

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

According to Great Indonesian Dictionary, defines “Batik” as the painted cloth specially made by writing or putting wax on the surface of a cloth that is processed in certain way. Batik is one of the cultural heritages of the archipelago, a traditional textile made using a special technique by writing or stamping hot wax onto the surface of the fabric using a *canting* (a pen-like tool) or handstamp to create pattern motifs. The term batik is derived from the words "amba" and "tik" or "nitik". "Amba" means to write, wide, or broad, and "tik" or "nitik" means dot or to make a dot (Supriono, 2016). So, batik means making dots or the suffix "tik" means making dots or dripping wax on wide fabric.

Among the various types of Indonesian culture, batik is an art form that holds high philosophical value. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) assesses Indonesian Batik as a textile craft rich in techniques, symbolism, and culture that is directly related to the life processes of the Indonesian people from beginning to end. As on October 2, 2009, UNESCO has recognized batik as a representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity, and the government has directly confirmed that every October 2 is commemorated as National Batik Day.

This event marks global recognition of the value and uniqueness of art that needs to be preserved and maintained in the modern era through society education, especially for the younger generation, development and innovation in batik, and promotion to the international level to survive in the midst of globalization.

Batik, an art form that has been known for hundreds of years, has become an essential part of Indonesian society's life. Batik has become a unique symbol of national identity because its motifs, techniques, and functions reflect the richness of diverse arts and culture. According to (Supriono, 2016), the existence of batik in Indonesia is not limited to being a visual object but also serves as idealism, identity, a tool for struggle, economic activity, a symbol of hope, and an expression of the social order of life depending on each region. Each region has its own distinctive batik that reflects the culture of that area. For example, Batik Solo is a type of batik produced in the environment of the Surakarta Sunanate. The characteristic of Batik Solo is its flexible or non-stiff batik motifs, fine *isen-isen* designs and patch ornaments, as well as the use of natural dyes from Javanese *sogan* that produce classic brownish shades and are predominantly lighter. Unlike Yogyakarta Batik, which is produced in the Yogyakarta Sultanate environment, this type of batik is characterized by a combination of the basic colors of white, black, and dark brown, as well as motifs that predominantly feature geometric patterns. Meanwhile, batik from West Sumatra is known as batik that reflects the culture and nature of the region. Just like the traditional batik from Yogyakarta, West Sumatra has utilized natural dyes for batik coloring. Such as *gambir*, a plant that grows abundantly in

Lima Puluh Kota Regency of West Sumatra, and batik dyed by *tanah liak*, whose base fabric is dyed with clay and motifs section are dyed with other plants.

In various aspects of life, including the fashion and textile industry, sustainability has been a focus in recent years. The resurgence of batik with natural dyes is one of the interesting trends in reviving the principles of a sustainable lifestyle. This is in line with the survey of (Gazzola et al., 2020), the increasing attention and importance of sustainability and circular economy among the younger generation, positioning these factors as key strategic advantages in the fashion industry and driving innovation, social responsibility and new business models. Natural dyes were utilized in the textile dyeing process before synthetic colors became popular today (Hartini et al., 2021). Due to to the early 20th century, artisans have been using synthetic coloring, replacing and abandoning natural coloring as time went on. There is currently a push to go back to natural coloring since the sources thought to be less expensive and more environmentally friendly (Alamsyah et al., 2020).

As the batik industry in Indonesia has developed, batik is no longer used for the sake of cultural and economic purposes. Batik has also evolved as a fashion and lifestyle necessity across various layers of society (Supriono, 2016). Nevertheless, the batik industry faces various challenges that could threaten its continuity. Here are some of the problems faced:

- a. Imitation in batik itself: based on the findings (Raya et al., 2021), one of the biggest challenges in the marketing subsystem of batik SMEs is that 100%



of all local government and batik SMEs owners in Java, and 90,48% outside Java, state the emergence of batik printing. With the rise of batik printing that can easily be claimed by sellers to resemble traditional hand-drawn and stamped batik, these batik printing products have started to dominate the market. Consequently, allowing them to be sold at lower prices and displacing the existence of high-value traditional batik. This phenomenon also indirectly affects consumers' perceptions of the difference between authentic and imitation batik, leading to a decrease in public interest in traditional batik.

- b. Lack of batik education for consumers: based on the results of initial interviews that have been conducted, many consumers do not yet understand the term of batik itself, starting from knowledge about the cultural value of batik, the history of batik, the process of making batik, the types of batik, and the philosophy behind batik motifs, which results in a lack of appreciation for the artistic value of batik.
- c. Environmental issue: batik is part of the textile industry which is vulnerable to environmental issues and has potential to produce hazardous waste, such as synthetic dye batik. The widespread use of synthetic dyes in the textile and other industries presents substantial environmental and health hazards, particularly when released into wastewater (Holkar et al., 2016). The waste from batik production using synthetic dyes is generally difficult to decompose due to its chemical content, which can pollute water sources, affect ecosystems, and poison aquatic organisms.

d. Product designs and motifs that are less innovative and varied: most artisans are still limited or have not yet developed in creating modern motifs and clothing designs that keep up with the times so that they seem shackled (Supriono, 2016). This results in consumers who quickly feel bored in using batik because the motif design is still too traditional (Raya et al., 2021). In addition, harmonious color combinations are essential in producing batik. Thus, some batik in Indonesia still appears monotonous and does not meet the tastes of today's consumers.

In response to this case, this project is a form of initiation by the author who has a passion in design fields to design products and develop batik businesses in the author's hometown, Lima Puluh Kota Regency. In addition, the author has also observed that Lima Puluh Kota Regency has great potential in the development of the creative industry, including in the batik craft sector. However, the development of batik in this region is still relatively slow and not widely recognized. Several factors influencing this are the limited innovation in product design, such as the use of environmentally friendly raw materials and digital marketing to reach a wider market so that the products can be recognized. Meanwhile, Lima Puluh Kota Regency has natural resources that can be utilized for the development of batik products, such as the *gambir* plant (*uncaria gambir*), which is generally used for chewing betel and as medicine and also has potential as a natural dye.

In addition, based on initial interviews conducted with five potential customers, it was found that most of them have an interest in natural dye batik products. This is also in line with previous research by (Yulianingrum et al., 2022),

which stated that 68% of respondents were interested in batik innovation combined with current fashion trends without losing the original batik value. However, they also highlighted some key consideration factors in the purchase decision, such as price, color, clothing design, motif, color resistance, and the meaning of the batik itself. Thus, the project needs to be carried out through new product development process model with the aim of developing batik products and establishing a batik brand (as an upcoming business) using natural dyes from *gambir* wastewater or local people commonly call “*kalincuang*”. This initiation is also supported by the author's experience in learning how to make natural dye batik through workshops directly taught by experienced batik craftsmen in Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. In addition to the knowledge of making natural dye batik, the author also gained insights related to supporting resources and production materials that are easily available for development purposes. Therefore, the author chose the focus of the final project as a form of supporting in starting a batik business with the title “PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OF NATURAL DYE-BASED BATIK FASHION”.

## **1.2 Problem Formulation**

Based on the background outlined above, the problem formulation in this project is: how to develop batik fashion in the form of ready-to-wear products using natural dyes as a preservation of batik culture in the modern era.

## **1.3 Project Goals**



Based on the problem formulation above, the goals of this project is to develop batik fashion in the form of ready-to-wear prototypes by utilizing natural dyes from *gambir* wastewater that prioritizes sustainable principles with a modern touch without losing the value of traditional batik.

#### **1.4 Project Benefits**

##### **1.4.1 Theoretical Benefits**

From a theoretical perspective, the goal of this project is to enhance knowledge about entrepreneurship, particularly regarding product development, which is expected to be useful as insights for the author and readers, as well as a guideline for future batik product development projects.

##### **1.4.2 Practical Benefits**

This project is expected to assist the author in the initial process of a natural dye-based batik business in hometown through theoretical studies, thereby building a business with great prospects that will be favored and accepted by consumers.

#### **1.5 Scope**

The scope of this project is only limited to making prototypes of natural dye batik products in the form of fashion wear that prioritizes sustainable principles by utilizing wastewater *gambir* production. The resulting prototype will be continued only until the market testing stage due to time constraints. After testing, feedback is obtained, a business feasibility analysis will be carried out by designing a business strategy for the future business guide. Then at the end as a conclusion will

be explained regarding the next agenda recommendations after this project is finished to connect the complete stage of the new product development process.

## **1.6 Project Systematics**

In general, this discussion will be divided into five chapters, with the following systematics:

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

Consists of the background, problem formulation, project goals, project benefits, scope of the project and project systematics.

### **Chapter II: Literature Review**

Explains theories related to the topic based on literature, previous business, project framework and workflow.

### **Chapter III: Project Implementation Method**

Describes the methods that will be used in carrying out the project, project design, business model, objective, data collection methods, types of data, data instruments, targets, operational definitions of the project, and project analysis tools.

### **Chapter IV: Project Implementation**

Project implementation contains the implementation of the project flow from business descriptions, product development process based on the workflow that has been designed, testing results and discussions.

### **Chapter V: Conclusion**

Contains conclusions and suggestions from the results of the project that has been worked on and future agenda.