

# Efforts Of Songket Craftsmen To Maintain The Sustainability Of The Business

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**Abstract:** This study aims to determine the various efforts made by the craftsmen of cloth woven songket to maintain the sustainability of its business so that it is still undergoing work as craftsmen of Batubara songket. This research uses descriptive qualitative approach. The population of the research was the target population, they are 20 craftsmen which is fully worked as craftsmen and draper earnings only on the results of the sale Batubara fabric songket. The entire population was made a research sample. Data analysis was performed with the techniques of study literature, observation, in-depth interviews and also questionnaire. The results of the research note that the craftsmen suffered many obstacles in sustaining its efforts in terms of economic factors in particular limitations of capital and the lack of knowledge or expertise in creativity for producing new motifs and still using traditional weaving equipment so that it takes a long time in the production process. In addition, the existence of a limited production number of result based on sales levels eventually made order fabric songket very little. Many of the efforts made by the craftsmen, they are (1) capital problem by submitting a loan to a bank just constrained reserved terms, (2) join the training or coaching from Government but still very limited amount and its implementation, (3) do marketing directly is considered more effective purchasing power draw compared to join the gallery or send to main distributor because it is considered more quickly receive cash (4) innovating colors and motifs follow current fashion trends (5) reduce the number of workers considered to be able to reduce production costs (6) sell fabric at prices cheaper but still give priority to quality (6) commitment to maintaining cultural heritage of Batu bara woven songket for the sake of continuity of the culture of the Malay of Batubara community in the future.

**Keywords:** Sustainability of efforts, Craftsmen, Songket Cloth

## 1. Introduction

Empowerment of Small Medium Enterprises is an integral part of national development that aims to realize a fair and prosperous society. SMEs is the dominant economy in an increasing number of labor with an average growth of 97% which shows the number of SMALL MEDIUM ENTERPRISES able to absorb labor, realized that with labor absorption rate is high, this sector has been ensure the stability of the labour market, unemployment and the emphasis became the vehicle of the rise of self-employment, as well as the emergence of a formidable national entrepreneurial and independent. (Indonesia Statistics Centre, 2018)

Indonesia is known as exporter of woven fabric. One of them is Batubara songket. The uniqueness of the style and materials of the impurity to become one of the charms of this fabric demand to get out of the country. Consumer interest with industry craft Songket of Batu Bara, because of original design or motif woven the area of art and culture has a value that is high enough. Therefore, many from neighboring countries

such as Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Brunei darussalam buy songket. This effort also was down from the succession since hundreds of years ago. Ancestral heritage which later became the home of the industry. Current fabric woven songket is not only used by the Malays, Batak also began wearing a songket. In some of the Batak wedding reception, not the bride but ulos fabric songket used concurrently with their traditional clothing. Songket of Batubara has its own characteristics, it can be seen from the process the making of cloth are still using songket weaving of wood in the traditional way, but still has a good quality, thus it is not inferior with songket which is generated by sophisticated machines at this time. The craftsmen of songket is one of the perpetrators of the SMEs is also able to improve the economy of the community and accelerate regional development in Batubara. Therefore need special attention in order to get business or production did not stop. Batubara regency is also known as one of the industrial centers of songket in North Sumatra.

This study is part of research that examines the ability of the craftsmen of songket with competitive advantage strategy through a SWOT analysis, so it is known that there are some barriers experienced by craftsmen to develop or improve the productivity of its production. The craftsmen are known to have a lot of obstacles in developing his business so that eventually many craftsmen who shut down his business and move on to other types of jobs that are considered faster and produce more promising in giving profit in the future. Batubara is one of the regencies in North Sumatra that society is not too quick to absorb the growth in North Sumatra. There are many craftsmen who initially continued the family business until only a couple of course is known to only about 150 people remain woven songket craftsmen to continue the customs and culture of their ancestors. Development should be evenly distributed in a variety of areas, including the field of the preservation of culture and empowering small businesses in areas such as craftsmen in Coal is not the maximum perceived by community craftspeople in district, bounded. Many of the constraints faced by the craftsmen so that lower the production numbers in the songket of Batubara. One of the most fundamental is the question of economy, it is capital limitations so as to decrease the quality and quantity of production of woven songket. This is of concern to the researchers to conduct in-depth observations related obstacles faced by craftsmen songket simultaneously analyzes efforts made by craftsmen to maintain the sustainability of its business especially to maintain quality with limited owned and made the fabric of songket in Batubara remains one of the needs of the consumer products would be sought and used of all time.

## **2. Theory**

### **2.1 Communities-Based Entrepreneurial**

Sugandi (2016) states that poverty reduction with sustainable needs-based approach on the principle of empowerment of the community so that the process of implementation of programs enacted in particular efforts should be made by the community with the target is the poor in villages and towns. Although in practice fraught with challenges, especially involving people with diverse backgrounds and an attempt to foster a sense of belonging from doing business. In the context of smaller communities anymore, lack of support from various parties making the entrepreneur in small community experiencing constraints in developing the ability and access to larger markets. There needs to be a holistic approach in the development of entrepreneurship,

which not only focuses on economic benefits, but also think about other benefits received as a market-oriented mindset and improve the potential of the business sustainable.

## **2.2 Business Development Strategy**

Hubeis and Najib, (2008) expressed in the strategic management process there are three main stages in the formulation of the strategy, the implementation of the strategy as well as evaluation and control strategy, beginning with the observation of the environment. Each stage is intertwined with each other, there should not be any stone unturned.

Next in the stages of the formulation of strategies, businessmen can use strategic management process consists of six steps i.e.:

1. The internal environment analysis.
2. Conduct analysis of external environment.
3. Develop a clear vision and mission.
4. Compile the goals and objectives of the company.
5. Formulating strategic choices and choose the right strategy.
6. Determine the control.

In the process of evaluation of the strategy of some things to do, i.e:

- a. Review the external and internal problems that occur at this time, what is happening perubahan-perubahan pada saat strategi dirumuskan.
- b. Presence of measurement capability or performance of the company by ensuring return, whether in accordance with a predetermined standard.
- c. Make improvements to the development of the company.
- d. Helping to develop the model in the future.

## **2.3 Research Purposes**

This research aims to find out what strategies and efforts made by the craftsmen of cloth woven songket, in Talawi of Batubara regency of North Sumatra Province to maintain the sustainability of its business.

## **2.4 Hypothesis**

Hypothesis of this research are the craftsmen do many efforts and implementing various strategies to maintain the sustainability of its business range from setting a price that relates to the purchase of raw materials are not redundant to reduce worker and do the intense marketing to the community directly.

## **3. Method Of Research**

This research is using descriptive and qualitative approach. Research by this method provides an opportunity for researchers to provide a complete description of all the findings in the field. This research was conducted in the Batubara District, Talawi. The location was selected based on the consideration that Talawi is a village known as cloth-producing village of songket. Population research is 20 craftsmen which are a native population of sub district of Talawi. All the members of population are used as the sample of this research. Data collection is using the questionnaire and in depth

interview to all respondents. The data collected is analyzed using descriptive data analysis.

#### **4. Results And Discussion**

Research conducted on villages in the Talawi Sub-district. The majority of the community is the first since the ethnic Malays in daily is making and using songket and fabric for a wide range of their interests. Batubara is a central of songket industry in North Sumatra and became an important part of traditional Malay as the mating of marriage, circumcision, welcomed his guest, conduct and welcomes pilgrims, and others.

The results of the analysis through observation and interview are deeply aware that the whole of the respondents is a native who continued the family business as a songket fabric craftsman. 80% of which is craftsman in the age range 40-60 years, even known there was a 10% aged above 60 years old. The remaining 10% were young age craftsmen in the age range 30-39 years. This data shows that craftsmen fabric songket is a craftsman who is old and chose to become a commitment craftsmen songket weaving cloth until the end of life. In contrast to the 10% minority the young age, the number of bit shows that very few young artisans because choosing other professions besides being craftsmen fabric songket. They choose to become civil servants, trade, working as an employee of the store or even leave the kampong and looking for another profession considered suitable and give greater income. Other survey results show that a majority of 90% have very low earnings in the range of Rp. 1.000.000,-until Rp. 2,000,000,-a month with a note that there are sales of woven songket. But if only a few order maximum income then songket cloth only reached Rp. 1,000,000,-a month. While the remaining 10% was income from craftsmen who have big capital and other distribution channels and more widely to market their products without having to wait for orders in advance. This provides information that the majority of 95% woven songket craftsmen did production based on orders or can it be said that the new fabric created if there are consumers who order them, and if there is no order so they would not make the songket. There are as many as 95% of the respondents i.e. craftsmen stated that they do not completely rely on the earnings as craftsmen woven songket. This means that the majority of entrepreneurs who are women is a wife who wants to help to augment the family income, while the husband has another job. In addition they also mention that the majority had difficulty of capital or capital limited to run the businesses as craftsmen fabric songket. The price of raw materials such as yarn is expensive because according to the quality of the fabric so that they will only make the fabric songket if there are consumers who order them, so there is no fabric songket are available as stock if one moment the consumer want to buy already some of the options available for purchase.

Other data show that craft fabrics tentun songket is already old and berlangsug is family heritage, so entirely is forwarded by family members. They also had quite a long run his business that is 95% is a craftsman who runs his business over 10 years while the rest are new to i.e. new ranges from 5 to 10 years.

Entrepreneur's songket is generally composed of women, who acted as Chairman of the Group and also as a stylist and motives. The songket weavers there who weave in the House Chair of the group, and there are also weaving in his own house while carrying tools songket at his home and carried out at your leisure. Traditionally, once

upon a time (until 1960) working must be done during the day, not allowed crafting at night, probably due to security reasons, difficult lighting. The location for the weaving is limited to the absence of a special place of production result in limited production process.

The organization system is a system of familial production. The choice of becoming craftsmen songket as primary livelihood but in general they assume that working to make songket is an odd jobs means that outside of the major work they used to do to earn an income everyday. This is due to the creation of songket is only done at the time of order only means no at any time sought by buyers. The organization is managed typically consists of the Chairman of the craftsmen at once owners of capital and the weavers whose number ranged from 20 to 80-20s members. They were given the wages according to the resulting sheet of songket and complexity make songket. Songket are done with ease, although it looks simple, the making of songket is not an easy job. To work on a single piece of cloth songket size two metres, it takes seven to 12 days. It is depending on the level of complexity of motives on a cloth. Therefore the existence of the factor length workmanship is also one of the causes of the craftsmen produce unbiased songket en masse to get lots of money. Based on field research, the prices of Batubara songket, the cheapest is Rp.75,000. Then the price of better quality was Rp.300,000. To the most expensive prices i.e. songket from silk yarn price is Rp.2.5 million. The advantage gained from sales of songket is will not fully accepted by craftsmen if craftsmen work with the owners of capital because it would only be measured by how many days wage work fabric that can be completed and songket how sheets of fabric songket being completed woven.

Limitation of capital into other barriers is experienced by craftsmen in the Talawi village. Although there are some who do the loans to banks but not in great numbers considering the requirements and guarantees should be given to the artisans bank can't completely given by craftsmen, while the bank must implement it for security reasons of the credit process. Generally the craftsman uses an initial capital of family money either from parents or personal savings or loans and joint ventures from the family that together become craftsmen. The materials and the process of making cloth songket until it became a motif of songket is generally about the same between all craftsmen. But the amount and quality of materials like threads are not the same because it depends of the magnitude of the capital owned by craftsmen. The difference of how to obtain materials, types of raw materials and offer it will make a difference against the income of the artisans who will have an impact on the sustainability of the effort. The difference in employment also have an impact on the process of craft business that impact revenue songket craftsmen namely due to the skill of the workers is a skill passed down so monotonous in nature there is no creativity and is consequently not able to create fabric songket with new models and motifs. But other motives and causes a monotonous colors due to the craftsmen also does not want to change the tradition passed down by their ancestors. In line with research of (Waluyati, Kurnisar and Sulkipani, 2016) stating that the limited skill of the craftsman causes the low production of fabrics, less varied songket attracted the attention of consumers due to the monotonous motifs. Even the craftsmen and workers do not want to change the motives for wanting to preserve the expertise of their ancestors.

The times and the technology is also capable of inhibiting his efforts continue in the songket craftsmen because at this present moment many people are not too fond of wearing a cloth songket because it is considered old fashioned and do not follow the

fashion. As a result the order against the fabric of songket is not too much just been among agencies or Government who made the event a tradition of using indigenous fabrics at the time attending the event and dress service on certain days. People have started shifting fashion tastes toward more modern fabric so songket Batubara Start fading charm and impact on the declining number of craftsmen songket are turning on another job.

Currently is known that there are only about 150 craftsmen in Talawi village. The majority of the carftsman are still using traditional manual tools are commonly called gedokan. So the production of songket is no more than 5,000 pieces per year. The marketing system is not covered by the craftsmen of these also make songket production and dissemination of Batubara songket is getting down. Market dominance of songket from outside the city such as Palembang and Thailand which is cheaper because it is produced with the machine, already penetrated the market of North Sumatra and surrounding areas. This makes the position of Batubara songket necreasingly lost prestige in the hearts of songket users . Origin of branded goods in Europe and United States more or less also affects the space motion of Batubara songket, for the prestigious values also start to fade because of obsolete. Production should be coupled with a marketing strategy. Has to be seen what kind of market trends is being loved, so there is an adjustment that could unleash a distribution to the public. Fabric songket should not be dealt with as a sarong and a cloth belt, but there needs to be a modification of the form so that the consumer can receive more broadly. The craftsmen of this songket cloth has very minimal knowledge in marketing strategy also causes a decrease in the productivity of the business fabric woven songket. Therefore its is required the intervention and active role of the Government in helping the process of marketing fabric songket to perform by craftsmen to sell songket and add revenue to the sustainability of the business. Another obstacle is the lack of knowledge manajamen management effort against craftsmen especially in terms of financial management so that the craftsmen do not have guidelines to regulate the financial impact on the cash flow of incoming and outgoing cash for financing his efforts. As a result of routine craftsmen suffered losses. Losses were also caused by the sale prices down, not marketing strategic location to reach the consumer, was also due to the times which results in craftsman argued that the fabric of songket is no longer the stuff of which make profitable selling points. Many of the obstacles faced by craftsmen but there are still some craftsmen who survive because they have no skills other than weaving or because there is no capital to move into other businesses. The craftsmen trying to overcome barriers by continuing to keep doing with the increased production of quality fabric songket, seeking assistance from the bank's capital as well as the help of coaching from Government with the hope that the legacy of the ancestors will not be lost. Craftsmen also overcome losses by limiting spending and giving priority to the production of goods required for the fabric songket Then craftsmen also cope with just making stuff for example one type of fabric to be direct songket offered to consumers so interested to order goods are plentiful and intact. Other strategy undertaken by the artisans by providing a low selling price but no loss or not take profit is too large. Craftsmen also innovate with mengkreasikan a variety of colors and patterns to attract the attention of consumers, even joined the training to improve the skills of the craftsmen who were held by the Government.

## 5. Conclusions

A decrease in the productivity of the business of Batubara songket caused many barriers that majority emerged from the internal environment of the craftsmen. The existence of limitations, famed for its venture capital and knowledge in managing their financial or business so as to make the craftsmen are not capable of producing large quantities of songket cloth. Another barrier is the existence of factors shifts in consumer tastes toward the fabric of songket due to technological advances and the development time of shifting consumer taste in fashion so that songket are ancient and not fancy. In addition to a lack of Government attention through the help of coaching and training as well as help venture capital causing the craftsmen began to switch on other businesses that are considered more quickly produce. But there are still craftsmen who remained as a songket craftsmen and hoping that they can still retain the heritage of their ancestors up to the future. So it is expected to help and support from the Government in particular the existence of the business community to help the craftsmen of Batubara songket so we still had the goods ancestral heritage and continued sustainability of our culture as the wealth of the identity.

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