

# **RECENT FUTURE RESEARCH IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR: A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF BATIK AS INDONESIAN HERITAGE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of the national economy. Batik Pekalongan, Solo and Lasem are examples of successful SMEs to stimulate local economy while creating products that are competitive in the national and international level. The purpose of this article is to identify the leading factors, as well as the barriers to doing batik business. In addition, this study also wanted to know the anticipation of future events done by batik entrepreneurs in creating customer value. The method is to use a qualitative approach to understand the problems that occur in SMEs batik Pekalongan, Solo and Lasem. The results show that there is great potential for doing batik business, that is because batik is a cultural product, batik has been rooted for generations, it has tacit knowledge, the availability of infrastructure and the good market. As for the obstacles is the lack of massive government support, the business is still run individually, as well as the lack of promotion. In addition, there is an absence of extra effort made by batik entrepreneurs in marketing and in anticipating future competition. Further research may emphasize on the role of associations and government, the role of the cluster, the patterns of anticipation on future strategy and how to develop human resources in batik industry.

**Keywords:** Batik, new models, future anticipation.

## INTRODUCTION:

Batik has become the icon of Indonesia and a world heritage by the UNESCO in the enactment date of October 2, 2009. This determination is done in the final session agenda number 25 in Abu Dhabi (<http://arkeologi.web.id/articles/berita-arkeologi/84-penetapan-batik-sebagai-warisan-dunia-oleh-unesco>). In this regard, the day was declared as the National Batik Day.

This milestone has not been responded well by the industry and batik consumers in Indonesia. This is shown from the following statement:

"The endorsement of batik by UNESCO associated with the famous batik techniques with lines and dots as an understanding of batik itself. It is ironic when what we wear is batik printing (manufacturer) which is very detrimental to hand-made batik or stamped batik. Most people simply do not realize that by buying and wearing batik printing, they already denied batik as world heritage ...." (<http://arkeologi.web.id/articles/berita-arkeologi/84-penetapan-batik-sebagai-warisan-dunia-oleh-unesco>)

Besides the fact that consumers do not appreciate batik, the batik entrepreneurs themselves do not take advantage of this momentum as they have not gained a "benefit" of this designation. In fact there are many batik entrepreneurs have not yet increased their turnover today. Sad, because actually this is a very good opportunity for batik entrepreneurs.

Based on preliminary literature study conducted, it was found that there was a downturn in batik market, especially its market share on writing/hand-made and stamped batik. Some of the reasons are less technological innovation applied, difficulty to anticipate and to know the needs of the market, difficulty to find buyers and the difficulty to develop business.

Along with the increasingly fierce competition among batik entrepreneurs, such as competition from both domestic and abroad (eg Malaysian batik), batik entrepreneurs then need to anticipate the future in all areas, for example in the field of manpower, raw materials, models and design, technology, etc.. Nevertheless, research on the future anticipation- especially for SMEs - is still very limited (De Roo, 2009; Adam, 2008). Therefore, this article tries to fill the gap by looking at the extra efforts made by the SMEs entrepreneurs to anticipate the future.

Related to this problem, there are several research issues that need to be answered in this study, such as batik entrepreneurs strategies in anticipating the future, the barriers experienced by entrepreneurs in anticipating the future, how batik entrepreneurs overcome these obstacles. Those things are the research objectives to be addressed in this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW:

### FUTURE ANTICIPATION:

Future anticipation is the customer perception about all the activities undertaken by producers who are trying to provide solutions to customer needs and requirements in the future. With the limited research and literature on future anticipation, then we used an approach of futuristic or futurology, which is the science that studies the future, which currently continues to grow and gain in-depth attention from academics (Mello, Bhadare, Fearn, Galaviz, Hartmann, and Worrel, 2009). Although this science will provide enormous implications in the world of marketing, but research and theory about the future is still very rarely discussed in the realm of marketing science.

Adam (2008) stated that it is the task of a company to shape the future. This is assumed as a resource that can be used today to make profits and competitiveness for companies. Further explained that to create and to shape the future is the right of every human being and company. This means that the company is the shaper of the future. The fact is companies spend money and large amounts of funds for research and development activities in order to deliver superior customer value in the future. Companies compete to innovate products development and services as part of future anticipation. When the company does not anticipate the future then they just wait for their death. One interesting example is Nokia which had been the market leader for decades in the mobile phone market. Nokia failed to maintain a strong will to innovate as a part of its future anticipation, that finally ended up in the major market acquisition by Iphone and Blackberry.

De Roo (2009) explains that the future is an activity related to the material, social and political. Social concerns as it relates to a lot of people to predict what will happen in the future. Regarding the material because it

requires a lot of funds needed by the company to identify trends in the future. Is said to be political because the company actually wants to dictate the market to a greater competitiveness. Although the future is a very complex matter to study, but this does not mean the future can not be predicted. Many corporate leaders in multinational companies such as Pizza Hut or United Color of Benetton conducting research by doing in-depth talks and even by living together for a few days with younger generation to understand their current needs as well as to try to understand their preferences in the future (Kwon, Schumann & Fairhurst, 2010). They did so in order to try to understand the future, because by understanding the future then they can carry out a series of anticipation to get the benefit out of it (Adam, 2008).

Related to the anticipation of the future, Chang, Hung and Ho (2007) introduced the process of finding potential customers through a needs analysis in the future. This process begins with the profile determination of loyal customers, continued with the search of potential customers and lead to a potential customer searches through predictions about their needs in the future. The drawing process can be seen in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: The Process of Determining Potential Customers in the Future**

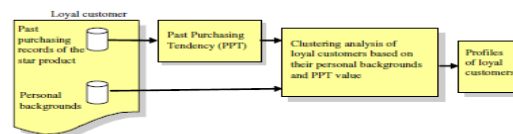


Fig. 3. The process of establishing loyal customer profiles.

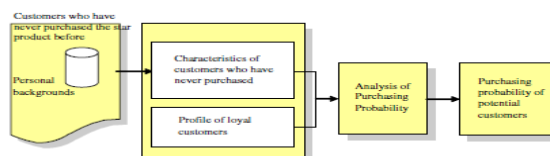


Fig. 4. The process of searching for potential customers.

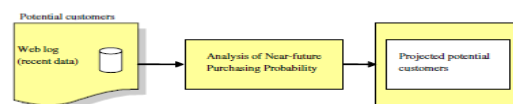


Fig. 5. The process of searching for projected potential customers.

**Source:** Chang et al., (2007)

Figure 1 above shows the importance of identifying patterns of sales for core products and customer background to understand the profile of loyal customers. It is also necessary to analyze the potential buyers who have never made a purchase, along with their characteristics to understand the buying opportunities that exist. The last part is to use existing data to understand buying opportunities in the future resulting in a projection of potential customers.

This analysis is important for SMEs considering that they rarely identify the pattern of their sales and customer profiles (Haryanto, 2007). By understanding the patterns of sales and customer profiles combined with anticipated future needs and desires, the opportunity to gain market potential will become large, which means an increase in the performance of the SME marketing.

## CUSTOMER VALUE:

Customer value is a customer's perception of the difference between what customers get to what should be sacrificed to obtain such services. Customer value helped the company to expand its innovation in order to obtain the perceived superior customer value (Kotler & Keller, 2009). In this regard, the entrepreneur needs to build a customer value proposition as a promise of what will be given to the customer.

Flint, Blocker & Boutin (2011) states that the customer perception of the value provided by the company is an important factor for a company to build an emotional connection with customers. Companies often invest a lot of money and effort to anticipate the needs and desires of customers in the future, but unfortunately this becomes useful when the anticipated effort is not appreciated by customers because it does not suit their needs and desires. They conduct research on a wide range of industries and found that the perception of anticipated customer value for the future felt by the customers give positive impact on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This shows the importance for all industries and SMEs to do future anticipation to provide superior customer value, to give satisfaction and to create customer loyalty.

In line with the above reasoning, Destan, Yaprak & Cavusgil (2006) conducted a study on SMEs in the United States to understand the importance of future anticipation. Under a condition of growing competition which creates a complex and turbulent situation, SMEs need to make a breakthrough and innovation in order to improve their marketing performance. By doing strategic alliances with existing stakeholders, especially with suppliers and competitors will make SMEs have a comparative advantage to anticipate the future. Further Mische (2009) states that by trying to understand the future will make the link between cognitive finally relate to the customer's purchasing decision. Entrepreneurs, such as companies and SMEs who are trying to anticipate the future will get appreciation from customers (Morales, 2005). This is because they put the customer as the driving force in their business. Customers who appreciate the extra effort will decide to make a purchase with the business. This can be explained through the theory of persuasion and attribution theory.

Future anticipation is part of the marketing strategy from business owners to persuade their customers. Several researchers have conducted research related to the company's consumer persuasion (Cardozo, 1965; Friedstat and Wright, 1994; Kirmani and wright, 1989; Campbell and Kirmani, 2000). While research on *attribution theory* has also been conducted by previous researchers (Folkes, 1988; Weiner, 2000). Nonetheless, the research that combines company'spersuasion with an extra effort is still very limited (Morales, 2005).

### COMPANY'S EXTRA EFFORTS:

Research from Morales (2005) about the extra effort that was issued by the company is the first study , because it links neutral motives and persuasion. However, research on the extra effort in general is not a new thing. Cardozo (1965) conducted a study which shows that under certain conditions, the effort and hope (expectation) affect the evaluation, both for products and shopping experience. When the expectation of the product or service is low, then the subject will rank them low grades as well. Spending more fund to make higher effort will moderate these effects, even will result completely different on shopping experience area. Clearly, spending more fund to carry out more effort will give higher initial evaluation for a better product.

Furthermore, Cardozo (1965) also showed that expectations influence the evaluation and satisfaction toward a product or service. High expectations will lead to less satisfaction because the company or service provider often fail to meet this expectation. While low expectations will likely be able to satisfy the consumers because it is relatively easily met.

One of the main theories used in Morales research (2005) is attribution theory. This theory states that consumers will appreciate general extra effort done by the company. Search on attributes by the consumers will be followed by failure or negative outcomes (Folkes, 1988). But it is also applied for success or positive outcome. In this regard, Weiner (1974) states that when a behavior can be controlled, then people basically have the moral and emotional responses, such as anger or otherwise feeling grateful that will motivate them to give punishment or reward. Talking about company's extra effort, consumers will punish companies that fail to work hard and give awards to those who work properly. Weiner (2000) adds that the process for attributes searching is fully a part of a continuing rationale for feelings which then leads to an action.

The second theory used by Morales (2005) is the equity theory underlines the principle of reciprocity (Adams 1965). According to this theory, humans basically have a tendency to give goodness (benefits) to those who do good to them (Regan, 1971). Further explained that men do not want to have moral duty onto others. When it is associated with extra effort, then the consumer will repay the kindness (an extra effort given by the company) by way of purchase or at least consumers will have a positive perception towards the product. This theory explained that the consumer will repay only if they feel they have benefited directly or personally.

A conflict between equity theory (which states that consumers repay only if they benefit directly and personally) with the attribution theory (which states that the consumer will repay though the the efforts given bythe company is in general) has encouraged Morales (2005) to conduct further research. The results show that consumers still appreciate the extra effort by the company, though it is only done in general and not spesifically done to personal. Another result obtained is that consumers appreciate the extra efforts made by the company if patterned motif is neutral and not as persuasion. Another result is that grateful feeling will bridge the extra effort and the possibility of checking on the products. While extra effort will lead to higher guilty feeling.

In connection with the inducement or persuasion on consumers, then Campbell and Kirmani (2000) have been identifying and examining the factors that influence the use of persuasion knowledge by consumers. Proposition that they ask is that when the consumer has unlimited resources, then the persuasion knowledge will be used to influence the persuasion motive and will affect the evaluation towards the salesperson. They adopted the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) with major postulations that consumers develop knowledge about persuasion and use that knowledge to compete with section persuaded. Therefore the use of persuasion

knowledge depends on the accessibility of persuasion motive, then consumers will not appreciate the company doing extra effort if it is based on persuasion.

Morales research (2005) examined only increased efforts by the company, although the quality has not changed. The result showed that the likelihood of the consumer to buy is higher for firms with extra effort, even though there was no increase in quality. It draws on research conducted by Kirmani and Wright (1989). They conceptualize the process by which ad costs are perceived role as a guide to quality. Folkes (1988) emphasized the importance of attribution theory in consumer behavior. Proposition put forward is to understand consumer perceptions and causal relationships that are the center of consumer behavior, which then marketers will be able to use it as a basis for marketing activities. Folkes explained that the products or services purchased by consumers for the causal relationship. As an illustration is when consumers buy deodorant that is believed to improve their social life, athletic shoes can improve achievement, medications to relieve pain, etc..

By reviewing the literature on attribution theory, Folkes wanted to show that attribution theory is very rich and well-developed approach deals with the issues in consumer behavior. Existing studies explain the relationship between consumer behavior and attitudes. For example, research indicates when consumers attribution will recommend products to other customers, and when they make complaints against the disappointments that occur. Attribution theory itself is actually a few theories that have the same basic assumptions. According to attribution theory, people will find what causes events (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1967). When company is associated with extra effort, then according to attribution theory, consumers will appreciate that extra effort even if it is only a general one.

The results from Morales (2005) -which serves as a guide in this study - also supports the attribution theory, noting that consumers appreciate the extra effort done by the company even though the efforts are in general and not to aim the consumers directly or personally.

Kruger, Wirtz & Altermatt (2004) shows that company's efforts is often used by consumers to understand the quality of products or services provided. The higher the company's efforts, the higher the perceived quality gets. In line with Morales (2005), though in fact there is no increase in quality, but if the company keeps giving extra efforts, then it will make consumers perceive better on its product or services.

## **RESEARCH METHOD:**

### **THE TYPE AND RESEARCH LOCATION:**

In terms purpose of study, this study is an inductive research as it aims to explore the phenomenon in connection with future anticipation. This study also aims to explain the cause and effect relationship (Blaikie, 2010). The research was conducted in three areas known as large Batik producers such as Pekalongan, Lasem and Solo in Central Java. Those three locations were selected because in this region there are many batik SMEs, both exporters and those which has not already done so.

### **DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES:**

- Focus Group Discussion (FGD). FGD is used to validate conceptual models and tools that have been designed either by the expert or practitioner. In this study, researchers conducted a focus group with 5 people in Solo, which are: the Chairman of the association of Solo Batik entrepreneurs, the Secretary of Solo batik Entrepreneurs Forum and three business owners representing small, medium and large SMEs. For in Lasem, FGDs were conducted with 6 people, they are the entrepreneurs of micro-level, small and medium enterprises, elders from batik industry, and representation from the biggest batik factory in Lasem. As for Pekalongan, FGD were conducted with 12 batik entrepreneurs and also the representation from batik association in Pekalongan. Researchers accompanied by staff from the Department of Industry and Trade from each district while doing this research. They provide assistance in selecting participants, given the facts that they have better understanding in every area of people better suited for this research.
- Observation is used to determine the general description, condition of SME organization, production, marketing and its future anticipation.
- Documentation is used to collect the required data through the implementation of business documents such as raw materials, production processes, financial, learning outcomes, the work (portfolio).

## **RESULTS:**

From the results of FDG in three cities mentioned earlier, it shows conclusion that Batik is a cultural product and has passed down through the generations. In batik cloth reflects the values and local wisdom that has



existed since very very long time. For example , batik Lasem have clear lines and scratches, depicts the society of Lasem who is harsh but honest. While batik Solo with its Keraton soul is subtle but rich in motifs and color. While batik Pekalongan is a combination of both. As batik is said as a product of the culture, what so—called batik is actually written batik /hand-made batik and stamped batik. Batik printing is not a real batik but is more as textile product with batik motifs. The following are excerpts from comments of participants in the FGD in Solo and Lasem.

"Me and batik entrepreneurs in Lasem do not want to produce batik printing. Although I know that batik printing will make me rich quickly, but nationalism and love for our culture making us persistent in maintaining hand-made batik / batik tulis . "(Mr. Santoso, 53 years old, batik entrepreneurs in Lasem).

"The so-called Batik is hand-made batik and stamped batik. Batik Printing is a imperialist product that would eliminate the values of batik itself. "(Mr. Widi, 40 years old, batik entrepreneurs in Solo).

From the excerpts above, it shows clearly that batik is not just textile products but has become a culture that has its own values. This is the potential and power for batik business. Many workers also have tacit knowledge, which is not owned by another nation. Batik market is huge and many, scattered both in domestic and abroad. Besides its potential, batik business carried on in Pekalongan , Solo and Lasem also experience obstacles that is relatively similar to those carried out in other cities. This was reflected in the following passage:

"The main raw material of batik is wax called *malam* ... wax with Gondorukem in it ... gondorukem 10 years ago .... 20% was use for batik ... but over time ... its use is widen now ... "

"Now this gondorukem material is used for newsprint, for cosmetic ingredients, etc. ... Perhutani / government pegged an export price on it... so who can pay at the highest rupiah they can get it .. . "

"That's what we worry about, that we will not be able to catch up the price ..." (Mr. Sodikin, from SERBA PAS community (Pasasaran Batik Workers Union).

From the quote above, it is seen that the raw material is still a major problem in the activities of batik making. Wax called *malam* where there is gondorukem in it, remains a concern for batik entrepreneurs because the current price pegged by Perhutani is the export price, thus batik entrepreneurs with middle class market will face difficulty to chase the price. Batik entrepreneurs in Pekalongan are expecting external parties such as from academics / colleges to be able to provide input to the government in order to provide the best solutions on gondorukem problems, or associated with other supporting materials such as mori fabrics, cotton etc. which sometimes also following the fuel price hike today. Because if we look at the reality on the field, the raw material in the process of batik making itself is imported , even though our country is also rich in natural resources, one of which is cotton. Not just a matter of raw materials as a problem faced by batik entrepreneurs in Pekalongan , but the problem about consumers as buyers of batik products. This was reflected in the statement below:

"... Consumers are becoming obstacles ... any kind of batik we create, if the price can not meet the consumer ... it's useless .... "

".... Apparently, any purchasing made by customers it is not because of the motives, but because of its uniqueness , a trend .....our products is indeed unique ..."

"Consumers do not want to know ... and do not want to ask ... if it is only patchwork clothing , so what ??? .. What's important is consumers like it and it is affordable ...."

"Packaging is also something interesting ... for example I do not use the packaging from paper or plastic ... I use water hyacinth ..."

"Concerns about the high price of raw materials ... made us forget about the importance of maintaining workforce .... we never think about their health, their wages,... it's all about raw material ... we forget that from the labor we can be the boss ... "(Abdul Ghofar, batik entrepreneurs" Preketek ")

From the above statement, it is clear that consumers are also becoming one of the obstacles in developing batik

business. Consumers who can not be reached will lead to losses for batik entrepreneurs who are producing a product. Moving on from here, let's think about how entrepreneurs can make or produce a batik products which are likeable, particularly affordable in price and quality, so that what has been done so far is not in vain.

Packing as the final process in purchasing or sale must also be considered. Packaging is not made of paper or plastic, but from water hyacinth. This is not necessarily to make it look different from others, and so forth, but in order to save the budget. One thing to remember is that consumers consider to buy batik because of its uniqueness.

Manpower as human resources greatly influence the success of an industry, therefore it needs to be well-maintained. They make one company succeed to meet market demands. Unfortunately, what's happening now is that these workers get only little attention, for example in their health, and especially in terms of wages. The mindset of business owners who only think of doing mass production to meet market demand amid fears of hiking price for raw materials, making them fail to take care of their labors. This urgently needs to fix, or it may lead to something harmful. This may also be a reason for them to choose to work outside the city that is believed can provide higher wages and give more attention as they expected.

### **FUTURE ANTICIPATION IN TERMS OF DEMAND:**

However, many batik entrepreneurs have already been running their business by doing future anticipation. They innovate in design, human resources and technology to anticipate the competition. For example, in anticipating strong demand in Solo, they have already had a good cooperation with other batik entrepreneurs to fulfill existing orders. If there is an order with certain motif that one can not fulfill, then they will take from other batik entrepreneurs and take a profit margin of around 10% only. This is done in order to continue receiving orders, maintain a strong networking among them and to ensure that requests from customers are well catered. They even provide training in other areas to socialize batik. For example batik TIDAYU (which stands for Chinese, Dayak and Melayu) is the creation of Solo batik entrepreneurs who teach Kalimantanese how to make batik motif Kalimantan by combining the Peranakan Chinese, Dayak and Melayu .. Here's an excerpt from the statement of the results of FDG in Solo.

"I provide training in Kalimantan and creating batik TIDAYU. After it becomes famous demand will be great. They can only produce at maximum of 10 fabrics per month, so if there is a larger demand, of course they will ask Solo to fulfill so I end up getting profit as well"  
(Mr. Soleiman, 67 years old, Solo batik entrepreneurs).

By doing such cooperation, batik entrepreneurs have done future anticipation, to popularize batik as well as to embrace new players or recent ones as mutually beneficial partnership. These findings reinforce the notion Kotler and Keller (2009) states that by the creation of networks (networking) then the employer will be benefited.

### **FUTURE ANTICIPATION IN TERMS OF DESIGN:**

In terms of design creation, it is found that batik entrepreneurs in Solo are more sensitive to market demand. They no longer hold the 'pakem' / existing standards, but are more concerned with meeting the needs of the market. This is done so that batik became more modern, attractive and able to reach various groups of people. Within three months they need to create new motifs and new creations in order to attract the market, otherwise their design will be soon outdated. Even in more extreme conditions, new motifs and designs is made almost every week to keep up the trend. This is quite different from the conditions in Lasem. Batik industry in Lasem still very much sticks to the 'pakem' / standard which relatively conventional. They still adhere to certain 'pakem' / standards and not willing to change it. It is in one hand a weakness because it looks outdated and old-fashioned. But on the other hand, also brings strength for batik lovers who actually appreciates its "antiquity" and find batik cloth that still holds the 'pakem'. Here are excerpts of comments from batik entrepreneurs in Solo versus those in Lasem about batik design:

"In Solo we no longer stick to the 'pakem'. This is due to changing market conditions so that we also have to keep abreast of the times. (Mrs. Ratna, 37 years, entrepreneurs batik in Solo)"

"No later than every three months we create new designs and motifs that is not outdated and our products can continue to be absorbed in the market (Mr. Soleiman, 67 years old, batik entrepreneurs in Solo).

"Batik entrepreneurs in Lasem are retaining existing 'pakem' through 'cecekan-cecekan' / pattern in a batik cloth. We remain loyal to the heritage." (Mr. Usman, 72 years old, elder batik entrepreneurs in Lasem).

### **FUTURE ANTICIPATION IN TERMS OF MANPOWER:**

There are significant differences in terms of workforce management in Solo and Lasem. In Solo, every employer has only limited employees. They rely more on outsourcing and or taking merchandise from other merchants. In Solo, the payment system for outsourcing employees is settled when they finish all the process of making batik clothes. While in Lasem, payment systems are in advance. Mori cloth will be given to the outsourcing employee then the employer will pay in advance for batik-making service. This is actually an obstacle for entrepreneurs from outside Lasem to do outsource. In many cases, a lot of employees who receive money in advance would misuse the money, renege their responsibility to accomplish batik-making process. In Solo, employers have begun to think about future anticipation in terms of manpower, either by using outsourcing and or taking merchandise from other merchants. While in Lasem, abundant labor available, for almost every woman in Lasem is able to make batik, so labor issues so far is not a problem in Lasem.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Of the three sites studied, there are some interesting findings as a description of the batik business. The results indicate that there is good potential for batik business, such as for example, batik is a product of culture, rooted for generations, have tacit knowledge, availability of infrastructure, the open market.

Besides potential and existing strengths, there are also some problems and barriers that exist in batik business. Some things such as the lack of massive government support, the business is still run individually, lack of promotion.

Regarding future anticipation, there is a lack of extra effort in marketing to face the competition. The entrepreneurs generally only set a short term plan about their business.

Further research that can be done is to see the role of associations and government, the role of the cluster, the patterns and future strategy and how to develop human resources in batik industry.

### **MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

In anticipation for the future, there are some things that need to be done by various parties, relating to the development of batik industry :

1. Unite the batik entrepreneurs, they currently run individually, no yet coordinated.
2. Proclaim a batik business area into batik village / Kampung Batik
3. Turn the empty houses into House of Batik
4. Involve young generations in batik industry
5. Join training programmes
6. Modernize the model and orientation, adjust to the market demand. Not only traditional batik
6. Be open to new way of process, not only written /hand-made -stamped-printing, now is also developed into painting and traditional. Do a combination of them all.
7. Consider other Batik entrepreneurs as partners, each entrepreneur has special abilities and limitation ... therefore they must cooperate.
8. Batik business needs to be associated with tourism activities.
9. The application of business ethics among batik entrepreneurs, ethics must be strictly applied by each of batik entrepreneurs, for example, if a buyer has already contacted certain entrepreneurs, the others will not interfere and should not be bypassed, unless the buyer himself actively look for various producers.

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