

DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF SEMARANG BATIK CRAFTSMEN BASED ON ASSISTANCE STRATEGY OF FRACTAL BATIK IN THE EFFORT TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

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***Abstract:** The aim of this research was to discuss the development and empowerment of Semarang batik craftsmen based on sustainable assistance strategy in the effort to build sustainable competitive advantage. The urgency of research to be achieved was to position Semarang batik which its current growth is still in a position of embryos to grow in a higher position. The population in this research was the entire batik craftsmen, joint business groups, and self-help groups in the city and district of Semarang. The number of samples was 80 in which the number of samples was greater than 30 and fewer than 500 so that it represented in the most of the research. This research used the sampling technique of non-probability sampling (the sampling did not provide equal opportunities to the members of the population to be sampled), which is purposive sampling in which the selection of a group of subjects was based on the characteristics or specific traits considered to have a close relation with the characteristics or properties of the previously known populations. The criteria used by researchers was that the production had started for more than one year. The batik acceleration strategy in the development of Semarang batik craftsmen based on the excellence of specific creative techniques after many efforts to improve the batik creative products, product differentiation and cost-oriented creative technique. Then, it required sustainable assistance strategy to improve sustainable competitive excellence in the craftsmen. Batik motif design is important to be the force for batik craftsmen, so the use of all devices are necessary to be able to explore batik motives to be taught to the craftsmen in order that they can explore their imaginations and designs by providing the assistance of making batik design using batik software. The strategy model was formed to be the reference in development acceleration of small and medium industries, not only on the batik industry but it is also expected to be applied to SMEs in general.*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the market has already provided a lot of products with various advantages and added value offered by competitors, making it difficult for a company to seize competitors' high market shares. On the other hand, when entering new markets, a company requires considerable cost. The better alternative for companies is to make efforts to seize and retain existing markets.

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Competition also applies for batik SMEs. Batik industry is actually a business activity supported by the One Village One Product (OVOP). The concept of One Village One product (OVOP) is a development approach to regional potential to produce unique global class products which are typical to the area to take advantage of local resources. One village may be extended to sub-districts, district / city, and other territorial units in accordance with their potential and scale economically.

Batik Semarang industry is required to produce more products with distinctive designed motives so that customers do not move to another company. It is a challenge for the batik industry to retain customers amid intense competition by taking various measures to improve the quality and image of the products appropriately to the needs and tastes of customers which are always changing. The competitive advantages possessed of a product will increase the benefits that can provide a high benefit to the company.

The deeper findings regarding the problems of Semarang Batik was based on the results of surveys and research conducted by the research team from 2013 to 2015 in Science and Technology for People and MP3EI / Masterplan Acceleration and Expansion Of Indonesia's Economic Development in the batik clusters is considered to the habit of making batik without considering the existing market needs. This happened because most of Semarangan batik craftsmen are in a phase of newly growth and developing in the last three to four years. It makes the experience and skills of batik craftsmen in Semarang unreliable.

The locations of Semarangan batik craftsmen which spread in several regions of Semarang make the lack of communication, caring and sharing among batik craftsmen and it is one of the obstacles. Although the facilitations in the form of coaching, mentoring, and training had been carried out until the creation of clusters undertaken by the government, it could not run optimally due to lack of assistance and mapping / classification to craftsmen's potential.

One effort to develop creative and innovative works is concerned with the design of Semarangan batik motif which must be accepted by the market and does not leave the typical uniqueness of Semarang. The specific advantages of creative techniques are proven to improve performance. However, the organizational performance that has been performed has not been optimal, so it has not been able to increase sustainable competitive advantage (Tjahjaningsih et al, 2015). Sustainable competitive advantage is the result of a formulation and implementation of appropriate strategies, rooted in the three-dimensional strategic management practices, i.e. the success in the efforts to build a base for competition, the way to compete and the management of advanced competition arena (Aaker in Ferdinand, 2003). The companies that can adjust to the requirements of industry or the market will survive and thrive, while the companies that fail to adapt fail and exit the industry / market.

This can be seen in the fact of Semarangan batik industry that has not been able to compete with the batik industries in other cities (Tjahjaningsih, *et al.*, 2015). Based on the findings in the field, from the respondents' answers to the open questions, the advantage of specific creative techniques specific based on creative products, cost-oriented creative product differentiation and creative technical advantages, and organizational performance, The approach to change the mindset of entrepreneurship and perform the development and empowerment by sustainable assistance are necessary and expected to be able to position Semarangan batik to be well-known by the public so as to build a sustainable competitive advantage. The aim of the research was: to discuss the development and empowerment undertaken by Semarang Batik SMEs based on sustainable assistance strategy in the effort to build a sustainable competitive advantage. The research urgency to be achieved was to position Semarangan batik which the current growth is still in a position of embryos to a higher position. The strategy model formed will be the reference for the acceleration in the development of small and medium industries, not only on batik industry but it is also expected to be applied to SMEs in general.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship, in general, has a similar essence due to the traits, characters, and characteristics inherent in a person who has the determination to realize innovative ideas into real business world and can develop them strongly (Drucker, 1994). Entrepreneurship is an ability to create the new and different. Furthermore, Drucker (1994) explains that, in epistemology, entrepreneurship is a value required to start a business (start-up phase) or a process of doing something new (creative) and something different (innovative).

Longenecker and Justin G (2001) describe entrepreneur as someone who starts and/ or operate a business. The recent developing formulation of entrepreneur is mostly derived from the concept of Schumpeter in 1934 (in Longenecker, Justin G, 2001). Entrepreneurship refers to a pursue of creative or new solutions to the challenges faced by a company, including the development or improvement of products and services, and administration techniques and new technology to perform the organizational functions. The essence of the function of entrepreneur is the introduction and implementation of new possibilities in the field of economic; first, introducing new product or a new quality of an item which is not known by customers; second, the implementation of new production methods, from a new scientific discoveries and new ways to handle a product in order to be more profitable; third, opening a new market which is the market that has not been entered by the relevant branches of industry or existing initial

marketing; fourth, the opening of a new basic source or half-finished or the sources which are still to be developed; fifth, the implementation of new organization.

Consensus in strategic management and entrepreneurship offers three dimensions that underlie the tendency of organizations to entrepreneurial management process; innovation (which introduce new goods, services, or technology, and to develop new markets), risk taking (which makes sensible decisions when facing the uncertainty of the environment and systematically reduces risk factors), and proactive (which looks for new ways to bring the concept of entrepreneurship to the result).

According to Miller, an entrepreneurial company is the one that moves in the market of innovation products, running less risky business, and the first that comes up with proactive innovation. Innovative dimension reflects the tendency of companies to use and support new ideas, experiments and creative processes that may be successful in introducing new products or services, new things, or technology processes (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). Therefore, this dimension is a basic willingness to leave old and existing technologies or practices to find new things to get better ways to improve business performance.

Proactive dimension refers to forward-looking perspective in taking initiatives to anticipate and pursue new opportunities and participates in the emerging markets (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). In the research of Lumpkin and Dess (2001), they found that the tendency of companies to act proactively positively associated with performance. The tendency to act proactively make companies have the ability to anticipate changes or needs in the market and be the first to act against this situation.

The dimension of risk-taking reflects the active willingness of companies to pursue opportunities even though the opportunities involve risks and provide result uncertainties. According to Venkantraman (1989), the dimension of risk-taking captures the level of risk-taking in a variety of resource allocation decisions as well as product selection and market.

Professional Competence of Entrepreneur

The approach of Resource-based theory (RBT) emphasizes the improvement of competitive advantage derived from the heterogeneity of resources and the typical capabilities of companies (Barney, 1991). Company's success will be achieved if the company/ organization has the ability to utilize resources in a productive so as to create distinctive competencies / different.

Amit and Schoemaker (1993) explain that competence is company's ability to exploit different resources using a variety of organizational processes to achieve

the desired results (Amit and Schoemaker, 1993). The other definition states that competence is the ability and knowledge of a company that become the basis of the company's day-to-day problem solving (Henderson and Cockburn, 1994). Competence is also expressed as the ability to organize works and deliver values in which competence may include: (1) communication, (2) involvement, and (3) a great commitment to work along the boundaries of organization (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990).

Boyatzis (1982), Thomas and Herrisier (1991), and Barlett and Ghoshal (1997) in Man and Lau (2005) classify three categories in the professional competence of entrepreneur that includes: (1) attitudes/ traits, (2) knowledge/ experience, and (3) skills/ abilities.

Man (2001) in Nakata and Chinintor (2007) describe the definition of entrepreneurial competence as individual characteristics by including (1) personality traits, (2) knowledge, and (3) skills that lead to higher or more effective entrepreneurial performance that can be assessed through the behavior of the entrepreneur. The other definition of core competencies for small business owners in the research of Gilmore, Audrey, Carson, David and O'Donnell, Aodheen (2004) describe the categories of (1) knowledge, (2) experience, (3) communication, and (4) judgment. Recently, the experiments have been developed based on experiential knowledge through individual's experiential learning.

Entrepreneurial competence as identified in the research of Nakhata and Chinintorn (2007) consists of then characters tht include (1) the ability to find opportunities, (2) the ability to build relationships, (3) the analytical ability, (4) innovative ability, (5) operational ability, (6) human ability, (7) strategic ability, (8) commitment ability, (9) learning (learning), and (10) personal strength. The research explains that entrepreneurial competencies and human capital as the factors that affect the success of an entrepreneur's career involved 388 entrepreneurs in Thailand.

Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Peteraf (1993) defines sustainable competitive advantage as the ability to sustain above normal return. Hoffman (2000) defines sustainable competitive advantage as a long-term benefit from the implementation of a "unique value creating strategy" that simultaneously is not applied by competitors. Aaker in Ferdinand (2003) explains that sustainable competitive advantage is the result of appropriate formulation and implementation of strategies rooted in the three-dimensional strategic management practice, namely the success of the efforts to build a base for competition, the way to compete as well as the management due to superior competition.

RESEARCH METHODS

Types of research

This research was a descriptive research and explanatory research. The data used in this research was the primary data sourced directly from the respondents.

Population and Sample

The research population was the whole batik craftsmen, joint business groups, and self-help groups in the city and district of Semarang. Population is a group of individuals or objects of research with the qualities and characteristics that have been determined. The number of samples was based on the opinion of Sekaran (2006) suggesting that the sample size of greater than 30 and less than 500 in most research has represented, and when the sample is divided into sub-samples, each category requires a minimum of 30 samples.

This research used the sampling techniques of non-probability sampling (the sampling by not providing equal opportunities to the population members to be sampled) and purposive sampling in which the selection of a group of subjects is based on certain characteristics or properties considered to have a close relation with the characteristics or properties of the previously known populations (Sekaran, 2006). The criteria used by the researchers was that the population had already produced batik for more than 1 year.

Data and Data Sources

The data in this research was collected using survey method by distributing questionnaires directly. The intention of distributing the questionnaires directly was to give the questionnaires to respondents to be filled out.

Data collection technique

- a) Documentation; by learning the relevant books, data and archive available in the research location.
- b) Questionnaire; by spreading the questionnaires to the respondents with the questions which were initially provided by the researchers.

Data Processing Technique and Data Analysis

The data processing technique used descriptive analysis. The descriptive analysis was aimed to know the general description of the respondents

DISCUSSION

Respondent Identification

The samples in this research were the batik craftsmen, joint business groups, and self-help groups in the City and District of Semarang based on the advanced industry of Semarang batik cluster classified at the stage of embryo / beginner of 80 respondents. The number of questionnaires distributed to Semarang batik craftsmen was 100 questionnaires, and the number of questionnaires returned and completely filled was 80 questionnaires. Based on the data from the appropriate questionnaires to be processed of 80 questionnaires, some information was obtained on the sex, age, length of work, and education. The followings are the respondent identification results based on the frequency distribution:

Based on the frequency distribution analysis, it was found that there were more female respondents of 70 people (87.5%) than the male accounted for 10 people (25.5%). It was because the profession of batik craftsmen was preferred by female rather than male. The males were mostly in charge of the household. Based on the results of the survey, it can be explained that the majority of batik Semarang craftsmen was dominated by women who were more skillful and interested in the business of batik

All respondents had a long period of work for more than one year. Twenty five people (31.25%) had the length of work for more than five years. It is in line with the reality in the field that Semarang batik starts to grow and develop started from 2006 or almost 10 years of batik business in Semarang city. Based on the results of the survey, it can be explained that the majority of Semarang batik craftsmen have all run the business for more than one year and mostly has been working for more than 5 years.

Most respondents were at the age range between 41-50 years old accounted for 35 people (43.75%), and the number of young craftsmen under the age of 20 years was 1 person (1.25%). The older age indicates a number of positive qualities brought into the work, such as experience, judgment, strong work ethic, and commitment to quality. Based on the results of the survey, it can be explained that the majority of Semarang batik craftsmen was aged 41-50 years old as a mature age in running their businesses.

Most respondents were in the educational level of high school accounted for 50 respondents (62.5%), and eight respondents (10%) were in post-graduate educational level. This phenomenon is related to the phenomenon found in the field that most craftsmen have sufficient education to work for their living. Based on the survey results, it can be explained that the majority of Semarang batik Semarang craftsmen were in the educational level of high school as the basic education that had been completed.

Position Mapping of Semarang Batik SME

Batik SME as a family business ownership is distinguished in the organizational context in important ways in which family business is often characterized by the dominant ownership due to the family members in different levels in the company's operations related to the purpose and behavior of business activities. The ownership referred to batik craftsmen is the owner of a family business who is responsible for the operation of the company and as the decision maker.

By considering the reemergence of Batik in Semarang in early 2006, for nearly 10 years, the production of batik has not made the position of Semarang Batik in a developed or firm condition (MP3EI research results by Tjahjaningsih, *et al.*, 2015). The maturity in making Semarang typical motives is not noticeable because most of the craftsmen who were just starting in the batik industry switched their professions and businesses to more promising businesses. This has the negative impact on the ability to explore the motives that can be used for batik. So far, the trainings conducted by the relevant agencies/ offices were only related to the process of making batik. Yet, the main attraction of batik cloth is the existing motives or patterns.

The continuity of batik businesses require innovation associated with the implementation of business by the entrepreneurs supported by their creativity. Creativity can be learned or improved. To improve the level of implementation, the craftsmen should consider attending workshops, trainings, assistances or teachings of creativity or comparative study to other places for a consultation. At the beginning of the implementation, the assistance strategies need to be configured dynamically by looking at the competition in the environment to do better with intense communications. A sustainable assistance program should be focused on this area.

Most of the craftsmen who still exist had the average age at productive age, but the ability to explore a design using computer became the obstacle. From various motives produced, they still tend to be monotonous, and there have not been a lot of efforts to innovate and have the creativity to develop batik patterns and motif design that can be the distinguishing feature for the city of the characteristic of the craftsmen. On the other hand, a competitive advantage should be able to be created by Semarang batik in order to be able to survive among batik businesses that continue to grow and thrive in almost all all cities in Central Java in particular. Therefore, batik businesses can create value for their customers. Constantly, the sustainable competitive advantage can be seen from the superior customer value, namely the company is able to offer products with the perceived quality / benefits which is far beyond the perception of the price / sacrifice. The products are not just satisfying customers, but also more effective than the competitors. High superior customer value shows that the company is able to understand the

customers adequately. Thus, the company will be able to create a product that the customer wants at present and in the future; what is perceived by customer at the moment and what they might feel in the future. Creating superior customer value is one of the strategies in creating a sustainable competitive advantage.

Sustainable Assistance Strategy

Innovation is associated with the implementation of entrepreneur business supported by creativity. Creativity can be learned or improved. To improve the implementation level, entrepreneur should consider attending a creativity learning workshop or using the services of a consultant. The implementation in initial level set dynamically and the competition in the environment to do better due to poor communication. The batik SMEs are required to give priority to natural coloration including to make environmentally friendly batik, to conduct their own natural coloring, to design batik motives and the to fill the motives themselves so that the prices can always compete with the batik products from other companies. In addition, the quality of products is the other priority using quality fabric and long-lasting coloring (durable), so fabric color does not fade soon and companies are always trying to be innovative to the pattern and motives according to customers' desire.

The attraction of batik depends on the motif design produced so that it will be favored by customers. Motif design expertise will also affect the selling price of batik. Motives can also describe and characterize the origins of batik with its local characteristics. Batik motif design is an activity in batik making, for hand-made, stamped, and printed batik. In designing batik motif, many things can be done by exploring the imagination or symbolizing some existing objects which are then translated in the form of writing on a piece of batik cloth. For that purpose, the assistance had been implemented through a training of fractal batik software using a computer device with the hallmark of Semarang city. With the assistance strategy that had been performed, the following matters will be achieved:

1. Sharpening the craftsmen's ability to use computers and the software of fractal batik in developing batik motives.
2. The craftsmen can make batik motives from the existing library into diverse motives relatively very fast.
3. Providing new discourse in making batik motif design in other ways as commonly performed by making use of the fractal batik software with the desired motives quickly.

To achieve the goals above, the solutions made to the craftsmen were as follows:

1. in order that the ability to design batik motives using fractal batik software can be sustained so that the skills acquired are complete and the ornament design of batik motives produced is more numerous and varied and can

be seen from various sides in three-dimensional shape, it is necessary to carry out the training of fractal batik in Pro level.

2. Providing the examples of a variety of batik motives that can be generated from Pro fractal batik software quickly.
3. Providing training and mentoring on the use of Fractal Batik Software in Pro level.

The purpose of the training of batik motif design using fractal batik software in Pro level was to improve the skill in using fractal batik software completely and integrately. It was also aimed to be able to change the parameters of the motives created and can get a variety of new shapes that have never been imagined before in three and two dimensions.



Figure 1: Design of Fractal Batik Motif

*Source:*Fractal Batik

Basic level capabilities in designing batik ornaments using the fractal batik software was performed by the craftsmen in the basic level training of fractal batik conducted at the beginning of August 2016. In order to improve the ability to use the fractal batik software in order to have more developed ability, it is necessary to carry out the training in Pro level, which requires the insertion of parametric elements in the fractal batik software.

By using algorithms and math calculation, batik motif can be made easily using computer. As a result, the motif can be made relatively fast and easy to reproduce. In addition to the application on a piece of cloth, batik motif can also be applied on wood and acrylic media.

Fractal Batik is the batik with its design touch (pattern and variety of decoration) made using mathematical formulas and computer technology (Figure 1).

The use of computer-assisted design with the software of fractal concept can combine the drawing techniques with effects as well as the electronic brush that can accelerate the creation of motives and then propagated for further process in making batik.

Batik ornament design development at Pro level can design the motives in 2D and 3D to create a variety of batik ornament motives created in 3D and printed in 2D for a layout on fabric. At the moment, we are accustomed to seeing the motives from the front side, and how if we are also able to see the sides and rear as well? What if the motif of parang can swirl? With the help of fractal batik software, it can create motives in the formation of three dimensions. Batik ornament design becomes richer with the appearance of the motives from various views; some even have never been imagined before.

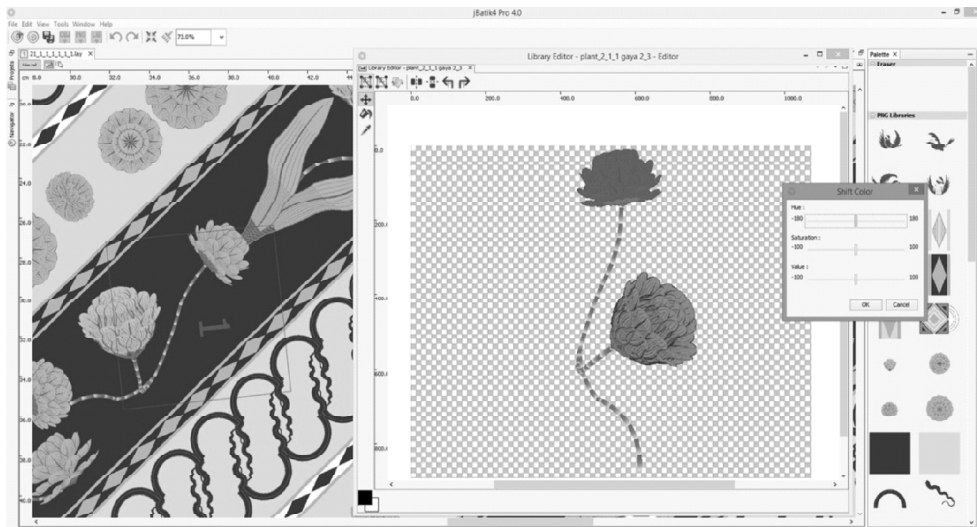


Figure 2: Three-Dimensional Batik Motif Design Using Fractal Batik Pro Software

Source: Fractal Batik

CONCLUSION

Based on the results that had been achieved and described, the followings are the conclusions that can be drawn:

1. The strategy to accelerate the development in Semarang batik craftsmen based on specific creative techniques advantage has been conducted by improving the batik creative product, product differentiation, and

advantages of cost-oriented creative technique. Then, to improve the sustainable competitive advantage, it requires the sustainable assistance strategy to the craftsmen.

2. The importance of batik motif design that can be the force for batik craftsmen, it requires the use of all devices that can explore batik motives to be taught to the craftsmen so they can explore their imagination and design by providing the assistance of making batik design using the fractal batik software
3. How to design batik with the assistance of a computer using fractal concepts had been developed, but the combination of other software to minimize monotony of design require some design patterns to shape the overall design of batik motif into a unique work which is not only proper to wear as clothes but can also emit the distinguishing features of the owner

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results that had been achieved and described, the recommendations that can be given are as follows:

1. The assistance strategy for batik craftsmen needs to be implemented in a sustainable manner. Therefore, the guidance for the governments of the city/ district of Semarang and the parties concerned is necessary
2. Semarangan batik craftsmen need to immediately improve themselves to take back batik to be better known in the community with the batik motif design which is more attractive, quickly, and the need for natural dyeing techniques which are environmentally friendly

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