

# INNOVATION PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION DESIGN OF NEW PRODUCTS AT A BATIK COMPANY

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## ABSTRACT

*This research was motivated by a batik company that experienced problems producing batik motifs where it could not keep up with the demand. The purpose of this study is to explore the innovation process of new products which is the result of benchmarks to several batik industries and it will then be applied to the development of new products at Batik Rolla. This study uses qualitative methods. The sample was selected using purposive sampling in the form of interviews. The results of the study show that there are 7 stages in the company's batik product innovation process, namely: idea generation, idea screening, concept development & testing, marketing strategy, product development, market testing, and commercialization. In the process of exploring ideas, moment factor is the main factor that influences ideation. Moment is the first step in finding sources of inspiration for the batik motif that will be launched. The source of inspiration from that moment can increase the originality and creativity of the company in creating batik motifs which will be produced. In addition to moment, other factor was found while exploring ideas, namely traveling. Companies can travel to find out the current trend. Traveling can be done by visiting places that have the potential to create ideas for the company.*

**Keywords:** innovation process, moment, traveling Introduction

## INTRODUCTION

The growth of the batik industry in Indonesia is very rapid. Almost every district/city in Indonesia has its own unique batik. Indonesian batik that is officially recognized by UNESCO is batik that uses traditional processes (scraping batik wax onto a piece of cloth). Batik itself consists of several types, namely hand-painted batik, printed batik, semi-written batik, and batik substitution products, namely printed fabric with batik motifs. Companies are required to innovate in order to meet current consumer needs. The increasingly tight competition in the batik industry makes batik companies realize the importance of increasing innovation in the process or product. This is carried out to increase the selling value of batik, mainly to be able to compete with foreign products which are increasingly saturating the textile industry today.

Jayaram, *et al.* (2013: 4425) explains that in protecting market share and maintaining the position of incumbency (a strong company with a large market share), companies must focus on implementing specific strategies in product development that have the potential to produce innovative products. Companies need to identify strategies to create competitive advantages based on innovation and determine the main focus on products or services to be processed.

The traditional innovation process is a series of predetermined stages, namely: creating ideas, selecting ideas, developing ideas, and how to distribute or distribute these items. The innovation process theory that refers to contingency theory is an innovation process that can follow a number of different paths (Salerno, *et al.*, 2014: 1). Not all innovation processes can be applied in various types of businesses that have different types of expertise. Utterback (1971 in Salerno, *et al.*, 2014: 1) is the first initiator in modeling the innovation process as a single managerial process consisting of one group of main activities, namely: idea generation, problem solving from which output originates, the ability to be implemented, and diffusion which aims to provide a significant economic impact.

Jayaram, *et al.*, (2014: 4424) in the research of manufacturing companies in Australia, mentioned different things from previous researchers. Jayaram stated that the environment has a positive relationship with product innovation strategy and innovation process. In deciding which innovations to

implement, the researcher argues that it is necessary to identify strategies to create competitive advantages based on innovation and determine whether to focus on products (or services) or processes. To determine the extent of innovation, the company needs to examine market opportunities and adjust to the capabilities of the company.

Oliver, *et al.*, (2016), in his research, gained insight that the innovation process strategy in SMEs was formed by the acquisition of knowledge to counteract the company's internal capabilities that were still weak. The SME innovation process in Spain shows that the innovation process relies heavily on the acquisition of external sources of knowledge to cover their weak internal shortcomings and the patterns of innovation that are produced are different from traditional R&D product innovation strategies. Naidu, *et al.*, (2014) explained that there were eight determinants in innovation, namely: added value of the product, design uniqueness, new product development, cultural uniqueness, advanced technology implementation, owner experience, the ability of the owner to adapt to market trends, and raw material quality.

Solo is one of the cities that has a very important role in developing and spreading batik throughout the archipelago. The history of Batik Solo cannot be separated from the influence of keraton. Batik Keraton is made by the ladies in keraton and courtiers who are only exist in the royal family, such as: Wahyu tumurun, leren, parang, sida (sida mukti, sida luhur and sida drajad). The resulting batik motif also has high aesthetic value because it is made in a complicated and detailed manner. In addition, the researcher chose the city of Solo because batik artisans there have more than five years of experience and the motifs and coloring techniques produced are so diverse.

Solo has two famous batik villages, namely Kampung Batik Laweyan and Kauman, which have become icons deemed as Solo batik centers which have been inaugurated by the local government and have been recognized internationally. These batik villages are also known as heritage tourism destination, educational tourism destination, industry, and historical icons. In addition, this batik village has consistently produced hand-painted batik and maintaining the existing motifs and following the acculturation of the current motif (Amalia, 2012: 3).

Batik artisans are required to be able to read the current market trends by not only producing abundantly but also developing different designs of batik motifs. A rapidly changing market trend makes it an obstacle in determining what products will be developed or launched. The increasingly fierce competition requires craftsmen to innovate when it comes to developing their batik business so that it can be inherited from generation to generation. Therefore, the importance of understanding the innovation process needs to be done to be able to map the innovation process in finding new things/to recycle to achieve competitive advantage.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a new product innovation process in the batik industry and design an innovation process for batik product development at Batik Rolla.

## **Research Methods**

The analysis in this study aims to find out what stages are carried out in several batik industries when applying the innovation process. This study uses semi-structured interview technique to informants, namely batik producers and batik collectors, selected based on certain criteria. For data collection and data analysis methods, this study uses primary data obtained from interviews. This study uses validity and reliability tests using source triangulation (Meolong, 2017: 330). To analyze the data, this study uses the Miles & Huberman method, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification.

## **Results**

The stages of the innovation process carried out in the study differ from Kotler, *et al.*, (2016) regarding the stages of developing new products which are divided into eight stages, namely: idea generation, idea screening, concept development & testing, marketing strategy, business analysis, product development, market testing, and commercialization. The results showed that in the creative industries, especially batik, only seven stages were found in the implementation of the applied innovation process, namely: idea generation, idea screening, concept development & testing, marketing strategy, product development, market testing, and commercialization. This study explains that business analysis cannot be applied in exploring ideas through competitors. When facing competitors, the company does not feel pressured because the current world of creativity cannot be compared apple-to-apple. The difficulty to carry out patent rights is also an obstacle in patenting the motifs right now. In addition, patents

also cannot guarantee that the batik motif can be owned by the owner. By changing just one part, it can change the ownership of the batik motif. He said:

*“No, no. The designer of the motifs can just add or modify the existing motifs to make it different and they can just take ownership of the slightly modified motifs. I’m quite flexible in this case. Patenting products is not that easy. It takes a long time and it’s expensive. And when the patent is owned, the motif is not up-to-date anymore. So I usually just let it flow. Sometimes what I get is only resentment, but that’s about it.”*

This obstacle made the batik company reluctant to carry out patent motifs. In addition, with the existence of increasingly sophisticated technology and the patenting process of motifs that are not easy and considerably expensive, companies are struggling, especially those companies who are engaged in the Creative Industry. However, technology also helps the sources of this study in terms of promoting new products launched.

In exploring the innovation process of batik motifs in Kampung Batik Laweyan and Kauman, it was found that the process of innovation was influenced by external factors, namely the moment in determining the motifs to be launched. Moment is the first step in finding sources of inspiration for the batik motif that will be launched. The source of inspiration is used in the whole process of creating new products. The source of inspiration from that moment can increase the originality and creativity of the company in creating batik motifs that will be produced. After conducting research on which moment to choose, the source of inspiration is collected in various visual images and information to be understood in detail to be translated into new designs (Mete (2006).

*“The timing is just perfect, don’t you think? I rarely miss the timing. Most of the time, I actually know in advance because I used to travel to Bali. Sometimes it’s not a thing here yet but outside of the city, it’s already a trend. Sometimes it even takes 2 years for it to be a trend. It often happens. If it’s not the motif, it’s the model of the clothes. I knew a lot of foreign people back then so I pretty much knew the trends. Once I tried it here and nobody knew about the trend, but 2 years after it became a hit in Jakarta and people started to look it up. So in a sense, I’m always ahead of the competition.”*

The choosing of moment is one of the important factors in determining the motifs to be launched. The selection of the right moment can determine the profits for the company, including the process of selecting new motifs to develop into the market.

*“Yeah, it was viral in all social media. I saw that on TV as well. I tapped into it and those ideas were just spontaneous and I launched it just in time. If I launched it too soon, some others would copy it right away. If I do this, they need more time for briefing so they’re more reluctant in a way. I already prepared in case I won, I launched new colors, modified the motifs a bit, etc. I do this based on the moment, and since I’m known for this anyway, I might as well do it every time.”*

Dyer, et al., (2011) found that innovators were intense and careful observers in observing the world around them (including technology, customers, products, services and companies) to be able to help them gain insights and ideas about new and innovative ways to do something. With these two factors the company can conduct product testing with the aim of getting experience and confidence in launching new products.

In launching new products, the company has internal factors when selecting the motif idea that will be launched. It is selected according to the owner's preference/character. The owner's preference is one of the factors in selecting the model that will be produced because the batik motifs that are produced illustrate the character of the owner of the company. It is concluded that the owner's character becomes the batik identity of the company. This is supported by source triangulation that says:

*“As far as I know, those motifs are like the aesthetical expression of the designer and that’s quite interesting. It can be said that batik is like a painting and that painting expresses what’s in the designer’s mind. It can also come from what he/she is experiencing at that time that inspires him/her to create that motif.”*

The companies in carrying out their marketing strategies, use the help of religious leaders to be able to help introduce products to be launched. This is done as to increase the turnover target that is preset by the company. In addition, batik companies also have other marketing strategies, namely by promoting their products through marketplace to be able to keep up with current technological developments.

In the long run, the company wants to hold a trunk show (mini fashion show) dedicated for consumers targeted by the company. This is done to introduce products that are launched so that more

can be introduced in detail to consumers. In the long run, the company wants to get repeat purchases by receiving input, advice, and following consumer demand to attain regular

customers. In addition, the company also wants to recruit salesmen to be able to introduce the products more broadly and in detail.

**Results and Discussion**

Moment is the first step in finding sources of inspiration for the batik motif that will be launched. The source of inspiration is used in the whole process of creating new products. The source of inspiration from that moment can increase the originality and creativity of the company in creating batik motifs that will be produced. After conducting research on which moment to choose, the source of inspiration is collected in various visual images and information to be understood in detail to be translated into new designs.

The choosing of moment is one of the most important factors in determining the motifs to be launched. The selection of the right moment can determine the profits for the company, including the process of selecting new motifs to develop into the market. The selection of the right moment can be supported by the right marketing strategy, namely by working with influencers/religious leaders/politicians to boost the market and to become more widely known to consumers. In addition, it can be done with a trunk show to build interaction with consumers and have salesmen to reach a wider area.

In the long run (Figure 1.) Batik Rolla will implement an innovation process that can be applied from the results of the research. The choice of ideas is done by a trend/moment factor to be able to keep abreast of the current model. Moment selection is the main factor in launching new motif ideas. The choosing of moment is done by identifying what moments are arising at this time by adjusting to the existing resources within the company. For example, to follow the moment leading up to the national election, the company identifies first whether the selection of the moment will harm the owner or company or not. The company has a backup plan in dealing with consumers who are not fond of political trends. The company is able to produce in large quantities to be able to meet and maintain the quality of consumer demand for products launched.

To dig deeper into finding ideas, companies can travel to find out what trends are being discussed at this time. Traveling can be done by visiting places that have the potential to create ideas for the company, for example by making a visit to the city of Bali to see what the trend is at that time. Visiting similar companies such as weaving companies, or other traditional fabric producers.

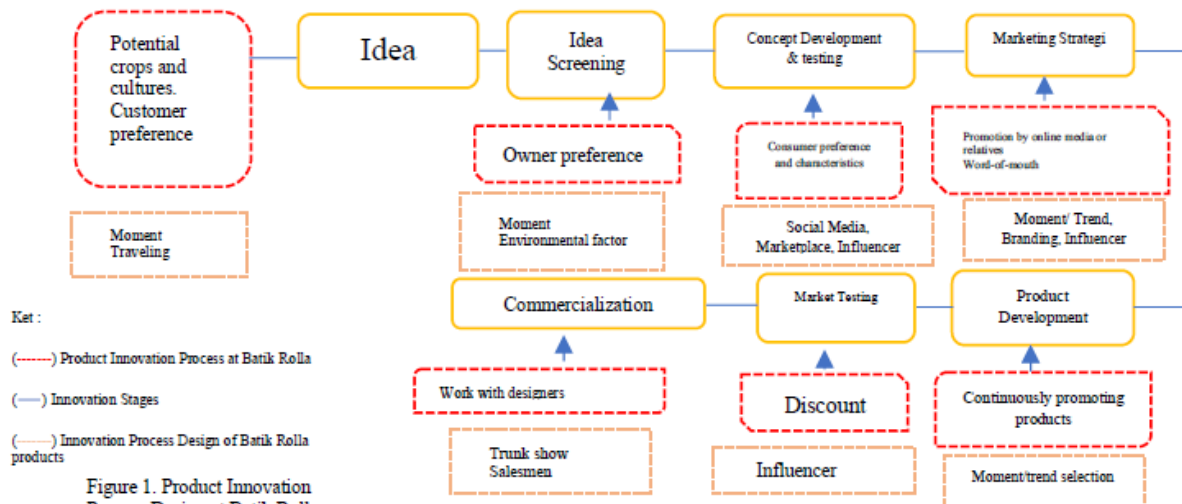


Figure 1. Product Innovation Process Design at Batik Rolla  
Source : Authors own's work

This is done to multiply the sources of ideas made. Batik Rolla does not have prior knowledge or prior motifs such as those possessed by the source person. This is because Batik Rolla is still 9 years old and is still in the first generation, in contrast to the source person who has business experience of more than 20 years and the company has experienced multiple generations of managers.

So far, in launching new products, Batik Rolla only informs through social media, friends, and word-of-mouth, which means that the scope of socialization is very limited. The results of the study show that by using marketplaces and influencers, batik sales can be increased. This is done by promoting products to be launched through the marketplace to see the direct response of potential customers.



Influencers (religious leaders, figures, artists) can help increase sales because they have many followers. Followers are expected to buy products that influencers promote because the product is attractive. The selection of the right influencers is also a major factor in promoting products to be launched. The characteristics of followers become a factor before making a selection of influencers. For example, Annisa Yudhoyono are followed by mostly women and they are fond of batik. She has also experienced becoming a batik brand ambassador. Therefore, if a batik company wants to hire an influencer, he/she needs to be suitable to be able to target the desired target market.

Batik Rolla also wants to hold a trunk show to be able to introduce products that are launched directly to targeted consumers. This can be done by working with designers to design trunk show themes in the selected moment. In a trunk show, companies don't just display cloth products but designers can help in the design of the clothes that will be shown. In addition, the company also wants to recruit employees in the sales sector to help promote batik sales even more optimally. The hope is that with the results of this study, Batik Rolla can do the right steps in exploring the innovation process that will be launched so no issues will occur during the process and the company can rectify errors.

In the process of exploring ideas, it was found that moment is the first step in finding sources of inspiration for the batik motif that will be launched. The source of inspiration is used in the whole process of creating new products. The source of inspiration from that moment can increase the originality and creativity of the company in creating batik motifs that will be produced. After conducting research on which moment to choose, the source of inspiration is collected in various visual images and information to be understood in detail to be translated into new designs.

The innovation process has relevance in producing appropriate innovations. Innovation process is a process that is always needed and always occurs within the company to create products that can be accepted by the society and to achieve the desired target. Therefore, it is expected that with the innovation process, companies can have a bigger chance of success in realizing the desired innovation. With the stages of the innovation process being carried out, companies can minimize failures.

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