

The Role of Tanah Liek Batik in the Growth of the Creative Industry in Padang City

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Abstract. *Tanah Liek Batik is a distinctive Minangkabau textile that uses natural clay-based dyes and holds deep historical and philosophical meaning. This study analyzes the existence and sustainability of Tanah Liek Batik within the creative sector of Padang and evaluates the government's role in supporting its development. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed with Miles and Huberman's interactive model, encompassing data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that Tanah Liek Batik serves as both a marker of Minangkabau cultural identity and an economic commodity that contributes to employment, local income, and tourism. Entrepreneurs maintain its relevance through motif innovation, product diversification, and digital marketing. However, challenges persist, including limited market access, high production costs, raw material scarcity, competition from printed batik, and low interest among youth. Government agencies have supported artisans through training, funding, equipment provision, and promotion, though constrained by limited budgets and weak regeneration. The study highlights the need for cultural-based innovation and stronger youth involvement to ensure the sustainability of this traditional Minangkabau craft.*

Keywords: *Tanah Liek Batik, creative industry, Padang City*

INTRODUCTION

Batik is a traditional art form that holds deep cultural, aesthetic, and symbolic value for Indonesian society. Beyond serving as a national identity, batik has evolved in various regions, each developing distinct characteristics that reflect local culture and creativity. In West Sumatra, one remarkable form of this heritage is *Tanah Liek* batik, a Minangkabau textile that uses natural clay as a dyeing agent. The uniqueness of this eco-friendly technique not only enhances its artistic and cultural significance but also presents promising economic potential within the framework of Indonesia's growing creative industry.

In Padang City, the industry producing this traditional batik has become both a means of preserving cultural heritage and a source of livelihood, particularly for women and MSMEs. The craft is widely used in traditional ceremonies, government events, and cultural exhibitions. According to data from the Cooperatives & MSMEs Office and the Manpower & Industry Office of Padang City, several active business units contribute to this sector, such as Batik Citra Monalisa, Ayesha Collection, Bundo Kandung, Rumah Batik Puti Andam, Pusako Mande, Shanumesty, Batik Loempo, Batik Nora, and Batik Emiarlin. Their products vary from fabrics and clothing to accessories and souvenirs, some even reaching export markets such as Qatar. This diversity demonstrates the vitality of the cultural textile amidst today's creative economy.

However, despite its potential, the contribution of this Minangkabau craft to the local economy remains suboptimal. Limited marketing access, a lack of technological innovation, insufficient artisan regeneration, and uneven government support are persistent issues. These challenges reveal a gap between the cultural value of the craft and its actual economic development within the creative industry ecosystem. While previous studies have discussed its historical roots and artistic value (Wahyuni & Hasibuan, 2019; Herwandi, 2016), few have examined how its existence interacts with and adapts to the dynamics of the modern creative economy in an urban context such as Padang City. Moreover, there is limited academic discussion on the role of local government policies and institutional support in sustaining this traditional craft amid globalization and industrial competition.

This study seeks to address that research gap by analyzing the existence, development, and institutional support mechanisms of the clay-dyed batik industry within the framework of the creative economy. Specifically, the research focuses on three aspects: (1) the existence of the craft as both traditional heritage and creative industry product; (2) its adaptation and competitiveness in the creative market; and (3) the government's role in ensuring its sustainability and growth.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the discourse on culture-based creative industries, particularly in integrating traditional crafts into modern economic frameworks. It provides a model for understanding how cultural heritage can be revitalized through entrepreneurship and policy support. This is the novelty of the study: positioning *Tanah Liek* not merely as a cultural artifact, but as a living creative enterprise that embodies both intangible heritage and economic innovation. Practically, the findings are expected to inform local stakeholders—government agencies, artisans, and entrepreneurs—about strategies for strengthening the industry's resilience and relevance in a competitive creative economy.

From a philosophical perspective, *existence* refers not only to physical presence but also to meaningful participation within a social and cultural context. Bagus (2012) defines it as a state of being real and present, while Hasan (2008) emphasizes active engagement. In cultural studies, Driyarkara (2010) adds that existence implies sustainability, acceptance, and significance in the community. Thus, the endurance of this Minangkabau textile depends not only on its preservation but also on its capacity to adapt, innovate, and sustain meaning across generations.

Historically, the evolution of this batik tradition can be traced through five major phases—from the Dharmasraya and Pagaruyung Kingdoms to its revitalization in the 20th century (Herwandi, 2016). The modern revival initiated by Wirda Hanim in the 1990s marked a turning point, introducing natural clay dyeing techniques to contemporary batik production. Nevertheless, the industry continues to face structural and cultural challenges, such as market competition, artisan scarcity, and limited promotion (Sari & Desrianti, 2021). According to LKAAM (2023), this craft represents the collective heritage of the Minangkabau people, which requires community-based preservation and innovation (Fitriani & Azra, 2022).

In the broader framework, the Indonesian Ministry of Trade (2009) defines the creative industry as an economic sector driven by ideas, creativity, and cultural expression. As a part of this ecosystem, traditional batik combines both cultural and economic values—functioning as an identity marker and a sustainable livelihood source (Wicaksono, 2016; Mulyana, 2014). However, the national creative industry still faces limitations in capital, digital literacy, and intellectual property protection (Purwanto, 2015), highlighting the need for collaboration among government, academia, entrepreneurs, and communities (Hartanti, 2018).

The existence of *Tanah Liek* batik in Padang City illustrates how traditional cultural expressions can adapt within the creative industry framework through design innovation, women's empowerment, and government support. According to Sarwani and Budiwirman (2023), the transformation of local symbols into batik motifs, as seen in the reinterpretation of Mahligai Temple ornaments, demonstrates that batik can sustain its cultural relevance by continuously recontextualizing tradition within modern aesthetics. This approach aligns with the findings of *Langgam* (2022), which emphasize that women's participation in creative home industries plays a crucial role in enhancing family economic resilience, a pattern also visible among *Tanah Liek* batik artisans in Padang who manage both domestic and production responsibilities. Practical support from local institutions has further strengthened the sustainability of this craft; as reported by *Langgam.id* (2019a), the distribution of electric canting tools to *Tanah Liek* batik producers facilitated production efficiency and design variation, signaling government attention toward craft modernization. Similarly, the development of other Minangkabau batik variants such as *Batik Mande Rubiah* in Lunang, studied by *Langgam.id* (2019b), reflects regional efforts to preserve local identity through market-oriented creativity. Overall, the synthesis of cultural value, technological innovation, and community-based empowerment indicates that the *Tanah Liek*

batik industry embodies both traditional continuity and adaptive resilience within West Sumatra's creative economy (Langgam Journal, 2023).

In summary, the significance of this research lies in its attempt to bridge the theoretical and practical gap between cultural preservation and creative industry development. By examining how this Minangkabau textile survives and adapts in Padang City's creative economy, the study offers new insights into the sustainability of local heritage within modern industry systems.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with the purpose of providing a deep and comprehensive description of social and cultural phenomena related to the existence of Tanah Liek batik within Padang City's creative industry. The qualitative approach was selected because the research focuses on the meaning, understanding, and lived experiences of individuals directly involved in this traditional craft. Unlike quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical measurement and generalization, the qualitative method allows for an in-depth exploration of social reality as it naturally occurs. Since the topic of cultural heritage and creative industry involves values, interactions, and subjective interpretations, the qualitative approach is more appropriate to capture the richness and complexity of these dimensions.

The rationale behind choosing this method lies in its ability to reveal implicit meanings and contextual understanding that cannot be measured through statistical instruments. The goal is not to quantify the production or sales of batik, but to understand how artisans, entrepreneurs, communities, and government officials perceive, sustain, and develop this cultural industry. Thus, the research prioritizes interpretive depth rather than numerical precision, aiming to uncover narratives of creativity, struggle, and adaptation in maintaining the craft's existence.

The research was conducted over a period of four months, from July to September 2025, in Padang City. Data collection focused on two main government institutions namely, the Padang City Cooperatives and MSMEs Office, and the Manpower and Industry Office as well as several Tanah Liek batik production centers. The research object is Tanah Liek batik as part of the local creative industry, while the subjects include artisans, business owners, user communities, and government representatives.

A total of 15 informants were involved in this study, comprising 9 business owners, 2 government officials, and 4 community representatives or users. They were selected purposively based on their involvement and relevance to the development of Tanah Liek batik in Padang City.

Table 3.1 Informant Profile

No	Name / Initial	Role / Position	Institution / Business Unit
1	Hj. Wirda Hanim	Owner	Batik Citra Monalisa
2	Fitria Lusua	Owner	Ayesha Collection
3	Nora	Owner	Batik Bundo Kandung
4	Sani Bismar Putra	Owner	Rumah Batik Puti Andam
5	Yori Oktorino	Owner	Batik Pusako Mande
6	Irma Yanti	Owner	Batik Shanumesty
7	Novia Hertini	Owner	Batik Loempo
8	Deswandi	Owner	Batik Nora
9	Ermiwati	Owner	Batik Emiarlin
10	Rahmiati Kahar, S.T., M.M.	Industrial Extension Officer	Manpower & Industry Office
11	Frisna Devi, S.K.M., M.M.	Entrepreneurship Developer	Cooperatives & MSMEs Office
12	Shekar Hanum Pramesty	Young Entrepreneur	Community representative
13	Maida Roza, S.E.	Designer / Entrepreneur	Wirda Hanim Batik
14	Nurhamidah	Owner	Batik Nurhamidah
15	Community Users (2 respondents)	Consumers	Local Residents

The data sources consisted of both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly through observation and structured interviews with batik artisans, business owners, community members, and officials from the two government agencies. Secondary data were gathered from official documents, archives, reports, and academic literature relevant to the topic. Data collection techniques included participant observation, structured interviews, and documentation review.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the research applied Lincoln and Guba's criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Data validation was strengthened through source triangulation (comparing perspectives of different informants), methodological triangulation (combining observation, interview, and documentation), and theoretical triangulation (linking field data with established concepts of cultural sustainability and creative economy).

Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, consisting of three interrelated stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data reduction, information was filtered and categorized according to emerging themes related to cultural existence, creative adaptation, and institutional support. Data display involved organizing the findings into narrative form supported by excerpts, tables, and documentation. Finally, conclusions were drawn through continuous interpretation and verification against field data to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Through this methodological framework, the research aims to comprehensively describe the dynamics of Tanah Liek batik as a living cultural enterprise and to analyze the government's role in sustaining its presence within Padang City's creative industry ecosystem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study found two main focuses, namely the existence of Tanah Liek Batik in the development of MSMEs and creative industries in Padang City, as well as government efforts to support its development.

1. The Existence of Tanah Liek Batik

This study found two main focuses, namely the existence of Tanah Liek Batik in the development of MSMEs and creative industries in Padang City, as well as government efforts to support its development. First, regarding the existence of Tanah Liek batik, interviews with business owners revealed that this batik is unique, particularly in its natural clay dyes, motifs rooted in Minangkabau culture, and philosophical values. These entrepreneurs view Tanah Liek batik as more than just a textile product, but a cultural identity that must be preserved. From a market perspective, the response from both local and out-of-area communities has been quite positive, although the market is still limited due to relatively high prices and minimal outreach. This batik is more often used at formal or traditional events than for everyday needs. Innovation strategy is key to maintaining existence, whether through the development of new motifs, the use of various natural dyes, product diversification to clothing and accessories, or the use of digital technology for design and marketing. Social media is an effective promotional tool, even expanding the market to international markets. However, challenges remain, including limited natural dyes, high production costs, competition with printed batik, and low interest among the younger generation in batik making. However, its economic contribution is real, both in creating jobs, driving the local economic chain, and supporting the tourism sector.

2. Government Efforts to Support Development

Second, from the government's side, support is provided through two main institutions, namely the Cooperatives and MSMEs Service and the Padang City Manpower and Industry Service. Government programs include entrepreneurship training, product innovation, digital marketing, technical assistance, and promotional facilitation at various cultural and fashion events, including the Padang Fashion Summit 2025.

The government also provides assistance with production equipment, facilitates cross-sector collaboration, and encourages digitalization through e-commerce. Despite significant government contributions, challenges remain, such as budget constraints, low artisan regeneration, competition from products from outside the region, and uneven distribution. To address these challenges, the government plans to establish a Tanah Liek Batik center, expand its network with national and international designers, and make it an official cultural icon of Padang City by requiring its use at government events, tourism events, and agency uniforms.

3. The Significance of Tanah Liek Batik

Thus, the existence of Tanah Liek Batik has proven crucial to the development of MSMEs and the creative industry in Padang City, both as a cultural identity and as a driver of the local economy. Government

efforts through training programs, promotions, and digitalization have contributed, although the sustainability of this batik still requires innovation, market support, and the involvement of the younger generation to remain relevant amidst the increasingly competitive creative industry.

Discussion

The results of this study show that Tanah Liek Batik has an important role in the development of MSMEs and creative industries in Padang City. Its existence is not only seen as a textile product, but also as a representation of Minangkabau culture that has high historical, aesthetic, and philosophical value. This field finding is in line with the concept of **existence** as explained by Lorens Bagus (2012), Hasan (2008), and Zainal (2008), that existence is not just a physical presence, but must be demonstrated through an active role, dynamics, and real contributions in social life. Tanah Liek Batik exists not only because it exists as a cloth product, but because it has meaning, function, and social recognition in Minangkabau culture.

The existence of Tanah Liek Batik in this context can be understood through two dimensions, namely the cultural dimension and the economic dimension. From a cultural perspective, Tanah Liek Batik is a medium for preserving customs and a symbol of the identity of the Minangkabau people. The motifs used, such as the traditional house, rangkiang, flora and fauna, show their connection to nature and the philosophy of life of the local community. This is in line with Driyarkara's (2010) view which states that existence in culture is not only physically present, but is also recognized and appreciated in a social context and is able to interact with its environment. Tanah Liek batik is culturally recognized, used in traditional events, and seen as part of the heritage that must be preserved.

From an economic perspective, Tanah Liek Batik is developing as part of the creative industry that contributes to the local economy. The Indonesian Ministry of Trade (2009) emphasized that the creative industry is an economic sector that relies on ideas and creativity as the main production factors. In this context, Tanah Liek Batik artisans utilize their creativity in developing new motifs, diversifying products, and utilizing social media as a marketing tool. The innovations carried out show conformity with Schumpeter's theory (1934) that innovation is the main driver for the sustainability and development of small businesses.

However, the existence of Tanah Liek Batik has also experienced ups and downs. Its long history, from the Dharmasraya Kingdom to its revival in the modern era, demonstrates the dynamic nature of cultural existence, as Zainal (2008) asserts. At one time, Tanah Liek batik flourished and became a symbol of greatness, but at another time, it declined due to modernization and a lack of regeneration. This phenomenon demonstrates that its existence must be continuously maintained through adaptation and innovation to prevent it from being lost to the changing times.

Field findings related to the involvement of women as part-time batik artisans also show that Tanah Liek Batik has a strong social dimension. Midawati (2020) stated that many Minangkabau women are involved in batik making after completing domestic duties. This confirms Dagon's theory (in Kartika, 2012) about human existence which is always changing and developing from potential to reality, because these women are able to actualize themselves in the socio-economic realm through batik crafts.

From a creative industry perspective, the existence of Tanah Liek batik aligns with Suryana's (2013) and Wicaksono's (2016) perspective that creative industries not only pursue economic profit but also serve as a means of cultural preservation. Tanah Liek batik, with its dyeing techniques using clay and other natural materials, not only produces aesthetically pleasing products but also preserves local wisdom. On the other hand, government involvement through the Cooperatives and MSMEs Agency and the Manpower and Industry Agency demonstrates synergy in creating a supportive creative ecosystem. Training programs, equipment assistance, and promotions align with Hartanti's (2018) theory that the creative industry will thrive when all stakeholders are actively involved.

However, challenges remain, such as limited raw materials, high production costs, low regeneration of craftsmen, and competition with printed batik. Purwanto (2015) emphasized that creative industry players often face obstacles in legality and protection of works, this was also experienced by Batik Tanah Liek, especially when the issue of copyright privatization by individuals arose. LKAAM (2023) emphasized that Tanah Liek Batik is the collective property of the Minangkabau people, so its preservation must be community-based.

Thus, it can be affirmed that the existence of Tanah Liek Batik in Padang City's creative industry is dynamic, active, and contributes to cultural, social, and economic aspects. Its existence is determined not only by the physical presence of the product, but also by the innovation of entrepreneurs, government support, and public acceptance. This aligns with the concept of the creative industry, which combines economic and cultural

values. Therefore, maintaining the existence of Tanah Liek batik requires continuous innovation, affirmative action policies, community-based preservation, and the involvement of the younger generation so that Tanah Liek batik not only exists but also continues to be present and meaningful in the context of modern culture and the creative economy.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research objectives and the results of analysis and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the existence of *Tanah Liek* as a cultural and economic phenomenon within the creative industry of Padang City. The conclusions are categorized into three key dimensions: cultural, economic, and governmental. The findings confirm that this traditional Minangkabau textile serves as a living representation of local identity and philosophy. Its use of natural clay-based dyes and motifs inspired by the Minangkabau worldview (*alam takambang jadi guru*) demonstrates how traditional knowledge is embedded within artistic expression. The craft thus embodies both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Theoretically, this supports Driyarkara's (2010) notion that cultural existence is defined not only by physical presence but by the continuous process of meaning-making and social recognition. Practically, it highlights the importance of sustaining cultural practices through intergenerational transmission, education, and creative reinterpretation. Integrating the craft into contemporary fashion and lifestyle contexts will allow it to remain culturally relevant and appreciated by younger audiences. From an economic standpoint, the industry has contributed significantly to local MSME development, job creation, and the strengthening of the regional creative economy. The artisans' capacity for innovation through motif diversification, eco-friendly dye experimentation, and digital marketing demonstrates adaptability and entrepreneurial resilience. Nevertheless, the sector still faces market constraints, including high production costs, limited access to raw materials, and competition from mass produced textiles. Therefore, the sustainability of this cultural commodity depends on continuous product innovation, consistent branding, and digital transformation to reach wider markets. Practically, this indicates that local creative industries rooted in tradition can serve as effective models for sustainable economic development when supported by innovation and technology. The government's involvement through training, funding, promotion, and digitalization programs has been pivotal in maintaining the vitality of the local craft sector. Institutions such as the Cooperatives and MSMEs Office and the Manpower and Industry Office have implemented initiatives that align with Porter's (1990) cluster theory—emphasizing the role of coordinated policy and institutional synergy in enhancing competitiveness. However, issues such as budget limitations, weak artisan regeneration, and uneven support distribution remain. To address these challenges, the proposed establishment of a *Batik Tanah Liek Center* as a hub for production, education, and promotion could serve as a strategic step toward creating a structured creative ecosystem. The government's long-term policy direction should focus on strengthening collaboration between artisans, designers, and educational institutions to ensure cultural and economic continuity.

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