth by writing as well as stamped. For the type of product, this center produces side cloth, sarong, clothes and shirts from batik.

Sukapura batik designs are taken from the regional characteristics of Tasikmalaya Regency and expressed in the form of batik drawings. Various batik designs and images are made in this center such as rereng suliga, peuteuy leaf, gambir saketi, taleus (taro) leaf, puger, bilik, latar hideung, doblang, renvil, seling puger and others.
The writing of batik motifs on the cloth is also done carefully and painstakingly to produce batik motifs that have high artistic value. The characteristic colors of Sukapura batik are maroon, dongker blue, black, and bone white. The fabrics used are prima and primisima cotton fabrics which have cool and comfortable properties.

Batik cloth that is done by writing and using traditional methods has high fastness, meaning that it is difficult to fade. In fact, according to several sources of Sukapura hand-written batik cloth, if washed, the color will get better (brighter).

A cloth can be called batik if the process of writing images or ornamental varieties on any medium uses batik wax as a color barrier. If the process is without using batik wax, it cannot be called batik, and is said to be batik-patterned textiles.

3 METHODOLOGY

This research design uses a qualitative research design with a case study approach, which is research that explores a particular phenomenon and a time and activity. Information is collected in depth using various data collection procedures over a period of time. The use of a qualitative approach in this study is to obtain an overview of the relationship between marketing and promotion with the sustainability of Sukapura batik.

The case study approach is applied to explore the promotion and marketing behavior of Sukapura batik business actors in running their business and the tourism potential that can be developed from the Sukapura batik production process. In case studies, researchers explore as much data as possible in order to provide a complete and in-depth view of the object under study (Mulyana, 2010).

Robert K. Yin's case study approach has elements of the main questions of how to and why on the issues studied in real life (Yin, 2011). The primary data of this research are the results of observations and in-depth interviews with informants consisting of batik makers, batik entrepreneurs, cultural observers, and the cooperative and industrial offices of Tasikmalaya Regency. Secondary data were obtained through literature studies and documentation related to promotion and marketing with the existence of Sukapura batik.

Data collection techniques were obtained through in-depth interviews and direct observation at batik-making places in Sukapura Village and Janggala Village. Observation was conducted to support the shortcomings in the interviews. Another method was the study of documents related to Sukapura batik.
The selection of informants was carried out through purposive sampling technique, namely having individuals as data sources or informants intentionally according to research needs (Bungin, 2011). The informants in this study consisted of key informants, main informants and additional informants. Key informants are individuals who know various information about Sukapura batik. Additional informants are people who are directly involved in making batik, as well as its promotion and marketing. Additional informants are parties who are not directly involved in the production, promotion and marketing of Sukapura batik.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sukapura batik craftsmen are spread across two areas, namely Pasar Kolot Village, Sukapura Village and Ciseupan Village, Janggala Village. Both are located in Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency. Both areas produce Sukapura batik with their own characteristics, from the production process to marketing.

4.1 BATIK MAKERS IN PASARKOLOT VILLAGE, SUKAPURA VILLAGE

Kampung Pasarkolot is an area that was first known as the Sukapura hand-written batik center. It is located on the edge of Jalan Cibalananrik. Based on the narrative of the batik artisans interviewed, in the area, in the past, almost every house had a batik maker. They worked individually and were not incorporated into a business group so that when they faced difficulties with capital, labor, and marketing, they chose to close their hand-written batik business, some of which switched to printed and stamped batik.

One of the well-known batik entrepreneurs in the Pasarkolot area is Pak Enung. In addition to employing the batik makers, Enung also accommodates the batik products that he markets to Tasikmalaya City and South Tasik. Enung’s contacts were extensive enough that he had an exhibition of batik at the State Palace during the time of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and was invited to exhibit in Japan. After Enung passed away, the business stopped because there was no one to continue it.

One of those who still maintains the Sukapura batik business is Mrs. To’ah Fatonah. The 73-year-old woman is still faithful to making batik. She goes through the process of making batik cloth from the beginning of making patterns, dyeing, until it becomes a piece of batik cloth that is ready to be marketed. To’ah often works alone. Occasionally, she is assisted by her only daughter, Nursahbani, a 30-year-old woman who
works as a batik skills teacher at SMA Plus Al Hikmah, Janggala Village, Sukapura District, Tasikmalaya Regency.

For To'ah, making batik is not just about scratching wax onto cloth using a canting, but has become an inseparable part of her life. Making batik has become a habit that must be done, because if not, there is something missing from her. In addition, making batik is an entertainment as well as a therapy for her peace of mind. To'ah said that she enjoys the process of making batik. When she is making batik, it is a time to calm herself down and give her pleasure.

She learned her batik skills directly from her mother, who was also a batik artist. To'ah said, starting from a sense of liking, and wanting to make batik, she stole the opportunity to make batik, because at that time her mother had not allowed her to make batik on the grounds that she was still small and afraid that her only canting would break. Eventually, little To'ah's behavior was noticed by her mother, who finally allowed her to learn batik from scratch.

Together with her sister, Uun Kurniasih, To'ah has been making batik cloth until now. However, due to her health condition, her sister stopped making batik and only markets batik cloth produced by batik makers around her house on Jalan Cibalanarik, under the name Kurnia Batik.

Nursahbani, To'ah Fatonah's daughter, said that the reason for maintaining Sukapura batik in the Pasarkolot area was because there was no one else producing Sukapura batik in her area. Moreover, the pioneer of Sukapura batik in the Pasarkolot area, H. Enung, has passed away and his family no longer continues his business. Despite the limited capital, Nur admits that production is still carried out, if the capital begins to accumulate. The batik work is done by her mother, and she assists in the ngarorod process or removing the night covering the cloth. The process is carried out at the back of her house on Jalan Cibalanarik, Kampung Pasarkolot, Sukapura Village, Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency.

4.2 BATIK MAKERS OF KAMPUNG CISEUPAN, JANGGALA VILLAGE

The only group of Sukapura batik artisans is the Gandok Jaya Mukti Joint Business Group (KUB GJM), located in Ciseupan Village, Janggala Village, Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency. The KUB, which was formed on October 20, 2019, is
chaired by Edang Ramdani, a staff member of Janggala Village, who has an interest in developing Sukapura batik.

Starting from Bank Indonesia's concern to preserve the almost extinct Sukapura hand-written batik, craftsmen were gathered to form a business group that would be fostered to increase the quantity and quality of Sukapura hand-written batik production, which has been constrained by capital, promotion and labor. The discussion with the Head of Janggala Village resulted in the establishment of the Gandok Jaya Mukti Joint Business Group (KUB GJM) Batik Sukapura. The name Gandok Jaya Mukti is taken from the name of the place where the KUB was formed, namely in the Gandok area, where the Janggala Village Head lives.

Currently, there are 25 batik makers who are members of KUB GJM, all of whom come from Janggala Village. They were originally batik makers who had worked for batik entrepreneurs in the Pasar Kolot area. The batik makers are all women, most of whom are over 40 years old. They are daily workers, who are paid based on the work they produce each day. Batik making is not their main job so there is no obligation to come every day. They are given leeway to do their work first before making batik at GJM. The division of labor is done in shifts to complete orders that come to Edang.

Edang’s interest in batik stems from his concern that Sukapura’s hand-drawn batik production is almost extinct. Yati, Edang's wife, who understands the batik production process, strengthened Edang's resolve to preserve Sukapura's batik through his production. Although he is unable to make batik using canting, Edang's ability to make batik patterns encourages him to maintain the existence of Sukapura batik through developing his own designs and including philosophical content in each batik design he makes.

Edang explained that the batik motif designs he makes, for certain motifs, are usually not directly produced, but first consulted with the descendants of the Sukapura Regent, who play a role in maintaining Sukapura’s cultural arts and traditions. The descendants of the Sukapura or Tasikmalaya Regent, R.A.A. Wiratanuningrat, live at the Sukapura Heritage Waqaf Foundation, located around Sukaraja Square. Only after Aom Anom’s approval was the motif shown produced.
4.3 SUKAPURA BATIK MARKETING

The marketing of Sukapura batik between Pasarkolot and Janggala Village craftsmen is different. For a long time, batik made by Pasarkolot craftsmen, Sukapura Village, has been marketed to the South Tasikmalaya region, namely Cikalong. The distribution of batik is done directly by the craftsmen, as was once done by Mr. Enung, and is currently still being done by Mr. Uyung. The distribution is done once a week, directly to batik traders who open stalls in the markets in the Cikalong area, by buying up. There are also resellers who deliberately come to buy goods from craftsmen in Pasarkolot by selling them to batik enthusiasts in the Cikalong area, in the market or selling them individually. The selling price range of Sukapura batik produced by Pasarkolot is between 100 thousand to around 1.3 million rupiah. There is no online marketing by batik craftsmen in Pasarkolot. They are constrained by technological stuttering in operating social media as a channel for marketing and promoting the batik they produce.

Meanwhile, the marketing of KUB Gandok Jaya Mukti's hand-written batik is done in two ways, offline and online. Offline marketing is done through exhibitions facilitated by KUB GJM's fostering agency, Bank Indonesia. This face-to-face marketing is important, because Sukapura hand-written batik is not classified as cheap batik. With a price range of 300 thousand to 700 thousand rupiah, the targeted market share is the upper middle class. Marketing of GJM batik is not only to individuals, but also to government agencies and Janggala Village officials.

4.3.1 Marketing Communication Behavior

Communication behavior that occurs in the production and distribution process of Sukapura batik tulis products takes place in the family, work environment, and social environment. In the family environment, communication is carried out to maintain togetherness and continuity of production. Communication in the work environment is carried out through interpersonal communication and small environment communication, with the aim of launching the production process and maintaining production quality. Communication with customers is done face-to-face, through social media, and through exhibitions.

Communication like this is done to maintain customer loyalty, as well as to facilitate product marketing. Communication with the business supervisor, namely Bank
Indonesia, is carried out in order to meet the promotional needs of Sukapura hand-written batik for business continuity which cannot be fulfilled through family finances, due to the large costs. Marketing of Sukapura batik produced by GJM is also carried out online through Instagram @batiktulis_soekapoera.

4.4 PROMOTION OF SUKAPURA BATIK

Promotion is a strategy to inform and influence target consumers to buy the products offered. Promotion is important for both large-scale and small-scale businesses. Promotion is carried out not only when a product is launched, but also when the product is already in distribution. Promotion has several objectives, namely creating brand awareness, building brands, increasing consumer loyalty, and advising consumer education about the benefits of the products offered. Promotion can be done with various events, namely advertising, sales promotion, publicity and direct marketing. In a promotion strategy, business people need to consider the target market, budget, and promotion objectives.

The promotion of Sukapura hand-written batik in the Pasarkolot area, Sukapura Village, is not running, due to several obstacles, namely most of the craftsmen are middle-aged and they do not have the skills to use social media on cellphones to promote the batik products they produce. They also do not have assistants or other people who can help promote their products.

Another thing is that the artisans already have a market share and feel comfortable with the ongoing conditions. They feel that even without promotion, the batik they produce has already gained its market share.

Generally, batik artisans in Pasarkolot, Sukapura Village work individually. They carry out the batik process themselves, from making patterns to coloring and drying them until they are ready to be marketed. They also market their own batik to markets in the Cikalong region. The markets in the Cikalong area are Cikalong Market, Cibeber Market, Singkir Market, and Kubang Market.

Uyung Sopyan, a batik maker in Pasarkolot, delivers his orders to the sellers himself once a week, every Monday, using a motorcycle. In addition, there are also sellers who take their batik orders to Pasarkolot themselves. One such seller is Diah, a resident of Cibeber Village, who takes her batik orders to To’ah Fatonah herself. The pick-up is usually on Saturday. Uniquely, the pickup is done based on Diah's intuition on the
calculation of the completion of batik making done by To'ah. This is done because Diah and To'ah are not skilled in using cellphones to communicate. There is no online marketing and offline marketing through exhibitions carried out by batik makers in Pasarkolot. The main distribution of Sukapura batik from Pasarkolot is through direct delivery to markets in Pasarkalong Sub-district, South Tasikmalaya.

In contrast to the batik makers in Pasarkolot who carry out the distribution of Sukapura batik on their own, the distribution of hand-written batik produced by KUB GJM is carried out with the assistance of various parties, including Bank Indonesia, the supervisor of KUB GJM, who helps market Sukapura hand-written batik produced by GJM through exhibitions organized by Bank Indonesia, as well as exhibitions organized by other parties and Bank Indonesia includes its assisted MSMEs as exhibitors.

Another party that assists GJM in marketing is the Tasikmalaya Regency Office of Cooperatives, SMEs, Industry and Trade (Diskopukmindag), by including GJM in exhibitions held in the Tasikmalaya area, as well as outside Tasikmalaya. In addition to participating in exhibitions, another effort of Diskopukmindag Tasikmalaya Regency to promote Sukapura batik is by ordering batik institutionally or privately, to be used as office uniforms or clothing used at certain events.

Efforts to promote Sukapura Batik from Janggala Village are also made through social media. The media used are Instagram, Tiktok reels, Youtube, Whatsapp, website, and online catalog. The social media address link used is summarized in https://linktr.ee/batiktulis_soekapoera.

Promotion of Sukapura batik is not only carried out by craftsmen. Parties who are interested in the beauty of batik and the conditions of the craftsmen, make Sukapura batik as content to fill the media channels owned by content creators. One of them is Balaka Sinematografi, a cinematographic community that elevates Sukapura hand-written batik audiovisually into a documentary film entitled Batik Sukapura. The film depicts Sukapura batik as a work of ancestral heritage that needs to be preserved, because its making has been going on for a long time and the craftsmen consider batik not only as a source of their income, but a part of life that they love, because it can provide peace so it must be preserved.

This movie is packaged not as a pure documentary, which features many opinions or stories told by direct sources, but as a movie that has a storyline whose characters are played by two actors.
4.5 TOURISM POTENTIAL OF SUKAPURA BATIK

Batik as an Indonesian cultural heritage has great potential to be developed as a tourism attraction. Some batik centers in Indonesia have made batik-making activities a tourist destination. Similarly, Sukapura batik in Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency, can be developed into a tourist destination for people who want to know about the process of making batik.

Sukaraja sub-district itself, has several tourist sites that are often visited by local people and from outside the Sukaraja area, namely Panyangrayan Hill and Pujiningrum Hill. Bukit Panyangrayan, is a hill in the Sukapura Village area that offers a beautiful view from a height.

Pujiningrum Hill is located in Pasirhaleuwing Village, Janggala Village, Sukaraja District, Tasikmalaya Regency. Pujiningrum Hill has an altitude of about 500 meters above sea level and offers a very beautiful natural scenery while looking at Sukaraja City from a height. The hill also offers selfie spots and gazebos.

Sukapura Village and Janggala Village, with the presence of batik makers, are very likely to become batik tourism destinations, as several batik centers in Central Java and Yogyakarta have done, for example Giriloyo Batik Village, in Wukirsari Village, Yogyakarta, has become a tourist destination for traditional batik making and bringing home the results (Khairi, 2022). Then Solo, Central Java, has many interesting batik museums and batik craft centers.

Based on this explanation, the potential for batik tourism that can be initiated in Sukapura Village and Janggala Village is learning to make batik by incising canting containing batik ink or malam into a pattern that has been drawn on a white cloth for batik.

It is not easy to develop batik tourism. It needs support from the government, industry players and the local community. Not just intentions, but supported by concrete actions to realize batik tourism in Sukaraja District. There needs to be a gathering of policy makers to design a form of batik tourism that can be developed in Sukaraja Sub-district and be able to lift the economy of local residents.

5 CONCLUSION

Sukapura batik artisans are located in two areas, namely Sukapura Village and Janggala Village. Both have a variety of differences in many ways, from how to produce...
batik to its marketing. Both run in their own corridors. However, they share the same problems, namely batik regeneration and marketing development. Batik produced in Sukapura Village is marketed to the Cikalong area, South Tasikmalaya. Meanwhile, the marketing of batik produced by KUB Gandok Jaya Mukti (GJM) is done with the support of Bank Indonesia as a business advisor and Diskopukmindag Tasikmalaya Regency. The market share is the general public, as well as ASN within the Tasikmalaya Regency government.

Product promotion using social media is not running in Sukapura Village, due to constraints in the mastery of the tools by craftsmen, most of whom are middle-aged. Meanwhile, the promotion of GJM batik products from Janggala Village through social media is carried out. The various social media used are summarized in one link.

The documentary film Batik Sukapura, emerged as a form of concern from the filmmakers of Balaka Sinematografi in Tasikmalaya, about the condition of the batik makers in Sukapura, which will be feared extinct, due to the absence of a regeneration process. This movie can also be used as a promotion of Batik Sukapura and tourist destinations in Tasikmalaya Regency.

Suggestions that can be conveyed from this research, professionalism in running a business is still applied even though the business is a home industry, in order to maintain business continuity. In addition, the use of social media needs to be intensified to increase turnover and expand marketing. The government and people who care about the condition of Sukapura hand-written batik, need to intervene to find the best way to support the development of the Sukapura hand-written batik business so that it remains sustainable.

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