
Elaboration of Batik Pattern Design Application in Indonesia

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Abstract – *Batik is cultural expression that contains symbolic meaning of philosophy and high aesthetic value for Indonesian people. The unique method makes Batik represent Indonesian unique character. As its application expanding, unfortunately modernization has brought incorrect interpretation about history existence of Batik design and application, it leads to a major problem in philosophy meaning and design innovation of modern Batik. Most of previous researcher only focus on the technique to preserve the method in producing Batik. Focusing in Batik motif and pattern design is required. By formulating a good structural connection from the philosophy of an object and its symbolic meaning, this paper will discuss Batik motif and pattern design which suitable for modern design application. This paper offering a comparative study of three category of development which applied philosophy, contemporary style and basic design principle approach to design a modern batik pattern. New improvement on designing a new modern Batik motif design are essential to applied on innovative product which contain a good philosophy in order to create a strong and consistent message to the target market. So, it can bring Batik to the modernization and international market with the high appreciation to Indonesian traditional culture.*

Keywords: *Indonesian batik; batik motif design; batik pattern.*

INTRODUCTION

As one of interesting cultural traditional art from Indonesia, batik has its own unique magnet for the foreigner sight, its complexity process successfully attracts the international attention. Implementing traditional batik motif design to a modern design application required specific research on meanings as well as dimension in its interpretation, principles, goals and its influence to the designer and also to the target audience. Previous study by Sunarya (2016) stated that we will make a clear statement about modern application on traditional batik design by simply viewing or referring its characteristics to the traditional meaning of batik in its aesthetics and identity. Which mean the comprehension of batik in the past must related or describe with the meaning as it will be use, applied or required in the future as a form of the modernity (Sunarya, 2016).

However various innovation and application of modernized batik in creative industry is developed rapidly only considering the economic value and unfortunately most of batik craftsmen make business strategic as the foundation to produce batik only to get high profit. In result batik was just only a production not as a creation, every aspect of batik starting to leave behind the philosophy meaning and degrading the precious value of batik. Destroying the value of traditional culture in modern day will produce a problem on our cultural heritage. At this stage preservation of batik traditional art culture is consider very important for Indonesia national identity because it is the key for Indonesian people to identify themselves.

Several researches stated that Batik motif design is reflecting the value of tradition which dynamically support the society. Batik design and motif design is acquired from the lesson of life, religious activity, culture, and nature condition in Indonesia (Anas, 1997)". In the field of art and design batik technique and its media application development is considered as new idea. Interesting research from Laksmi *et.al.* (2014) she concludes that "Through precise placement, composition of batik motifs can improve the aesthetic value and provide special features that promote local content in the present design". This means that batik can provide knowledge about the preservation of ancestral heritage so that it still exists to answer the needs of today's society (Laksmi *et al.*, 2014). As in various flood of modernity impacts in the world of batik span from ornaments, themes, colors, composition, techniques, naming, and labeling to the characteristics of each production spaces. The motifs design also modified for varieties of use. According to Baroto in his research on "Development of Indonesia new batik design by exploration of recent context" he is adding a new category on batik motif design

development. He called it "others design" which is batik motif design using special software; Batik Fractal (emphasis on the technology on designing batik motif), batik motif design for organization needs such as school/university uniform and batik motif design for recent strategic issue like batik motif design for Indonesian Train Corporation (emphasis on the implementation). He also includes the thematic, segmented and symbolic oriented batik motif design (Indrojarwo, 2008).

By addressing current development of Indonesian traditional batik motif design, then continue to explore and implement the findings to construct the representative or new method on designing batik motif by exploring traditional batik motif design method and make a new combination with the modern design theory. Motivated by these consideration, this paper offer a method on designing the modern batik motif and pattern by emphasizing the philosophy and modern contemporary approach and creative exploration of design element.

Batik Design Development Foundation

Batik motif design improvement have to fulfill the standard in every aspect. This referring to our traditional batik, batik motif is designed in accordance with the standard (*pakem*) or provisions that apply at that time, because the context of batik is identity so using batik is strictly based on the standardization and bound to time usage, place and social status or position (Darmaputri, 2015).

This foundation should never take apart from the whole activity related to batik design just like "*Nunggak Semi*" this is a concept that introduced by Go Tik Swan one of the Indonesian pioneer in developing "Indonesian Batik" he said that "*Nunggak Semi*" is the correct concept of cultural development which emphasizes that the development of a culture should not lead to uncontrolled development but it should develop based on the old (traditional or classical) (Rustopo, 2008:96, cited from Saksono, 2010)). Although the old traditional culture will be replaced in time, but from that milestone a new culture should blossomed. Go Tik Swan applies the concept of "*Nunggak Semi*" in order to participate in preserving and developing Javanese culture. He states inspiring words as following; The only thing I can do is take care of my environment and guide people around me to not deviate from traditional lines. If you are going to create a new one, first learn the old one, so that the creation is better (Tirta, I. 1980).

Iwan Tirta can be consider as the representative of batik care taker who successfully applying this concept. Based on Era Soekamto the one who now hold the legacy of Iwan Tirta private collection she shared a story about Iwan Tirta basic method in designing batik motif that he always thinking out of the box (limitless creativity) but at the same time thinking inside the box (concerning the *pakem* rule) (Dewaraja, 2015).

On the recent condition, now contemporary batik although contain traditional motif inside, it is more flexible to wear because the form of clothing and motifs are not bound by the provisions of batik wear in earliest time. Nowadays people can freely give their identity through what they wear. One of them are through batik that they wore. Proscribed Batik can be used by ordinary people who can afford to buy batik. Contemporary batik cannot be interpreted in the same way to interpret traditional batik because the values that bind it are already changed (Darmaputri, 2015). As the creativity keeps progressing it is expected to solve the deadlock in growing interest on batik to the young people. Amaragita batik became one of example which is consider solved the problem, based on her fondness for something young and modern, amaragita batik is touching the young market with the principle on preserving batik technique.

Batik development is not enough just by keep making and designing the same motif all the time. But to understand and adapt the way our ancestors expressed and inherited their art soul is the important essence that must continue to be maintained for batik development although transformed in all applications should be able to become Indonesian batik that represent identity of any young, old, modern, and classic (Diananto, 2016).

In conclusion from above discussion is proved by another successful batik businessman Doellah Santosa owner of the Danar Hadi Batik, he said batik motif design development is widely open for the designer creativity which also influenced by modern context and environment that dynamically

changes time over time. It becomes the responsibility of the next generation to develop and preserved batik as a cultural heritage to become the national identity (Doellah, 2002).

METHODS

Methodology that used in this paper is qualitative research method using grounded theory. It consists of several steps:

- 1) Problem formulation stage. Observe the current situation of the selected topic and review the possible solution.
- 2) Theoretical overview usage stage which is literature review, reviewing recent applicable theory regarding batik motif design in modern application.
- 3) Data collection stage, literature data and theory were collected through various methods such as field observations, interview with batik makers, current related Journal or publication research, book research, news and trend, regarding batik motif and pattern design.
- 4) Data analysis stage, comparing three kind of a new method to directly applied in designing batik motif design and implement it on products. New method in this research is referring to feature of the traditional batik design method that should be maintains in order to keep the artistic value of the history and philosophy. Combine the additional theory related to product design knowledge in accordance as the one who play important role to convey the development correctly. It's benefits to the batik craftsmanship and the batik product to be able to reach global market with maximum product knowledge from the batik designer, and automatically preserve the culture with a strong image of Indonesian culture.
- 5) Conclusion and report writing stage. Summary of the result findings and suggestion for the future research.

Those five stages of grounded theory research above are develop simultaneously. After relevant observation, collection of data, and organizing the selected data then constructs applicable method from all source of collected data at the same time.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

So far batik pattern design which applied in modern design is expanding to a wider exploration. For examples is the one that applied in commodities goods such as; Pillow case, rain coat, bags, shoes, sandal, book cover, helmet, key chain, pen, food packaging, and all daily products. This application might consider as unsuccessful implementation if it was applying the old traditional sacred meaningful philosophical batik motif/pattern design into unrelated essence of product. This unrelated essence application is the one that start the miscommunication about batik motif philosophy. Then, lead to batik degradation, misused, unorganized, and dishonor the philosophy.

This research is focus on finding answer on the lack of new creative and innovative batik motif/pattern design. That's why this research is discuss and compare method on designing batik motif which became the foundation part on batik design. This research purpose is to encourage designer on answering the problem to shape the future of traditional batik art with full understanding on translating their philosophy meaning into a modern design.

How to design a new modern batik motif design with high philosophy meaning and how to implement it into modern design innovation is the main attention of this research. So everyone who intended to applied batik motif/pattern design into a modern design application should fully understand on how to deliver the messages with high philosophy meaning. just like Darmaputri (2015) said Batik motif design improvement have to fulfill the standard in every aspect. This referring to our traditional batik, batik motif is designed in accordance with the standard (*pakem*) or provisions that apply at that time, because the context of batik is identity so using batik is strictly based on the standardization and bound to time usage, place and status of ownership (social status or position) (Darmaputri, 2015). Therefore, it's able to emerge the development of batik art in modern design application.

To make a further analysis on the result of the batik pattern design and its application in modern design in this research discuss three example of popular design works which consider success on implementing traditional batik art in modern design application.

Popular design work will be discussed in the scope of comparative analysis. The popular works is selected in accordance to the works in this research. These works are considered able to represent successful works on implementing batik motif/pattern design into modern design. These works are categorized into 3 type of implementation and design process which then continued with the explanation of improvement that have been made in this research. Here are the popular design works explanation;

Traditional Batik Motif Design in The Modern Application

First category is the work from “*Ciandari* Batik application” their main concept is exploring traditional batik motif and then implement it in modern application such as pillow case and other interior products. This work is consider successful on exploring the application of new media to implement the traditional batik pattern. The batik pattern that applied here had the aesthetic function as shown in Figure 1.1 the batik pattern is incorporate aesthetically in the design which makes the products visually beautiful and easily touching the emotion of the target market who loved traditional things. Although it was a modern design but the color combination from the batik pattern are still brings up the traditional feel of the product shown in Figure 1.2 target market such as international tourist will be interested in this product.

In assumption this work is still redesigning, recomposing, and reconstructing traditional batik motif which are open a repetition of the traditional motif which potentially degrading the philosophy meaning to the traditional batik essence, it will miscommunicate the essential message of the traditional batik motif design which have been inherit to the generation. While good application on designing batik motif is to handle this miscommunication.



Figure 1. Batik Pattern in Pillow Case
Source: Ciandarijogja.blogspot.co.id



Figure 2. Traditional Color Design
Source: Ciandarijogja.blogspot.co.id

Contemporary Batik Motif Design in the Conventional Application

Second category is the work from Faramita Dewi, her batik fashion brand is “*amaragita batik*” this work is exploring new batik motif design with implementation in conventional application. As we know that batik is commonly referring to cloth so this work is consider applying the new motif design in conventional design which is cloth. The strength of this work is in the exploration of the motif design. It is explored in modern approach using the stylish trendy and creative design aesthetic. In her popular work Dewi is exploring modern icon robot into her batik shirt as shown in Figure 1.3 this kind of motif is really interesting to the young people. The trendy approach to batik design is consider a fresh innovation to the batik industry in the scope of fashion industry.

In assumption this work has the same design approach to batik motif design in designing batik motif design, but the philosophical approach which became the foundation on batik design process is

lost in this work which can also lead to the degradation of batik substance. While *pakem* is trying to hold the philosophical approach which applied carefully in traditional batik motif design to avoid the wrong impression that expressed from the batik wearer. Motif exploration must using related object to the message that want to be sent so it will have a connection to the batik motif design.



Figure 3. Batik Robotic Pattern Design
Source: @amaragita Instagram Photos

Contemporary Pattern Design in the Modern Application

Third category is the work from Melissa Sunjaya with her product brand "*Tulisan*" she is exploring certain illustrated motif design and implementing it in a new modern application. "*Tulisan*" is Indonesian bags accessories and interior product brand as shown in Figure 1.4 that successfully implementing philosophical approach in modern design. Just like a review from Elle Decoration Indonesia Magazine said that "Melissa fuses traditional and contemporary elements to create a personalized aesthetic that reflects energy, virtue, and humanity." Specific messages that build are aesthetically clear "...with a touch of graphic art forming limited edition prints, *Tulisan* evokes a distinct and bold artistic statement." Her bold statement in every design work is the one that build a connection to batik motif design foundation. Melissa uniquely put a story on each illustrated edition which is based on a composition of pen & ink sketches and accompanied by a short fiction with various themes of dreams, love and hope. What makes this work is selected as the popular design work which can be an inspiration to my design work is that Melissa design work is representing the design method on philosophy approach in every design process that Melissa do and also design elements and principles which is carefully crafted in her works.



Figure 4. Tulisan Product Show
Source: www.tulisan.com

As discuss in previous literature that batik is all about telling a story, the story were translate into a pattern design which tells an inspirational things for the next generation. Here Melissa share her story in the same way as the batik motif designer before does, she's able to translate one of Indonesian legendary inspirational story into modern design work as shown in Figure 5 which also can give impression as batik does.



Figure 5. Story Theme Pattern Design in Modern Design Work
Source: www.tulisan.com

In assumption to this work, although Melissa did not focus into traditional batik pattern development as regular batik motif, but her work are able to represent one of the designer role to preserve their traditional art culture which is consider very important for Indonesia national identity, because it is the fundamental method for Indonesian people to identify themselves and compete in the modern globalization.

CONCLUSION

By examining the strength and weaknesses of the popular design works in their different aesthetic approach, Setting more focus to the development which related to batik motif design in modern design application that have been conduct in this. This comparative batik motif design purpose is to positively encourage young designer to be able to implement batik motif design in any modern design application. From the comparative analysis above this research conclude that an improvement can be done in:

1. Creatively innovate the motif design exploration to bring the fresh design in batik pattern design and automatically build a connection to the product itself.
2. Philosophical approach as the foundation in batik motif design to communicate correctly about the identity of Indonesian batik art.
3. Build a connection between traditional cultural heritage and the modern design, so young creative designer able to preserve and communicate their cultural identity in globalization.

This paper discussion also can bring a good implication to young designer, which this paper is open a new media to study and explore more about batik pattern design. More creative and aesthetic approach using design elements and design principles in exploration of traditional art and design. Developing new ideas to create modern batik motifs pattern and maintain the philosophy message which became the solution to preserve Indonesian batik. Understanding the traditional process of designing batik motif can open a new creativity on applying the traditional art into modern use, alongside with preservation of the traditional art.

To the batik craftsmen, this paper is open a new exploration of the batik motif design source which is unlimited, so batik pattern design will not just repeating the old pattern design. As the improvement of the technology in batik making, applying the design method of batik motif design also develop the improvement of the batik industry in Indonesia. Fresh new design will open various segment of targeted market that can be reach.

To the target audience, this research result is offering a deeper understanding on product knowledge of Indonesia batik, as the solution to avoid the misused of batik cloth which is the Indonesian traditional cloth wear. New design which explored specifically for the targeted audience will also making the Indonesia traditional batik pattern design exist and became more classic and more valuable to the market.

Although development of batik can be approach in many ways, focusing on the meaningful pattern design can be one specific path to develop a high influential batik design in fashion, interior and other related industry. By considering other theory on designing modern batik design can open a development of new media application in order to reach various product. By adapt explore and incorporate new method of design for example the surface pattern design theory will make batik motif design had more innovative exploration and wider aesthetic approach, so this can be concluded into a further research recommendation.

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