



Natural Motif of Batik Kimono as A Leading Commodity of Batik Arrangements in Surakarta – Indonesia

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The research is an in-depth study of the development of Batik Kimono production by focusing on three main objectives, namely: (1) Knowing for certain the opportunity of Batik Kimono with natural motifs, (2) Finding Batik Kimono motifs that are suitable for four seasons in Japan, (3) Knowing the marketing opportunities of Batik Kimono for international consumption. This is a qualitative research based on the characteristics of the research problem, data sources, and research data. This research was conducted in Surakarta City, Central Java. Data in this study were collected and analysed using the interactive workings of three components, namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification. This study uses a single case study strategy that will be dealt with in a multi-perspective. The findings in this study include: (1) Batik Kimono has enough opportunities to become the leading product of batik artisans in Surakarta. (2) This study found batik patterns for the four seasons. (3) Batik kimono has the opportunity to become a superior product in the international market by utilising seven strategies such as market control, product variation, promotion in the heart of the city, familiarity with consumers, strengthening the network, and strengthening the promotion system.

Key words: *Batik, Kimono, Clothing, Patterns, International Market*



Introduction

Batik and Kimono are two creative works of the nation's children from Indonesia and Japan that have values of nobleness, excellence, and cultural links that are very close. Batik Kimono in its development can be combined into one literary work of art that colours the development of fashion and clothing in both countries. It is starting to become a fashion trend in the world forum (global). Batik clothing - especially shirts - has been widely known by the Japanese people. Japanese people like to wear Batik clothes when it is summer because it is made of thin fabric and is classified as simple cloth (Prasetya, 2010). Batik is even used as official clothing by some Japanese people (Kudiya, 2011). Batik Kimono is a multi-purpose cultural asset, not only in a cultural context but also in the creative economy including fashion, design, and crafts.

Research on the development of the creative industry of Batik Kimono as a leading commodity in the batik craft community in Surakarta is very strategic for the improvement of a sustainable economy, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic and the continuation of the free market. Javanologi Center of Study Universitas Sebelas Maret from 2011 to 2019 has carried out exploration research and made a network of developing Batik Kimono in Kyoto, Japan. The results of research that has been done before in the context of Batik Kimono and collaboration with various parties must be followed up to obtain the production results that are beneficial for the development of the country's creative industries.

Some obstacles arise during the production of this Batik Kimono including (1) The lack of motifs, patterns, and designs production of Batik Kimono that have been tried by the craftsmen community in Surakarta, (2) The need for assistance and training to improve competence and develop innovation in motives, patterns and designs of Batik Kimono, (3) The lack of product exhibitions, scientific publications, and books publications of Indonesian-Japanese Batik Kimono, (4) There is no final product testing in the Batik Kimono user community.

The development of the creative industry of Batik kimono opens opportunities to absorb labour directly around the location of the establishment of this business. In addition, it also increases the creativity of batik artisans (Veldhuisen, 1993). The development of Batik Kimono's creative industry also helps government programs in tackling social problems such as limited employment, high unemployment of productive age, and efforts to increase the income and welfare of the people in the city of Surakarta. In addition, the development of Batik Kimono's creative industry has a very large cultural impact on the preservation (protection, development, and utilisation) of culture in both countries, Indonesia and Japan. Batik is a noble cultural heritage of the Indonesians that has been known and recognised throughout the world (Rojen, 2001). Preservation efforts are



carried out by developing Batik culture and integrating it with Kimono culture so that Batik and Kimono culture will grow and develop new innovations and creations.

The development of Batik Kimono's creative industry has a special impact on the economic structure of society in the city of Surakarta. This can be seen from the rising of community's welfare because of the increase in the average income of Batik crafters/entrepreneurs (Djoemena, 1990). Batik and kimono have almost the same motifs and philosophical meanings, although there are several different things. The difference is certainly related to culture and environmental influences. These two aspects significantly distinguish the meaning of the motifs in batik and kimono. Based on the results of research conducted in 2013 and 2014 "Developing Patterns and Designs of Batik-Kimono to Support the Public Creative Industries in Indonesia and Japan", there are several batik motifs for 4 seasons in Japan that will be produced and developed as community superior commodities by Batik artisans in Surakarta.

Material Methods

The form of research that is deemed appropriate and able to provide a complete picture is qualitative (Charmaz, 2000; Staruss & Crobin, 2003). The selection of research forms is based on the characteristics of the research problem, data sources, and research data (Marohaini, 2004). This research was conducted in Surakarta City, Central Java. Data in this study were collected and analysed using the interactive workings of three components namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification (Miles & Huberman, 1992). The qualitative research was chosen to give the possibility that a multi-perspectives view would occur during the study. This study uses a single case study strategy, namely the production and development of Batik Kimono as the Commodity of Batik Craftsmen Society in Surakarta, Indonesia. This single case will be dealt with in a multi-perspective manner by utilising wastra-psychological theories and the direct involvement of traditional artists who have proven expertise. Data analysis techniques use interactive analysis that combines several research components in a balanced way and perfects one another.

Result

Natural Motifs as Batik Kimono Opportunities

In principle, batik motifs are very dependent on the natural state around the crafters. This then gave birth to two batik groups in Central Java, Indonesia, namely inland batik and coastal batik. Rojen (2001) explains "inland batik" is a batik that develops in the Surakarta and Yogyakarta regions, whereas "coastal batik" grows in cities in the northern coastal regions of Central Java. According to Djoemena (1990), the ornamental variations found

in the two groups describe the environment in which the craftsmen live. Therefore, it produces some flora or fauna motifs that live in the region (Samsi, 2011).

Javanese inland batik is known as traditional batik or also known as palace batik or classical batik (Hasanudin, 2001). This batik was born in a palace environment to meet the needs of ceremonies and status indicators. Gillow (1992) explains that there is also batik, not traditional, made outside the palace environment for the needs of the general public. Djoemena (2009) indicates the existence of the phenomenon of batik production from "inside walls" versus "outside walls" which were judged to have lower quality. This type of batik (batik palace), which was originally not allowed to be worn by people outside the palace, but in the hands of batik merchants outside the palace, the palace batik patterns are slightly changed in colours, elements and motifs, so the visuals are no longer exactly the same as batik palace. Further, batik can be worn by the wider community.






Batik inland Javanese decoration generally uses three basic colours such as indigo blue, *wedelan* (dark blue), *soga* (chocolate-like *soga* trees), and white or tanned white (cream), while with coastal batik, the colours used follow the tastes of the wider community that is dynamic and bright like red, blue, green, yellow, even orange, purple, and other young colours (Tirta, 2009). The nature of coastal batik colours is dynamic, dominated by bright colours. While inland batik tends to be dark. It seems that foreign cultural influences from Dutch, Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese traders at that time greatly influenced the choice of coastal batik colours (Priyo, 2009).

Batik with flora motifs are taken from several types of flowers that grow in Indonesia generally (Lestari, 2013), and Central Java in particular, like Rose, Jasmine, Ylang-ylang, Tuberose, Chrysolite, Sunflower, and Cape flower. Jasmine is the typical Indonesian flower and even determines as the national flower through Indonesian Presidential Decree Number 4/1993, while many Kimonos make flora motifs taken from several types of flowers that grow in Japan, such as Chrysanthemum (*Kiku*), Plum Blossom (*Ume*), Peony (*Botan*), Sakura, Camellia (*Tsubaki*), Wisteria (*Fuji*), Trumpet (*Kikyeou*).

Japan is one of the four seasons countries which have various typical colours in each season, such as winter with whitish and pale colours. Spring begins with yellow and other bright colours like red, blue, orange, and purple. The characteristic of autumn in Japan is in the change of the colour of leaves to light tones such as red, gold, copper, and yellow (Elliot, 1984). Summer is covered in green. *Ume* or plum blossom is a floral motif that is also commonly used for Kimono. These flowers bloom in early spring, but the charm of the *Ume* in Kimono can be witnessed throughout the year. This design usually features long stamens and 5 round petals with flowers depicted in shades of red, white, or pink.

Based on the explanation above, Batik Kimono as a work of batik is not a tradition or included in modern batik that utilises natural motifs, flora, and fauna that makes it has a great opportunity to be developed in Japan and Indonesia. Certainly, the type of flora and fauna that should be chosen is according to the colours that suit the four seasons in Japan. The style can be chosen from typical Javanese batik patterns, such as *Sekar Jagad*, *Lasem*, *Parang*, which all contain flora motifs (Kusrianto, 2013).

Table 1 Kimono with flower motif (flora)

Flower name (Japanese name)	Realisation on Motif	Information	Realisation on Cloth
Plum Blossom (<i>Ume</i>)	Round, the crown of 5 pieces, long stamens	Used quite often	
Chrysanthemum (<i>Kiku</i>)	Round, small crown totaling 10 pieces	Used quite often	
Peoni (<i>Botan</i>)	Stacked flower crown	Used quite often	
Sakura	"V" shaped crown	Most used often	
Camellia (<i>Tsubaki</i>)	Crown flower hat, piled up	Used quite often	










Wisteria (<i>Fuji</i>)	Flower sticking out, dominant purple colour	Most used	often	
Trumpet (<i>Kikyeou</i>)	Prominent flower, Star-shaped crown.	Used often	quite	

Table 2. Batik with flower motif (flora)

Flower name (Scientific name)	Realisation on Motif	Information	Realisation on Cloth
White Cempaka (<i>Magnolia champaca</i>)	Flower buds and blooms, 1 layer crown	Used quite often	
Ylang-Ylang (<i>Cananga odorata</i>)	Flowers sticking out, pistil stilisation	Used quite often	
Cape Flower (<i>Mimusops elengi</i>)	Layered flower crown	Used quite often	
Kemuning Flower (<i>Murraya paniculata</i>)	Flowers intact, in rows of 5 or 6	Most often used	
Roses (<i>Rosa sp</i>)	Flowers in a row, colourful	Used quite often	

Jasmine (<i>Jasminum sambac</i> L.)	Whole flowers, stacked 5 with stylisation	Most often used	 
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Based on tables 1 and 2 above, it showed that the Javanese batik flower pattern of Indonesia has a specific similarity as a Kimono style. However, there are some technical obstacles that should be paid attention to, including:

- (1) The colouring of motifs is much related to the psychology of Japanese society;
- (2) The size of the flower motifs on fabric/silk;
- (3) The compositions and combinations according to Japanese tastes;
- (4) Product details are the most important part, especially in finishing the products.

In designing batik products, the thing that needs to be considered is to arrange the motifs or ornamental elements, as well as the colour selection (Maizou & Muller 2020). Batik structures, consisting of elements of patterns, or batik motifs that are arranged based on established patterns, namely:

- (1) The main motif. It is the main element in the form of pictures of a certain form. Because it is the main element, then it is called the main ornament;
- (2) The filler motif. It is a pattern in the form of pictures created to fill the field. The shape is smaller and does not contribute to the meaning or soul of the pattern. This is called a filler ornament / supporting ornament;
- (3) The dotmotif. This motif serves to beautify the overall batik pattern. In the main, ornament as well as filler ornaments are filled in the form of decoration points/checks, lines, a combination of lines and points, and many more types. (Dharsono, 2007)

Basic Material of Batik Kimono

The design of the Batik Kimono, in addition to the consideration of its style (motifs and colours, and composition), must also consider its textile material. Kimono is usually made from Japanese silk printed with the *Yuzen* technique. *Yuzen* means repetitive printing techniques. Many people think that the kimono is painted and each kimono contains one painting, but in fact, it is not.

One alternative fabric for making batik kimono is cotton fiber because this annual plant is often found in the tropics and sub-tropical country (Hartanto, 2003). Cotton fabric derived from cotton fibers has good absorption of sweat and is strong. It feels soft because it has good circulation so it can suck up the heat (Yusuf, 2012).

Mori is the basic material of cotton fabric that can be used as a basic material for Batik Kimono. Mori has several types based on its quality, namely *primisima* mori, *prime* mori, *blue* mori, *kolississima* mori, *volissima* mori, and *shantung* mori. Another type of fabric that can be used is silk. Silk is a natural protein fiber that can be woven into textiles. The most common type is the silk from a cocoon produced by larvae of cultivated mulberry silkworm (*Bombyx mori*). Silk is an alternative fabric because it has a smooth, soft texture but is not slippery (Hitchcock, 1991). Some other types of fabric that can be used as an alternative to making batik kimono are *dobby*, *poplin*, *berkolin*, and *rayon* for qualities below silk and cotton (Belinda, 2009). The market also currently has a type of fabric called cotton silk. Judging from its texture, this fabric is similar to a cotton cloth, but it looks rather shiny with a lustre. The fabric is soft and the colour absorption is very good. However, the price is more expensive compared to cotton fabrics, but less pricey compared to silk fabrics. Batik artisans now often use this fabric to visualise their batik products.

One difference between batik and other types of cloth is the main ingredient called "batik wax" or *malam* in Javanese. The function of the batik wax in the process of production is to cover up certain parts or areas so it will not get dyed. The parts that are given a wax are automatically impenetrable by the dye because the two properties of the material are contradictory. Batik waxes contain oil while dyes contain water (Subarno, 2000). The question is whether this problem is an obstacle.

"I don't think it's a serious problem because batik wax is only in the process of induction. In the process of making batik kimono, batik is ready. So, it's not a problem. Stiff impression because of the waxing process can be anticipated. Then the variation of batik material can be from silk so that it is smoother "(Hamzuri, 1981: 12).

Regarding batik techniques, people are often stuck with artificial batik techniques. This, indeed, needs to be understood because batik is not only made by waxing the fabric, but other criteria must be fulfilled as well. Batik in accordance with SNI 0239: 2014 Batik - The terms and definitions of Batik are handicrafts as a result of staining by obstruction using hot wax (batik wax) as a colour barrier with the main tool of batik wax, and *canting* (a pen like tool) to form certain meaningful motifs.

The basic ingredients that can be sought come from batik with natural dyes, not containing too many chemical elements. Natural batik dyes can be obtained from plants (Rini, 2011). For example, teak wood for brownish-red colouring, jackfruit wood for light yellow colouring, tea leaves to produce brown colour, avocado leaves to produce brownish-green colour, turmeric for yellow colouring, mangos teen for purplish colouring, and shy grass to produce a greenish colour.

In addition to these basic ingredients, another important element is the various motifs on batik. The selection of basic ingredients with the right batik motifs and patterns is very important. Natural batik motifs are inspired by the surrounding natural environment such as plants (flora), animals (fauna), elements of the natural atmosphere, astronomy, and many more. Batik motifs are created with simple lines but can absorb the distinctive shape of leaves and other natural elements. Some types of batik motifs inspired by natural motifs are banana leaf, indigo leaf, bamboo, rattan, shell, corn, spice, jasmine, ylang-ylang, coconut flower, cloud (*megamendung*), eagle and other birds, butterfly, fishes, *sekar jagad*, *kawung* (aren palm) and many others (Soemantri, 2008).

Discussion

Batik Kimono for Summer

In accordance with summer conditions, the motifs of batik are dominated by vibrant colours that give bright effects, such as red, orange, and yellow. All of these motifs can be found in coastal batik. These motifs are highly suitable to be associated with Japan as a country that consumes a lot of seafood. The pattern found in coastal batik is generally marine themed.



Figure 1. Design of Batik Kimono for Summer



Figure 2. Batik Kimono 107 & OBI / Source of Idea: Sakura, Lily and Butterfly

In the Batik Kimono summer design (Left picture), the motif consists of a wave square, shells, seawater ripples, and coral reefs combined with red and yellow. While the design of the pattern on the right side of the Batik Kimono is inspired by summer life in the interior of Java so that the motifs are in the form of orchid, peony, and plum blossom and butterflies. The colours used are ochre yellow, red, purple, and green. Both of these Batik Kimono designs are made of soft cotton, so even though they are hot, they are comfortable to wear, especially in summer.

Batik Kimono for Autumn

The condition in Japan when it is autumn is almost similar to Indonesia, because it is in the period between the rainy and dry season. Many trees live with only branches because their leaves fall by strong winds that occur every day.



DESAIN BATIK KIMONO
MUSIM GUGUR

Figure 3. Design of Batik Kimono for Autumn



Figure 4. Batik Kimono 110 & OBI / Source of
Idea: Wisteria, Yellow Ylang / *Kantil*

The Batik Kimono design on the left figure is visualised by the motifs of twigs, fallen leaves, and lung vines in Java, worked with white bone lines and fields, with a brown background. The Batik Kimono design on the right picture is visualised with a lung motif of wisteria, ylang-ylang, and *kanthil* (champak). The chosen colours are blue, orange, and light purple which are typical in Japan for autumn.

Batik Kimono for Spring

Spring means to grow. In batik, the patterns and cement boards are known to mean semi-reason (growth) and base (forest). It includes non-geometric patterns which are a composite composition of flora, fauna, and objects. The idea is to describe the atmosphere of non-geometric spring with fresh natural colours.



Figure 5. Batik Kimono III & OBI / Source of Idea: Plum Blossom, Jasmine, *Banji* motif



Figure 6. Design of Batik Kimono for spring

The Batik Kimono motif above is designed for spring. On the left figure, the Batik Kimono motif is structured from the elements of the *banji* (which is quite well known in Japan), plum blossoms, jasmine, and leaves. It works on a light green cloth, background alloy turquoise and red polka dots. The right Batik Kimono design drawings are composed by flying birds, orchids, cherry blossoms, arranged on a bright green background. The brightness is supported by colours that are also bright like purple, orange, red, and blue.

Batik Kimono for Winter

The tone of winter is white and blue. White in Batik is often found in Yogyakarta motif, known as *bledak* batik (white background and basic colour).



Figure 7. Batik Kimono 109& OBI / Source of Idea: Peony, Orchid, Sawat/ Lar



Figure 8. Design of Batik Kimono for winter

The Batik Kimono design on the left is intended for winter filled with shades of pale colour. The green colour disappears as an accent, the pink on the background, and the colour of the salmon on the edge of the arm all lead to a youthful colour resulting in a very light colour which is referred to as pastel colour. The motifs stocked on the Batik Kimono are structured from the shape of *gurda* (banyan tree) and orchids. On the right is Batik Kimono design which motif is structured from the shape of orchids, cherry blossoms, lung motifs, and fringe motifs (under the kimono) in the form of hills. The colours used are red, blue, and green pine. White curved lines are the symbol of the wind depiction that usually accompanies winter. These motifs are spread in the form of reflection patterns with a light blue background.

Overall, this batik is made in the form of rectangular sheets that follow the Kimono pattern in Japan, as in the batik making plan below:

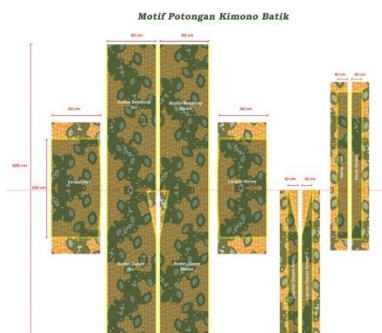


Figure 9. Cut Motif of Batik Kimono

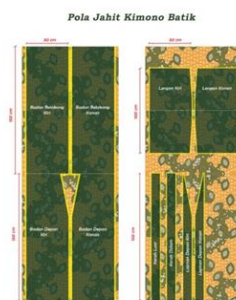


Figure 10. Sewing Pattern of Ba Kimono



Figure 11. Batik Kimono 108 & OBI / Source of Idea: Sunflower, Plum Blossom, Teak Leaves

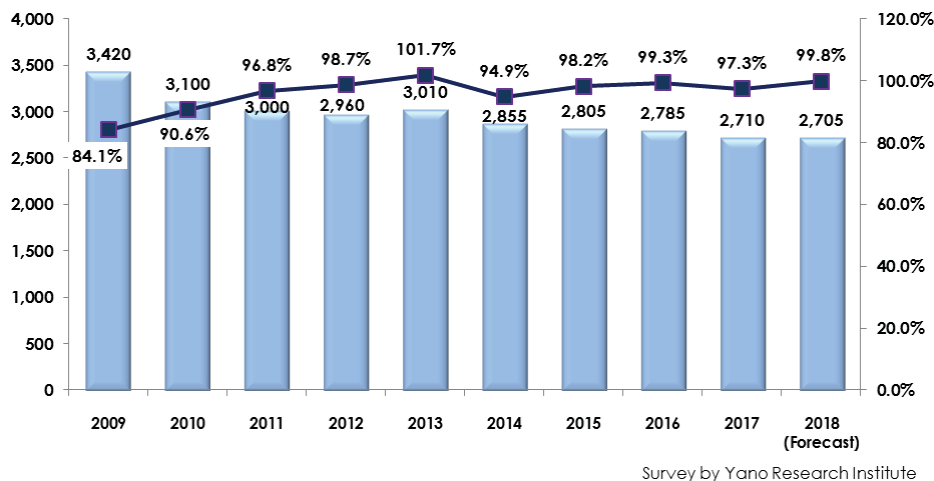
Marketing Prospects for Batik Kimono Products

Batik Kimono is designed to be worn comfortably by all circles and ages for traditional clothing, official ceremonies, fashion, and special occasions. Batik Kimono is made from quality materials with sufficient stitching quality (smooth, solid, aesthetic, and strong). The goal is to penetrate the target market in all cities in Japan.

In 2017, the domestic Kimono market recorded a profit of 271.0 Billion Yen. That number is decreasing from the previous year due to some negative social sentiments such as the lower number of births and children, the declining frequency of ceremonial traditions (marriage, celebration, the cycle of life), and admittedly also due to the lesser number of people getting married.

A very strong obstacle felt by Kimono traders in Japan is the increasingly strong form of online sales. However, this sales model has also gradually expanded the Kimono market to the young generation. They are inspired to wear and make it as a necessity of trend and fashion, even the way of life. Second, there is increasing sales of recycled Kimono because the price is pretty affordable compared to the average price of Kimono which reaches approximately 12 million rupiahs per strand.

Graph 1. Kimono Sales Fluctuations in the Retail Market
(Hundred Million Yen)



Based on observations and survey data, the sale prospect of Batik Kimono is highly dependent on the ability to recognise the target market. With a choice of patterns, motifs and controlled material selection, the Batik kimono will become a high quality and low-cost product so everyone can wear Batik Kimono. Second, selling using all social media help to provoke and stimulate the young generation to be interested in wearing the "new styles" of fashion throughout the year. Third, offering more variations and free product at several promotional events (Hemmings, 2019). Fourth, determine the centre of



promotional activities and art sales in the heart of cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka. Fifth, establish good relations and assist consumers to get to know and get involved directly with this new product. Sixth, strengthen network relations by targeting particularly campuses, schools, and communities as a potential base. Seventh, strengthen the community-based promotion system.

Conclusion

Based on research problems and research analysis, it can be concluded that Batik Kimono with motifs from the natural surroundings has the opportunity to be a superior product for batik artisans in Surakarta. Secondly, Batik Kimono has a choice of motifs and different patterns for summer, autumn, spring, and winter. Third, Batik Kimono has marketing opportunities for international consumption. However, there are some things to note such (1) the knowledge of the target market, (2) the marketing strategic that utilises various social media technologies, (3) variation of product offered, (4) conducting a promotion in the city centres, (5) familiarity and closeness with consumers, (6) strengthening potential user networks, and (7) strengthening the promotion system.

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