

REGENERATION AND PRESERVATION OF BATIK IN WUKIRSARI

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Abstract.

Giriloyo Batik in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Subdistrict, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region, is one of the most well-known batik production centers with international recognition. Currently, Wukirsari is known as a cultural educational tourism destination and has been named by UNESCO as one of the world's best villages. However, this status contrasts with the declining preservation and regeneration of batik in Wukirsari. The current batik production is dominated by the older generation, posing a risk to the continuity of this tradition without regeneration and preservation efforts. This community service program aims to address this issue by introducing and educating children about batik from an early age through a children's batik school program using animated stories, batik folklore, and tales about Giriloyo Batik Village. The methods include lectures and direct educational activities. The program is expected to strengthen cultural awareness and creativity among children from an early age. The implication of this activity offers a new perspective on batik preservation and regeneration through creative educational approaches involving the wider community.

Keywords: *Batik Education; Batik Regeneration; Cultural Preservation; Giriloyo Batik*

I. INTRODUCTION

Batik is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages that has been recognized worldwide as a textile art rich in aesthetic, historical, and philosophical values. Since the 16th century, batik has become an integral part of Indonesia's national identity, created through a wax-resist dyeing technique that produces patterns reflecting the cultural values, beliefs, and daily lives of local communities. In 2009, UNESCO designated batik as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, emphasizing the importance of preserving such traditions as global cultural assets (Azizah et al., 2025; Nurcahyanti et al., 2021). According to Haryani and Santosa (2023), batik is defined as an artistic expression reflecting local identity and modern adaptation, with evolving motifs and techniques aligned with global trends such as integration into contemporary fashion.

Culture is a system of values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, shaping their identity, lifestyle, and social interactions within a community or organization. Hofstede et al. (2022) defined culture as a collective pattern of thought that distinguishes one group from another, influenced by dimensions such as individualism and collectivism, highly relevant in today's global context. Ting (2023) adds that culture includes symbols, rituals, and artifacts passed down across generations, reflecting adaptation to social and technological changes.

Region of Yogyakarta, is rich in cultural heritage, especially as the center of Giriloyo Batik production, which is recognized internationally. This village is a popular cultural education tourism destination, where visitors can observe the traditional batik-making process performed by local artisans. In essence, the Special Region of Yogyakarta, particularly Dusun Giriloyo in Wukirsari Village, has made handwritten batik a strong symbol of local culture. Giriloyo has been known as a center of handwritten batik since the 17th century, originally developed to fulfill the needs of the Mataram Palace for royal ceremonies. Over time, Giriloyo batik has evolved into an economic activity for the community, producing batik fabrics with classic motifs such as *kawung*, *parang*, and *ceplak*, all rich in philosophical meaning..

The continuity of the batik tradition in Giriloyo is currently facing serious challenges, particularly due to the lack of regeneration and preservation efforts among the younger generation. Most of the batik artisans in Giriloyo Batik Village are elderly women, while interest among the youth in learning and preserving the art of batik remains very low. This phenomenon is caused by several factors, including the influence of modernization, lifestyle changes, and the lack of engaging cultural education for children and teenagers (Pratiwi et al., 2020). Without structured regeneration efforts, the batik tradition is at risk of extinction within the next few decades. This is a critical issue, especially considering that Giriloyo Batik Village has become an international cultural education tourism destination attracting thousands of visitors each year who come to learn about the batik-making process and the cultural history of Yogyakarta. The development of cultural education tourism has proven effective in preserving batik traditions by utilizing local wisdom to raise cultural awareness and attract both domestic and international tourists (Suherlan et al., 2023). The existence of Giriloyo Batik Village not only supports the local economy but also strengthens Yogyakarta's cultural identity on the global stage (Zubaedah & Hidayah, 2023).

The lack of young batik artisans in Giriloyo reflects a broader challenge in preserving cultural heritage in the face of globalization. Many young people in Giriloyo are more interested in modern professions, which are seen as more economically promising, such as jobs in the tech or service industries, rather than batik-making which requires time, precision, and specific skills. Additionally, formal education in local schools often does not integrate batik learning into the curriculum, leaving children with little exposure to the values and processes of batik-making from an early age (Wahyuni, 2024). In fact, culture-based learning media introduced at an early age have proven effective in building awareness and appreciation for local cultural heritage (Siregar, 2020). On top of that, handwritten batik is often perceived as expensive, making it less accessible-especially when applied in schools. Therefore, innovative approaches are needed to introduce batik to younger generations in ways that are relevant and appealing, in order to preserve the batik tradition in Giriloyo.

To address this issue, a community service initiative is necessary to introduce batik to young generations as a long-term cultural preservation strategy, including innovation in batik clothing. This initiative involves direct observation, interviews with batik community members, and discussions with local stakeholders to design contextually appropriate solutions. One proposed solution is the development of a "Children's Batik School" program in the Yogyakarta region. The aim is to instill a love for batik from an early age through child-friendly approaches. Short animated stories about the batik-making process, folklore about the history of Giriloyo, and narratives about life in the batik village are expected to build emotional connections between children and this cultural heritage. This

approach aligns with research showing that story-based and visual learning media can significantly boost children's interest in local culture (Palupi et al., 2023). Additionally, the program includes basic training for children to try batik-making techniques, so they not only learn theoretically but also gain hands-on experience. Thus, the Batik School program is not only about preserving batik tradition but also empowering the local community through inclusive and sustainable cultural education.

II. METHODS

The community service activity aimed at regenerating batik culture employed lectures and direct educational approaches targeted at young children and youth in the Imogiri area, Bantul, Special Region of Yogyakarta. Data collection techniques included participatory observation and informal interviews with participants and facilitators. The method of combining lectures and hands-on education in community service offers several significant benefits, particularly in the context of cultural preservation and community awareness building. Lectures complemented with direct interaction allow facilitators and participants to engage actively, which enhances learning motivation. According to Rahman (2024), this interaction creates a supportive learning environment that is highly relevant for instilling cultural values in children in the digital era. Meanwhile, efforts to preserve batik also involved coordination with the local government.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Giriloyo Batik Village

Giriloyo Batik Village is located in Wukirsari Village, Imogiri Subdistrict, Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta. This village is known as a traditional handwritten batik center that has existed for generations. The people of Giriloyo, especially housewives, have inherited batik-making skills from their predecessors. They produce batik with classic Mataram motifs such as *Sido Asih*, *Wahyu Tumurun*, *Sido Mukti*, and *Parang*, all of which reflect Javanese cultural values and philosophy. In 2006, Giriloyo Batik Village was severely affected by the earthquake that struck Yogyakarta. However, with support from the government and non-governmental organizations, the village was able to recover. Assistance in batik production processes, marketing, and business management helped the Giriloyo community to rebuild and further develop their batik industry.

Over time, the need to preserve batik culture in Wukirsari has become increasingly urgent. Most of the managers and artisans in Giriloyo Batik Village are elderly women. The long and labor-intensive process of making batik has discouraged younger people from continuing the tradition. In addition, the wages are often considered insufficient to meet daily living needs, posing a major challenge to maintaining batik preservation efforts in Wukirsari. Interestingly, a unique herbal plant called *Sir Gunggu*, which is believed to only grow in Wukirsari, has become the hallmark of handwritten batik in the village, giving it a distinctive identity.

Batik Regeneration and Preservation Efforts

Wukirsari Village faces a serious challenge due to the lack of regeneration among young batik artisans; current batik production is almost entirely carried out by the older generation. This phenomenon endangers the continuity of batik traditions, which serve not only as cultural heritage but also as a livelihood source for the local community. To address this issue, a community service program has been designed with a focus on cultural education, aiming to introduce batik to the younger generation as an initial step to build a new generation of batik artisans capable of preserving and advancing this art in the face of globalization and technological change.

Cultural education in this activity was conducted through a children's batik school program, utilizing creative and interactive approaches to attract young people's interest in batik. The program incorporated animated short stories, batik folklore rich in philosophical values, and narratives about the history and uniqueness of Giriloyo Batik Village. The methods included lectures by experienced artisans and hands-on educational sessions, where young participants learned about the batik-making process, the meaning of motifs, and the importance of preserving local culture.

The challenge of batik preservation has become increasingly evident due to the lack of young artisan regeneration and the growing interest of youth in modern trends that often neglect traditional heritage. To address this, the Yogyakarta government, together with local communities and schools, initiated an innovative program promoting modified school uniforms made from batik fabrics. This program aims to integrate batik into the daily lives of children and teenagers while raising cultural awareness from an early age. It is expected to serve as a strategic step to sustain the batik tradition amidst the rapid digitalization and globalization of 2025.

The modified school uniform program was designed with a creative approach to attract students' interest, blending batik motifs with plain fabrics into stylish uniform designs suitable for elementary to high school students. The modification also aims to reduce costs associated with handwritten batik, which is often considered expensive. These uniforms preserve the original aesthetics of batik while being adapted for comfort, using lighter materials and better ventilation, developed in collaboration with local artisans and young designers from Yogyakarta. The implementation of this program began in early 2025, with pilot projects in several schools in Bantul, including those in Wukirsari. Students were invited to visit batik villages to learn about the production process firsthand. This effort was also supported by additional cultural education embedded into the school curriculum. Students not only wore batik uniforms but also learned about the history, techniques, and philosophical meanings of batik motifs through lectures and simple hands-on practices.

This initiative is also supported by additional educational content integrated into the school curriculum. Students don't just wear batik uniforms, they also learn about the history, techniques, and philosophical meanings behind batik patterns through lectures and simple hands on activities. In collaboration with the Giriloyo Batik artisan community, students have the opportunity to join weekly workshops held every Saturday morning, where they can try painting batik with direct guidance from local artisans.

The implementation schedule of this program was systematically planned for the year 2025 to ensure sustainability and maximum impact. The initial stage included socialization with schools and parents on June 20–22, 2025, aligned with the end-of-school-year agenda, followed by design and artisan training on June 23–28, 2025 to prepare for mass production. The distribution of modified uniforms to pilot schools was scheduled for July 5–10, 2025, with official use starting on July 14, 2025, coinciding with the start of the new academic year.

The implications of this modified uniform program are wide-ranging, not only for cultural preservation but also for economic empowerment and education. With increased batik usage, local artisans in Wukirsari and surrounding areas gained access to new markets, potentially increasing their income by up to 20% by the end of 2025, based on initial projections. Additionally, the program strengthens Yogyakarta's cultural identity, attracting more educational tourists and investors, especially amid the rising trend of cultural tourism. Challenges such as production costs and resistance to design changes can be addressed through government subsidies and awareness campaigns involving schools and parents. Thus, this program represents an innovative model for batik preservation, blending tradition and modernity to ensure cultural heritage remains alive and relevant into the future.

IV. CONCLUSION

The community service activities aimed at preserving and regenerating batik culture demonstrate that cultural preservation is not only an individual responsibility but also requires collective involvement from various stakeholders. Through training programs on batik-making, education about batik history, and skill enhancement, local communities, especially the youth, have begun to understand the importance of maintaining and continuing this tradition. This proves that with the right approach, cultural values can be effectively instilled and attract the interest of the next generation. In addition to preserving culture, these activities also bring social and economic benefits to the community. The batik making skills acquired by participants not only strengthen local cultural identity but also open up new business opportunities and improve economic independence, particularly for women. Support for the regeneration of young batik artisans also encourages innovation in batik motifs and techniques, without abandoning the traditional roots that already exist.

Therefore, community service efforts in preserving batik not only safeguard cultural heritage from extinction but also strengthen the social, economic, and national identity foundations. The success of this program shows that collaboration among academics, the government, and the community can create a tangible and sustainable impact. This initiative is expected to become a replicable model in other regions to protect Indonesia's rich cultural heritage.

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