

## CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH BATIK CRAFTS IN WUKIRSARI TO IMPROVE FAMILY INCOME

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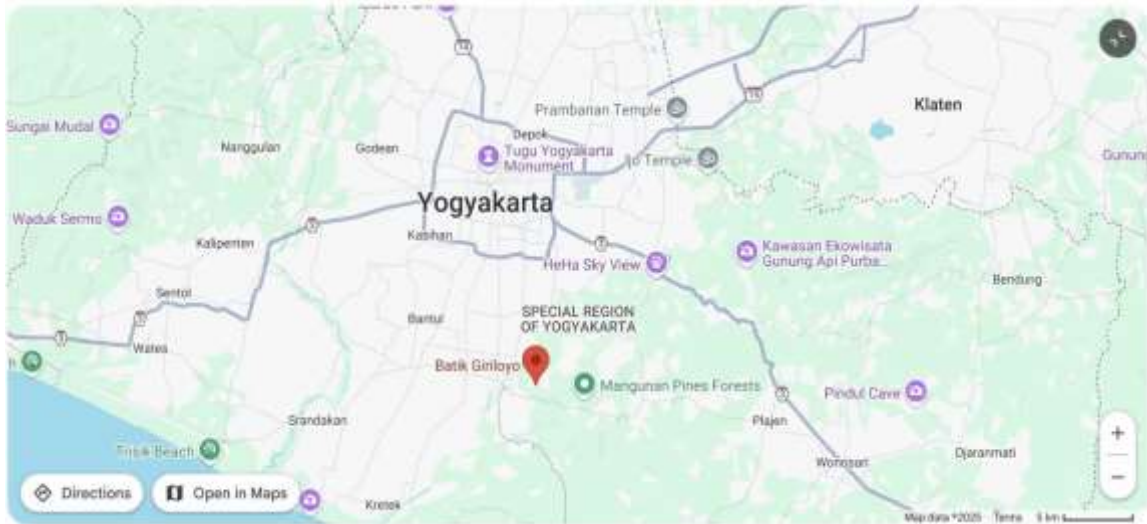
### **Abstract.**

*Batik crafts are one of the winning product in enhancing the tourism village in Wukirsari, Imogiri District, Bantul Regency. Batik as a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved, especially in Wukirsari Village which is the best tourist village in the world according to UNESCO. The local government focus on maintaining the award and invites all levels of society and stakeholders in supporting the program, especially that related to sustainable development. The batik tourism village activities centered in Pendopo Giri Loyo are one of the government's concern in reducing poverty and sponsoring gender equality. The craftsmen are women and they participating to boost family income. This program held by commitment from members and fulfill all the requirement in supporting batik union and pendopo Giri Loyo tourism to increase family income.*

**Keywords:** Batik crafts; Giri Loyo; Governance; Family income.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Preserving local culture is an important part of sustainable development as one of the priority programs not only serving national identity (Mawangi, 2024) but also to encourage economic empowerment of the community especially women. Empowerment is a process to gain control in any circumstances in lives (Yusra & Sugito, 2021). Empowerment is a positive activity or effort struggling from weak circumstances becoming strong (Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh, & Eldabi, 2020) (Zali, et al., 2012 dalam Hakim). One of the villages in daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Imogiri, Bantul located in Wukirsari known as a center for traditional hand-drawn batik craft. It has extraordinary potential in preserving batik culture so it needs to be continuous developed to improve the welfare of the villagers and maintain the existence of the local wisdom. Wukirsari is not far from Centre of Yogyakarta, it tooks at least 30 minutes long or about 15 kilometers far to reach this village.



Picture 1. The location of Wukirsari Village (Batik Giriloyo)

Based on the situation analysis, Wukirsari Village has cultural wealth in form of Batik skills that have been passed down from several generations. According to Djoemena (1990), batik is a process of painting on cloth with wax and dye which reflects cultural identity and local wisdom with motifs that often have philosophical meanings such as symbols of harmony between nature and life. Batik not only a textile product but also a cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO as a World Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009 as explained by Soedarsono (2010) who emphasized the role of batik as a representation of Indonesia's national identity. Batik is one of the phenomena that has undergone modernization in traditional culture. Batik crafts can be characterized as of of the tools of modernity (Wahidin, 2019). This effect from transformation including innovation. Most batik craftsmen are women who work from home. Batik work in Indonesia is mostly conduct by women in the same time with nursing the children at home. This shows that Wukirsari women are actively productive. The main reason why they work on Batik production is supporting family income. The average wage received by Batik craftsmen is IDR 300,000 for four times productions. This amount of wages can be received if the member is actively working.



Picture 2. The hand drawn batik display

Batik activities in Wukirsari have actually been around for a long time as a hereditary culture that must be preserved and managed professionally. Wukirsari established an association called Giri

Loyo. In the past ten years this batik association has been able becoming a center for educational tourism in the field of cultural preservation with the number of visits reaching around 29,000 people per year and sales turnover reaching around 2 billions per year. The number of association members also increasing and it needed to be develop as a batik management to be more profitable and has a measurable performance. Local government Wukirsari Village In 2022 carried out this development by changing the management of Batik from “paguyuban” (association) to “unions”. According to the Republic of Indonesia Law Number 17 of 2012 concerning the unions, defined as business entity whose members are individuals or unios legal entities based on the principle of family and economic activities carried out based on unions principles. Davis (2001) explains that unions are a form of collective business that aims to improve the welfare of members by sharing profits fairly, reflecting the spirit of a community-bases economy. According to the guidelines on regulations regarding unions and SMEs, the definitions of a unions is a business entity whose members are individuals or unions legal entities with activities based on unions principles as well as being a people’s economic movement based on the principle of family (Ministry of Unions and SME’s, 2012). However the associations and unions are the same as a forum for interaction in a group (Afif & Kristanti, 2022)

The unions has been running and succesfully developing worldwide. In 2024, Wukirsari Village received an award from UNESCO as the number one best tourism village in the world. The strategy is optimizing the empowerment of existing communities by: (a) involving batik artisans as tour guides in short course activities where every four visitors will be accompanied by one artisan, (b) involving youth organizations to manage nature and outbound tourism, (c) involving homestay managers and local signature culinary, (d) involving art managers as a welcoming attraction. The strategy implemented is very appropriate and in accordance with the character and resources owned by the village. According to Hofmeyr (2025), a deep understanding of local resource structures is very important in determining the success of implementing a strategy. The efforts for continous improvement for Wukirsari are certainly not only satisfied with current achievements. There are still many things that can be developed further. Therefore, other strategies are needed to maintain the above predicate and be closer to the community in general and sustainably in increasing family income. The community service team strives to participate by providing input on the management of batik union that further strengthen Giri Loyo as a batik cultural heritage for the younger generation and women so that they can maintain the gift of sustainable batik tourism village in increasing family income.

## II. METHODS

The management of unions developing Batik Giri Loyo to maintain the achievement as a Batik Tourism Village award in a sustainable manner and increasing family income can not seperated from the potential problems that may arise.the team provide insight on governance for scheduling production management and gallery visits so that these activities were more focused and coordinated. In this regard, it is hoped that during the visit activities of various partners, it will be more interesting, clear, focused and cooperative.

The arrangement of member clusters, batik unions are able to pass on the cultural heritage to the younger generation and women because they will clearly enter the available clusters, so the responsibilities of unions members are clear and will ultimately increase the family income. Culture heritage is the foundation of the identity for the sustainability of an organization or society, in this case it can influence the way individuals and groups interact and agility. According to Schein (2010), passion on organizational culture allows an organization or society to maintain core values and basic assumptions that have proven effective while transferring collective knowledge to the next generation or new members.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### The Description of Batik Giri Loyo Unions

Before carrying out community service activities, it is necessary to know the general description of batik Giri Loyo unions first. In the past, batik craftsmen in Wukirsari Village were individuals and produced their own products. They were not yet organized, so that batik sales were not focused and did not accommodate people who wanted to produce but did not yet have a place to do their work. Therefore, accomodating the aspirations of the community and to introduce batik more widely, a group of batik makers was formed with the name paguyuban Batik Giri Loyo which was founded in 2009. Batik association keep run the business but in terms of wages, batik artisans only receives small wages. Based on sources from one of the Batik Unions administrators, the wages of batik craftsmen for each batik work are only IDR 11.000. The very small amount of money makes them doubtful about going concern. However since 2022 the association has improved its governance and changed its form to become the Giri Loyo Batik Unions.

In the beginning start, Unions was formed from members of the association led by 12 people who had batik products, including batik products with the names: Sri Kuncoro, Sekar Arum, Giri Indah, Suka Maju, Sungging Pile, Sungsang, Sido Mukti, Giri Canting, Berkah Lestari, Sekar Kedhaton, Bima Sakti and Batik Giri Loyo. The Batik association initially had their own showrooms. However, because all batik associations wanted to enhancing Wukirsari Village and providing activities for other women, various associations joined the unions and becaming administrators in the unions and actively intriduced the Batik Giri Loyo Unions as a batik tourism destination centered at the Pendopo Batik Giri Loyo.



Picture 3. Part of the management of Batik Giriloyo union

The members of the unions must be committed to maintaining the quality of batik because they must comply with the unions's requirement where the batik management process must be traditional, namely by using wax as the basic material and using a canting tools in the manufacturing process. In addition, according to Mr. Bahtiar as the head of the Giri Loyo batik torism field coordinator, all unions members, both those who act as owners (and have showrooms) or those who are only members, are required to introduce Giri Loyo batik and maintain the quality of batik, include introducing Wukirsari Village batik products in various ways, such as participating in local/national/international exhibition or events or collaborating with tour agencies/hotels and tourism networks to boost visitors in Giri Loyo. Various annual village events such as Majemukan, Kirab Budaya, Batik Festival, Nyadran, Batik Expo etc also support welcoming of Wukirsari Village

to the general public. Developing an online marketing strategy by utilizing websites & social media as well as collaborating with journalist networks & mass media strengthens the marketing strategy used.



Picture 4. Mr Bahtiar as a field coordinator

The members of the batik unions are 86 people, all of whom are not batik craftsmen or batik owners, but also traders and other women who want to be active in developing Wukirsari Village. However, each member of the unions from batik craftsmen is required to make at least one batik in a year to be exhibited in the village gallery, which is near Pendopo Giri Loyo. Producing hand drawn batik takes quite a long time, one piece of batik can be completed in approximately two months because Batik Giri Loyo is known as a traditional batik that uses wax as an auxiliary material. On average, each unions member who has batik products and a showroom is able to produce fifty batik cloths with the same design and products according to the requirement of the unions management in the gallery section. The results of these products are exhibited in the pendopo gallery.



Picture 5. Gallery as a showroom of the hand drawn batik

Batik craftsmen can still be creative without feeling like they are being competed with by other members product, because they have a commitment to developing Wukirsari village as a tourist village that is famous for its traditional hand drawn batik production. Batik production is a time consuming and this is the reason behind the expensive price for a piece of batik in the range of prices strating from IDR 500,000 to those with a nominal value of over IDR 3,000,000. In addition, in an effort to develop a batik tourism village, the unions management determine that members who are active in unions activities, both production nor marketing then bati gallery tourguides will receive an awards or incentives. However, efforts are still needed to manage the unions in a more targeted manner that better introduces tourist villages.

### **The Efforts to Preseve Batik with Unions Governance**

The length of time to produce hand drawn batik makes the price expensive. On average, a piece of batik product takes two months. The batik making process goes through two stages namely the pattern making stage and the coloring stage. The percentage wage for the pattern is IFR 70,000 – IDR 80,000 per pattern. The requirement for compiling the pattern depend on the motif desired by the customer. The next stage is coloring stage. Wages for batik craftsmen are determined by the level of complexity of the pattern, because the more difficuklt the more expensive the price. The unions gallery team has a policy in determining the quality of batik and the costs of selling batik.

The gallery team has a policy of making batik with the Shir Gung Gung pattern which depicts shrub leaves as the basic ingredient of guruh tea. Therefore, the craftsmen are asked to produce the pattern as a characteristic of batik in Wukirsari.



Picture 6. The characteristic pattern from Batik Wukirsari

The craftsmen have a way of reducing the selling price to make it more affordable for buyers, namely by minimizing the pattern so that production is also easier and faster. Unions members must of course have an active role if they want to get incentives from the unions, so they can contribute as companions for batik tourism activities to the pendopo. Until now, the members of the Batik Giri Loyo unions have been recorded as 600 people consisting of various groups.

According to the explanation at the beginning, making batik takes a long time, so patience is needed in producing batik. Based on one of the batik administrators, he said that in producing batik in a span of one month, an average of 4 times batik and each time batik is given a wage of Rp. 75,000 so that the average one month is Rp. 300,000. When viewed from the figures compared to 2009 with a wage of Rp. 11,000, of course there has been an increase, however, efforts are still needed to increase the wages of batik makers so that family income increases.

### The Efforts Increasing Family Income

Overcoming problems in unions governance is by increasing the role of unions's members through scheduling production activities and visits so that progress can be seen from the performance of unions members that can increase family income. The batik making process time is around 9 am to 4 pm. The time is quite long in the process and the amount of production is small with an average of 4 sheets in 1 month. The batik making process is carried out at home, so that batik craftsmen do household chores in the remaining time which is sometimes less focused. Another provision of the unions management is the profit sharing from batik production, 80% of sales proceeds for batik makers and 20% for unions managers. To overcome the problem of less productive production, namely by preparing a batik production schedule as an improvement in governance. As an alternative, it can be described as follows:

Table 1. Activities Pattern Schedule

| Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Notes for batik pattern |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|
| A      | D      | G      | K      |                         |
| B      | E      | H      | L      |                         |
| C      | F      | I      | M      |                         |

Table 2. Activities coloring and finishing schedule

| Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Notes for coloring and finishing |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------------------------|
| G      | K      | A      | D      |                                  |
| H      | L      | B      | E      |                                  |
| I      | M      | C      | F      |                                  |

If the schedule is arranged in the activity, it will be seen from the activeness of the batik members. The twelve members of the craftsmen who have the showroom can more easily control their activities, such as in which week they have to do the activities of arranging patterns and coloring and perfecting. Independent batik craftsmen who do not have a showroom can adjust to the group that exists in that week so that the schedule arrangement is clearer.

In addition, it is necessary to schedule field coordination if there are activities to review visits to batik tourist villages by preparing a schedule that is more adjusted to the group, because in the coloring and perfecting stages, the work is lighter compared to the pattern-making stage which includes "isen-isen" activities (filling in patterns/pictures such as marking dots in flower pictures), so in the week of the coloring stage, the group can be assigned to accompany tourist visits.

Table 3. Activities tourist visit schedule

| Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Notes for tourist visit |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|
| K      | G      | D      | A      |                         |
| L      | H      | E      | B      |                         |
| M      | I      | F      | C      |                         |

The arrangement of schedules and governance practices so that the potential for the development of batik cooperatives will be more measurable and cooperative members will have clearer accountability.



Picture 7. Small Group Discussion with one of the union management



Picture 8. The main gate of Kampung Batik Giriloyo

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Preserving culture and empowering communities through batik in Wukirsari is not only about preserving ancestral heritage, but also creating new economic opportunities for families. Through a collaborative, educational, and adaptive approach to technology, this service is one form of real contribution from universities in building an independent, creative, and cultured society. The Giriloyo batik cooperative already has a wide market and is even known as a tourist village that has received the best award from UNESCO. Therefore, sustainable efforts are also needed to maintain this predicate because it requires high awareness and commitment from all people in Wukirsari Village. Sometimes things that have been arranged are considered certain to succeed, but they will not be achieved if they are not based on commitment. Although the efforts of the cooperative management in the field coordinator section have succeeded in introducing the batik tourism village, and have been able to introduce it to schools and universities and even other community organizations to introduce batik products in the area, if a clear schedule is not prepared in the management in the field when production activities and visits take place, the results of the cooperative's activities are less measurable. Social innovation that has an impact on improving sustainable development mechanisms, especially in Indonesia as a developing country, should be of concern to the government as policy makers, practitioners (NGOs) and academics (Kabir et al., 2024).

Therefore, with the preparation of the batik craftsmen's reporting schedule coordinated by unions members who have 12 showrooms, the activities and production of Giri Loyo batik can be coordinated, so that the progress and activities of each craftsman and the schedule of visiting activities can be seen. For cooperative members who join in the active batik tourism activities, they can participate by choosing a cluster of batik craftsmen who have showrooms, so that each group is clear in terms of both responsibilities and rights that should be received.

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