

Revitalizing West Javanese Culture: Enhancing Batik Kasumedangan's Marketability on National and International Fronts

Mariana Rachmawati¹, Deden Sutisna², R.Adjeng Mariana F.³
Suharno Pawirosumarto⁴, Lilis Yuaningsih⁵, Cucu Hodijah⁶, Santi Maria⁷,
Wandi Kurniadi⁸

Universitas Widyatama Bandung¹²³⁴, Institut Manajemen Wiata Indonesia⁶, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Administrasi Bagasasi Bandung⁵⁷⁸
mariana.rachmawati@widyatama.ac.id, deden.sutisna@widyatama.ac.id,
adjeng.mariana@widyatama.ac.id, suharno@widyatama.ac.id, lilis.yuaningsih@widyatama.ac.id,
cucu_hodijah@imwi.ac.id, santi.maria@stiabagasasi.ac.id, wandi.kurniadi@stiabagasasi.ac.id

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Abstract

The Ministry of Industry continues to explore the potential of the batik industry, particularly in West Java, with the aim of enhancing competitiveness and the welfare of batik and weaving artisans. In West Java alone, there are 27 districts and cities actively producing batik with a variety of motifs, employing around 4,000 batik artisans. According to the Minister of Industry, Saleh Husin, West Java boasts a rich array of textile creations, including batik and weaving, influenced by its agrarian and industrial culture which fosters openness and dynamism among its people. This increasing innovation and preservation of West Javanese batik will contribute to its greater recognition. The batik from West Java is highly diverse, featuring bright and basic colors, with each motif and color carrying its own significance. Despite these attributes, in 2021, the performance of the Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs in West Java was relatively low, failing to rank among the top ten textile exporters in Indonesia. The underperformance of these SMEs can be attributed to ineffective strategic management, which has been hindered by external environmental factors, inadequate company resources, and ineffective competitive strategies, ultimately resulting in very low business performance.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, Smart Villages, Information and Communication Technology, Training, Mentoring, E-Commerce

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Industry is actively exploring the potential of the batik industry in West Java to enhance competitiveness and improve the welfare of batik and weaving artisans. West Java, with its 27 districts and cities and approximately 4,000 batik artisans, boasts a rich variety of batik motifs, including the well-known mega mendung from Cirebon and others like Singa Wadas, Patran Keris, and Simbar Menjangan. The Minister of Industry, Saleh Husin, highlights the region's dynamic and open nature due to its agrarian and industrial influences, which foster innovation and preservation of batik (Cravens & Piercy, 2023). The Ministry, through initiatives such as the Batik West Java Foundation, supports local batik development via artisan education and product marketing, aiming to enhance artisan welfare and create new job opportunities in the creative economy sector. West Javanese batik features a wide array of patterns and colors, each carrying its own significance and meaning.



Figure 1. Traditional West Javanese Batik and West Javanese Kasumedangan Batik

Cultural revitalization involves efforts and strategies to preserve and enhance local culture, such as the Kasumedangan batik, which forms a crucial part of cultural identity. This includes maintaining traditional techniques while encouraging innovation to keep the craft relevant and dynamic. Marketability, on the other hand, focuses on aspects that influence the commercial appeal of Kasumedangan batik in both national and international markets. This encompasses the product's quality, design, pricing, and promotional activities (David, 2022). Effective cultural revitalization not only strengthens the cultural heritage but also improves the marketability by ensuring that the batik remains appealing and competitive. By aligning traditional craftsmanship with contemporary market demands and trends, Kasumedangan batik can achieve greater visibility and success in diverse markets, fostering both cultural pride and economic growth (Drucker & ElsevierDrucker, 2021).

Commercialization strategies are essential for boosting the market penetration and appeal of Kasumedangan batik on a global scale, involving methods such as targeted marketing, efficient distribution channels, and strategic partnerships. These strategies aim to enhance the visibility and desirability of Kasumedangan batik, thereby expanding its reach beyond local markets (Gupta et al., 2020). The successful implementation of these strategies not only positions the batik favorably in the international arena but also significantly impacts regional development. As the commercialization of Kasumedangan batik advances, it contributes to the economic and social growth of West Java by creating job opportunities, stimulating local businesses, and fostering cultural tourism. This ripple effect helps uplift the regional economy, improve the quality of life for local artisans, and promote sustainable development through the integration of traditional crafts into the modern market (Hitt et al., 2022).

International market penetration involves navigating both the challenges and opportunities of entering and competing in global markets, requiring strategies to overcome barriers such as differing cultural preferences, regulatory requirements, and market competition. At the same time, it presents opportunities to leverage global trends, tap into new consumer segments, and expand brand reach. Consumer perception plays a critical role in this process, as the attitudes and opinions of consumers towards Kasumedangan batik, whether in local or international markets, directly influence purchasing decisions and marketing success (Kotler & Keller, 2021b). Positive consumer perception can enhance the attractiveness of Kasumedangan batik, leading to increased sales and market share. By understanding and addressing consumer preferences and feedback, companies can tailor their marketing strategies to effectively position Kasumedangan batik in diverse markets, ensuring that it resonates with target audiences and capitalizes on global opportunities (Kotler & Keller, 2021a).

In 2021, the performance of the Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs in West Java was relatively low, as evidenced by their absence from the top textile exporters in Indonesia. This underperformance is attributed to several factors including ineffective competitive strategies, limited innovation, and weak market positioning compared to other regions. The SMEs struggle with internal resource constraints such as inadequate working capital, limited market accessibility, and insufficient intangible assets, including underdeveloped human resources. Furthermore, the organizations have not effectively adapted to external environmental forces like global economic conditions, government policies, labor demands, and competitive pressures. These challenges highlight a critical need for the SMEs to improve their strategic management, enhance their resource base, and better navigate external opportunities and threats to boost their market competitiveness and overall business performance.

The purpose of this research is to analyze and address the underlying issues affecting the performance and market competitiveness of Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs in West Java. The study aims to identify the gaps in their competitive strategies, resource management, and market positioning, as well as to explore the impact of external environmental factors on their performance. By examining these aspects, the research seeks to develop actionable strategies to enhance the SMEs' marketability, improve their operational efficiency, and ultimately strengthen their presence in both national and international markets. The goal is to provide insights and recommendations that will support the revitalization and growth of the Kasumedangan batik industry, contributing to its economic and cultural significance.

2. Method

The implementation method for the program involves several key steps to enhance the performance of the Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs, guided by Mrs. Nafisa Sariningsih. The process begins with a site survey to assess the current state of the SMEs. This is followed by training sessions and group discussions to address specific challenges and share best practices. An analysis will then be conducted to identify priority issues and barriers faced by the SMEs, alongside an evaluation of market opportunities both locally and internationally. Finally, the program will provide ongoing coaching and education on business management, including understanding external environmental factors, resource management, competitive strategies, and technology integration. This comprehensive approach aims to strengthen the SMEs' capabilities and improve their market presence (Sugiyono, 2022).

3. Results and Discussion

The challenges faced by Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs in West Java, as discussed with Mrs. Nafisa Sariningsih, revolve around several key issues affecting their business performance and competitive strategies. Despite having a range of batik motifs, including the well-known mega mendung from Cirebon, the SMEs' performance remains low compared to other regions like Yogyakarta and Pekalongan. They struggle with creating innovative products, adapting to external environmental changes, and offering competitive pricing. The weaknesses include inadequate resource ownership, limited working capital, and insufficient intangible assets such as skilled human resources. These issues contribute to the difficulty in

competing effectively and adapting quickly compared to rivals. The management's inability to fully address these external and internal challenges further impairs the SMEs' business performance and market positioning. Addressing these problems is crucial for improving the competitiveness and overall success of the Kasumedangan batik industry (Lovelock, 2022).

To address the identified issues, the author proposes using a Hybrid Model approach, as outlined by Dalgic, to guide the implementation of government strategies and policies aimed at promoting the internationalization of Indonesian batik. This model involves three key phases: antecedent, planning, and execution. The antecedent phase involves understanding the current challenges and preparing the groundwork for international expansion. The planning phase focuses on developing strategies and policies to overcome barriers and capitalize on opportunities (Tjiptono, 2023). Finally, the execution phase entails implementing these strategies to effectively enter and compete in global markets. By following this structured approach, the goal is to enhance the international presence and competitiveness of Indonesian batik, including Traditional Kasumedangan Batik SMEs.

Planning Phase

In the planning phase, as described by Dalgic, SMEs in the batik industry must identify and assess relevant markets for their products. This research focuses on how government strategies and policies support SMEs in their internationalization efforts. The government plays a crucial role in helping SMEs explore global market opportunities by collaborating and establishing institutions that provide assistance in market identification. This includes creating networks at both international (external) and domestic (internal) levels. The government's approach involves implementing policies through the establishment of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Center, which aims to facilitate the international expansion of batik SMEs by connecting them with external actors and providing strategic guidance for entering global markets (Wheelen et al., 2021).

Human Resource Enhancer

To enhance the capacity of batik SMEs, the government has implemented several initiatives aimed at developing and promoting batik production to meet global market demands. This includes organizing training programs, research, and development activities in collaboration with industry stakeholders, artisans, and academics. These efforts are designed to foster innovation and adaptation within the batik industry by focusing on natural dyes and waxes, leveraging local resources, and providing technical support to improve product quality and manufacturing processes.

Additionally, the government has addressed production and distribution costs by offering facilities and equipment support. Recognizing that insufficient funding can jeopardize production, the government has introduced regulations, such as the Ministerial Regulation No. 13 of 2018, to assist SMEs with machinery and equipment restructuring. This initiative aims to enhance productivity and ensure that batik SMEs can maintain competitive production standards, especially for export-oriented enterprises.

The government also supports batik SMEs through national exhibitions, such as the Gelar Batik Nusantara, held biennially as part of National Batik Day celebrations. These events showcase batik products, including fabrics, garments, and

accessories, and feature fashion shows and galleries that attract both domestic and international visitors. These exhibitions not only promote batik products but also foster national pride and appreciation for the art of batik.

Furthermore, to ensure product quality and competitiveness, batik products are encouraged to obtain ISO 9001:2015 certification, adapted as SNI ISO 9001:2015 for local standards. This certification process, managed by the Lembaga Sertifikasi Produk (LSPro) Toegoe, involves rigorous testing of batik products for various quality attributes, with certification fees and laboratory tests varying in cost. This standardization effort is crucial for improving the marketability and credibility of Indonesian batik on the international stage (Zulganef, 2020).

Execution Phase

In the execution phase of the Hybrid Model, the focus shifts to how SMEs implement internationalization strategies to enhance their global market presence. Domestically, Indonesia supports batik SMEs through specialized markets and cultural villages that promote batik products. These markets, often developed in collaboration with associations like APPBI and the government, serve both as commercial hubs and cultural attractions, showcasing a diverse range of batik products and prices. These initiatives aim to elevate batik as both a traditional craft and a tourist attraction, enhancing its visibility and accessibility within the country.

On an international scale, the government supports batik SMEs through international exhibitions, promotional activities, and the establishment of Indonesian cultural centers abroad. These efforts are designed to broaden the global reach of Indonesian batik by fostering partnerships and expanding market access. International exhibitions and promotional events help introduce batik to global audiences, while cultural centers serve as platforms for showcasing batik and other Indonesian crafts, further integrating batik into the global market and cultural landscape.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the government's strategies and policies to promote the internationalization of Indonesian batik have been relatively effective, given the limitations faced by batik SMEs. The Hybrid Model's phases—planning, execution, and antecedents—illustrate a non-linear process where ongoing adjustments and reflections are necessary. However, the implementation of internationalization strategies has seen a shift, with the government increasingly managing exhibitions and promotions directly through diplomatic channels rather than involving batik SMEs. This approach has led to a disconnect where SMEs are not actively engaged in international efforts, limiting their learning and participation. Additionally, the lack of a centralized strategy and persistent competition among batik industries have further contributed to the suboptimal export performance of Indonesian batik.

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