

## Local community perception of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity of Sleman

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### ABSTRACT

Salak Parijoto: A sign of the cultural identity of Sleman Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta, batik is an expression of creativity. The goal of this research was to examine and assess how local residents view Parijoto Salak Batik as Sleman's cultural identity. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method of data collection, which included thorough interviews, participatory observations, and documentation. The younger generation views it as a potentially creative economy that can be developed, while artists and cultural icons see it as a cultural legacy that must be protected. The salak motif, which is typical of this batik, symbolizes Sleman's distinctiveness as the top producer of salak. Additionally, the research revealed obstacles to conservation and growth, such as inadequate promotion, competition with contemporary textile goods, and a scarcity of skilled artisans. The study's conclusion indicates that, while Parijoto Salak Batik has potential as a solid cultural identity, cooperation between the government, creative industry participants, and the community is necessary to maintain and foster it. In the context of modernization and globalization, these results add to a thorough understanding of the dynamics of local cultural identity.

**Keywords:** Batik Parijoto Salak, Cultural Identity, Sleman, Contemporary Textile Goods, Batik.

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RESEARCH & PUBLISHING



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Local cultural identity plays a crucial role in shaping the uniqueness of a region amid the rapid currents of globalization (Aprianti et al., 2022). In this context, batik, an intangible cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO, reflects the pride and identity of Indonesian society (Hasan et al., 2024). A distinctive example is the Parijotho Salak Batik, which originated in the Sleman Regency in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This batik motif is unique, as it integrates elements of history, culture, and the natural resources of the region, particularly salak pondoh, a superior product, and the pride of the area. However, Parijotho Salak Batik has not yet gained significant attention from the public, both locally and nationally. Therefore, this study aims to explore how the community perceives, appreciates, and interprets Parijotho Salak Batik as a part of Sleman's local cultural identity. This research focuses on the level of public awareness of Parijotho Salak Batik, the cultural and aesthetic values embodied in the motif, and the factors influencing its public perception. This study is expected to contribute to the understanding of the role of Parijotho Salak Batik not only as a cultural artifact but also as a symbol of local identity capable of enduring amidst modernization and globalization. The findings of this study can also serve as a basis for local governments, creative industry players, and communities to preserve and promote this batik more broadly.

In the context of preserving local culture, cultural identity plays a vital role in maintaining the distinctiveness and sustainability of traditions amid global homogenization. Local cultural identity functions as an "anchor" that binds communities to their traditional roots, while providing space to adapt to changing times (Hasan et al., 2024). As a dynamic cultural expression, batik is not only an artifact of the past, but also a manifestation of creativity that continues to develop according to the context of its time. Parijotho Salak Batik is a result of the dialectic between the batik tradition that has existed for centuries in Java and the local uniqueness of Sleman. The motif inspired by snake fruit is a visual marker that directly identifies the origin and characteristics of a region. The emergence of this batik began with the initiative of several batik craftsmen in the Sleman Regency in the early 2000s who tried to create a regional batik identity. The name "Parijotho" itself is taken from the Javanese word meaning "to be clean or holy", while "Salak" refers to a typical Sleman fruit, which is a superior commodity. The Parijotho Salak Batik motif gained significant momentum after the release of the Regional Regulation on the preservation and development of local batiks in 2010, according to data from the Sleman Regency Culture and Tourism Office (2021).

The development of Parijotho Salak Batik accelerated in the 2015-2020 period, when the local government launched the "Sleman Creative Economy" program, which provided support to the local creative industry. According to the documentation of Sleman Bappeda (2022), during this period, there was a significant increase in the number of batik craftsmen from 12 groups to 28 groups spread across several sub-districts, especially in Tempel, Turi, and Pakem, which are centers of salak production. The marketing of this batik has begun to penetrate the national market through cultural exhibitions and festivals. Recently, Batik Parijotho Salak has experienced diversification of motifs and techniques (Purnomo & Cahyana, 2020).

One of the main problems in developing a regional batik identity is the imbalance between policy support and implementation (Rianto et al., 2022). In Sleman, although there are regulations that encourage the use of local batik in government and school environments, the use of Batik Parijotho Salak is still less popular than conventional batik from other regions. Another important problem is the regeneration of the craftsmen. According to a survey by the Sleman Regency Industry and Trade Service (2022), the majority of local batik craftsmen are over 45 years old, while the involvement of the younger generation in the batik production and innovation processes is still minimal. This condition raises concerns about the sustainability of batik tradition in the future. The regeneration of batik craftsmen is a common challenge faced by almost all batik-producing areas in Indonesia, including Sleman (Zubaedah & Hidayah, 2023). Local batiks are often caught in a dilemma between maintaining authenticity and market demands and are more oriented towards cost efficiency and fashion trends (Indraswara et al., 2023). Sustainable cultural identity must be deeply rooted in the collective consciousness of the community, not just a cultural

engineering project (Harno & Maharani, 2023). A thorough comprehension of public opinion may serve as the basis for a more successful approach in the long run, which will help establish Batik Parijoto Salak as a living and evolving cultural resource, rather than just a nostalgic relic.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative methodology to investigate and analyze local people's views of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity of Sleman. The qualitative methodology was chosen because it effectively reflects the complexity of the meanings, values, and subjective experiences related to the cultural phenomenon being studied. With a phenomenological focus, this study falls within the domain of descriptive, qualitative research. The phenomenological approach was used to explore how individuals and community groups perceive, understand, and interpret the existence of Batik Parijoto Salak in relation to their social and cultural lives.

As explained by Moleong (2021), this approach enables researchers to uncover the essence of human experiences related to specific phenomena, in this case, the public's perception of batik as a cultural identity. Phenomenological theory is based on several key concepts. First, *epoché* involves suspending or setting aside all preconceived notions and assumptions to understand the phenomenon purely from the perspective of the subjects being studied. Second, *intentionality* asserts that human consciousness is always directed toward something, making experience inseparable from its object or context. Third, *the lifeworld* emphasizes the importance of understanding individual experiences within social, cultural, and historical contexts. These principles form the foundation for uncovering the profound meaning of people's experiences with Batik Parijoto Salak.

Furthermore, according to Yin (in Creswell, 2022), case studies allow for empirical investigation of contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are unclear. This approach is relevant for studying Batik Parijoto Salak as a phenomenon that cannot be separated from Sleman's sociocultural context. By integrating the principles of phenomenology, this study aims to provide an authentic and in-depth understanding of the public's perception of Batik Parijoto Salak as a local cultural identity.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study revealed that Sleman society's perception of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity is multidimensional and influenced by various social, economic, and cultural factors. Several main findings can be identified based on the data analysis, as discussed below. This research employed a qualitative approach with primary data collection methods through in-depth interviews and structured questionnaires. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the public perceptions of Batik Parijoto Salak, the researcher involved four respondents representing various elements of Sleman society with diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique to ensure representation of multiple perspectives relevant to the research topic.

The first respondent is Mrs. Endang Wilujeng, a senior batik artisan who has long been involved in the art of batik-making and has directly participated in developing the Parijoto Salak motif. The second respondent was Mr. Barokah, a cultural activist who actively campaigned for the preservation of Sleman's local cultural heritage. The third respondent was Mr. Heri, a traditional community leader with extensive knowledge of the history and traditional values of the Sleman community. Finally, Mr. Aditya Tri Cahyo is a young cultural activist engaged in promoting and preserving Sleman's local cultural heritage.

### 3.1. Key Findings on Public Perception

This study found significant differences in public perceptions based on age, educational background, and involvement in the batik industry. The older generation tends to view Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural heritage with noble values and a deep philosophical meaning. They believe that this

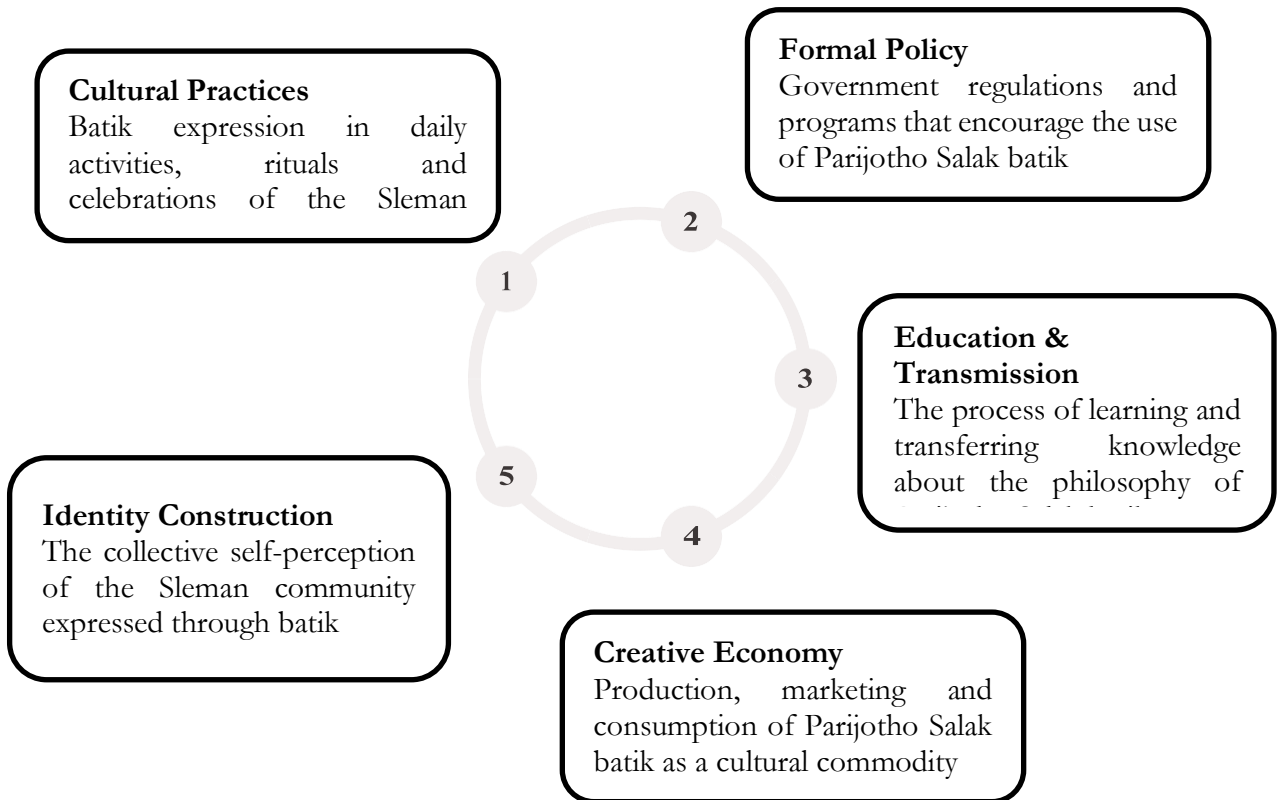
batik is not just a salak fruit motif, but a representation of the philosophy of life of the Sleman people, who are based on agrarian values, the softness reflected in the salak flesh, and the steadfastness depicted through its skin. For them, preserving this batik is part of maintaining the identity and local wisdom that has been passed on from one generation to another. However, the younger generation highlights the potential of this batik in the realms of creative economy and innovation. They view Batik Parijoto Salak as a means of expressing a local cultural identity in a more modern and global framework. By combining traditional elements and contemporary aesthetics, this batik is considered capable of bridging cultural roots and the dynamics of the times while opening up opportunities in the ever-growing fashion and design industry (Decker et al., 2020).

### **3.2. Difficulties in Being Recognized as a Cultural Identity**

Several obstacles must be overcome to establish Batik Parijoto Salak as one of Sleman's unique cultural identities: The limited public knowledge of the cultural context behind this batik is a major obstacle. The public is still not fully aware of the history of its development, the philosophical significance of the name "Parijoto," and the distinctive features of the batik pattern. Consequently, the process of passing on batik skills is slow and at risk of stagnation, if not addressed immediately (Sulaiman et al., 2022). This batik is still predominantly present in the form of traditional cloth and has not fully penetrated the format of contemporary products that are more in line with the lifestyle of modern society, such as urban fashion, accessories, or interior decoration (Untari, 2021).

### **3.3. Cultural Identity Construction and Stuart Hall's Theory**

The Sleman community's interpretation of Batik Parijoto Salak reflects Stuart Hall's idea of cultural identity as something dynamic, not a fixed entity that has been formed (Keai & Tugang, 2021). This process allows for the renewal of meaning that not only reflects local cultural roots but also adapts to the needs and aspirations of contemporary society (Sukarini et al., 2022). Within this framework, the identity of Batik Parijoto Salak continues to "become" along with the dynamics of Sleman as a living social space, making this batik not just a textile product, but an active symbol of ongoing cultural construction. However, the findings also show limitations from an essentialist perspective of cultural identity (SF et al., 2020). In contrast to Hall's characterization of identity as being formed collectively through shared experiences (Poon, 2020), Batik Parijoto Salak as a relatively new identity is still in the stage of being "introduced" to some people, not something that is already embedded in collective consciousness. This aligns with the results of Maziyah et al. (2020), who found that regional batik identity is the product of a discussion process between top-down actions and bottom-up appreciation (see Figure 1).

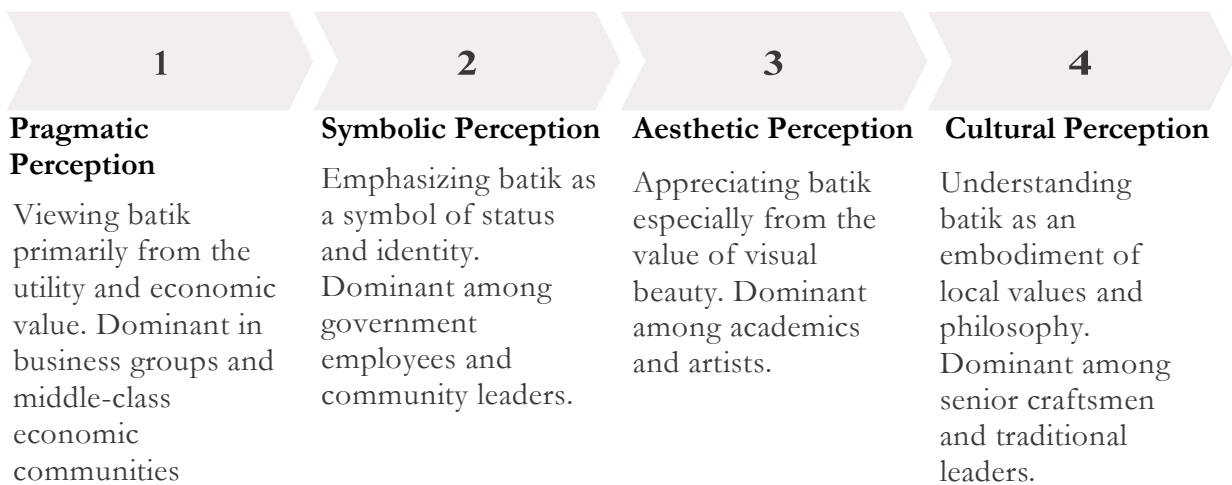


**Figure 1. Key Dimensions of Parijoto Salak Batik Practices in Sleman**

*Note: The figure illustrates five interrelated dimensions of Parijoto Salak batik as a cultural phenomenon in Sleman, cultural practices in daily life, formal policy support through government programs, education and transmission of philosophical knowledge, creative economy activities in production and marketing, and the construction of community identity through batik expression.*

### 3.4. Social Perception and Bourdieu's Theory

Pierre Bourdieu's "cultural field" theory, which holds that a person's cultural capital and habitus have a significant impact on their perceptions of Batik Parijoto Salak, is supported by the study's results. This analysis is in line with the findings of Jannah et al. (2020), who identified the typology of public perceptions of regional batik. In Sleman's context, the typology of perception can be classified as follows (see Figure 2):



**Figure 2. Typology of Batik Perceptions Among Community Groups**

*Note: The figure presents four dominant perceptions of batik within the community: pragmatic (focused on utility and economic value, common among business and middle-class groups), symbolic (as a marker of status and identity, prevalent among government employees and leaders), aesthetic (valuing visual beauty, found among academics and artists), and cultural (as an embodiment of local philosophy, upheld by senior craftsmen and traditional leaders).*

### **3.5. The Concept of "Invented Tradition" and the Dynamics of Parijoto Salak Batik**

An analysis of findings through the concept of "invented tradition" from Hobsbawm and Ranger shows that Batik Parijoto Salak can be categorized as a relatively new tradition but constructed by utilizing existing cultural elements (batik as a Javanese cultural heritage and salak as an icon of Sleman). Several mechanisms have been identified for this process; however, the findings of this study indicate that the Batik Parijoto Salak invention process is more adaptive and generative, responding to the contemporary need for a distinctive local identity amid cultural homogenizations. Overall, the analysis of the research findings shows that the Sleman community's perception of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity is in a formative phase, in which the process of negotiating meaning is still ongoing. Socioeconomic context, cultural background, and accessibility to knowledge are determining factors in the variation in perceptions that emerge. This demonstrates that cultural identity is a dynamic process that includes intricate interactions between tradition, innovation, and the recontextualisation of values in modern society. [Reza and Kristanto \(2024\)](#) claim that human creativity frequently contains components of spontaneity, emotion, and intuition that are difficult to quantify or code into algorithms.

### **3.6. Recognizing Parijoto Salak Batik as a Representation of Sleman's Culture**

This study demonstrates the diverse range of appreciation for Batik Parijoto Salak among Sleman's people. This batik is beautiful because of its balanced composition, harmonious use of delicate yet vibrant colors, and distinctive motif that takes cues from the form and feel of the salak fruit, one of Sleman's regional symbols. The unique visual impression of batik, which is distinct from batik as a whole, is created by the combination of geometric components common to traditional Yogyakarta batik designs and the organic form of salak fruit. This visual feature demonstrates both artistic beauty and a fusion of local traditions and innovation. [Kristanto and Maulidini \(2024\)](#) assert that younger people who want to stand out and be unique can be drawn in using vibrant colors, strong contrasts, and eye-catching graphic displays. In addition to its appealing appearance, Batik Parijoto Salak incorporates strong cultural values and appreciation.

The philosophy of life of the Sleman people, who value hard labor and maintain harmony with nature, is reflected in the meticulous manufacturing process, which makes use of natural materials and demands patience. The themes that are created frequently reflect the physical form of the salak fruit, as well as symbolic meanings based on local values such as patience, perseverance, and harmony. This cultural component demonstrates that batik is not just an attractive item; it is also a tool for expressing shared beliefs and identities. According to [Yulianti and Yuda \(2024\)](#), the efficacy of the communication process will also be impacted by the behavior, etiquette, and worldview that is passed down from a specific culture. This batik is valued not only for its artistic merit but also for its potential to generate commercial prospects and sustain the lives of the people in the area. [Reza and Kristanto \(2024\)](#) assert that the selection of the right digital platforms to reach the target audience, visual identity, and communication messages must all work together to create a more effective digital promotion.

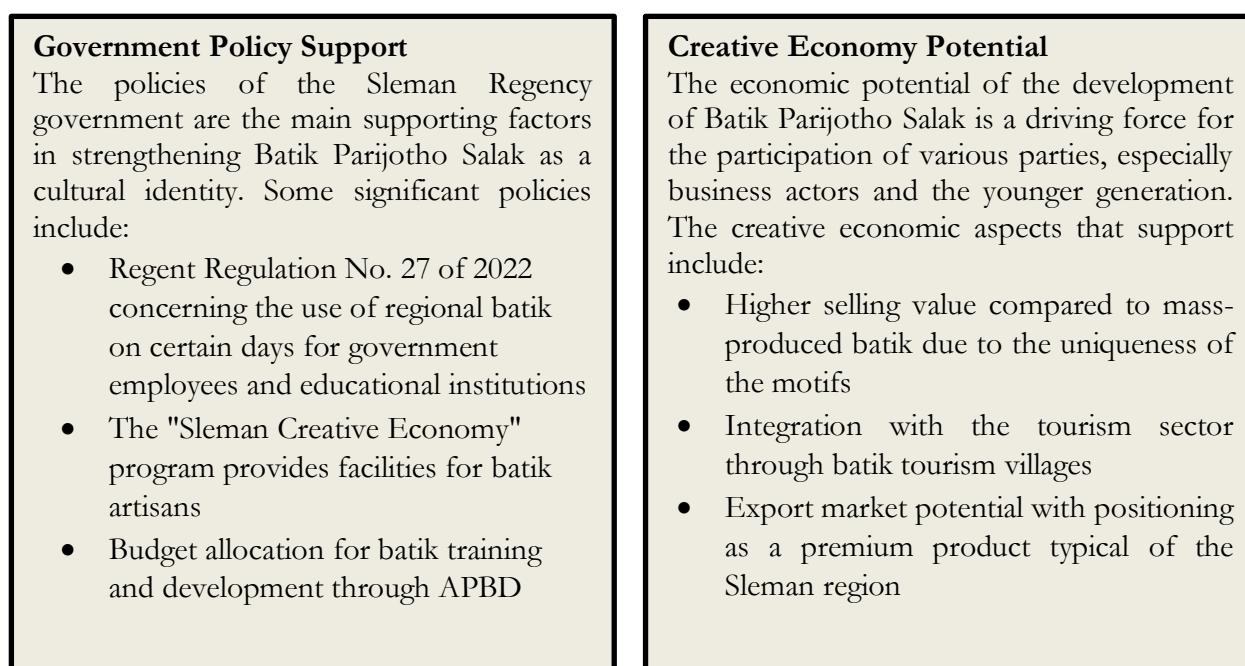
### **3.7. Expressing Gratitude in Society**

The use of Batik Parijoto Salak in a variety of official settings demonstrates one of the clearest ways to express gratitude. The symbolic worth of this batik as a cultural representation of the area is reinforced by its continuous usage in forums, where Sleman is represented at the regional and national levels. [Yulianti, Sucipta, and Kristanto \(2024\)](#) contend that social interaction in it has a great potential to be conducted between individuals and groups, between groups, between individuals and groups, and even

between individuals and groups and the general public. The Sleman Arts and Culture Center is also actively holding batik design competitions with the theme of Parijoto Salak, which involves cross-generational participation, encouraging creative exploration, while expanding the reach of appreciation for batik as a living and developing medium of cultural expression. Despite significant appreciation, this study also identified a gap between discursive (verbal/conceptual) appreciation and actual practice. The existence of media literacy education provides us with the tools and skills needed to become confident and competent media consumers (Damayanti et al., 2024).

### 3.8. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Cultural Identity

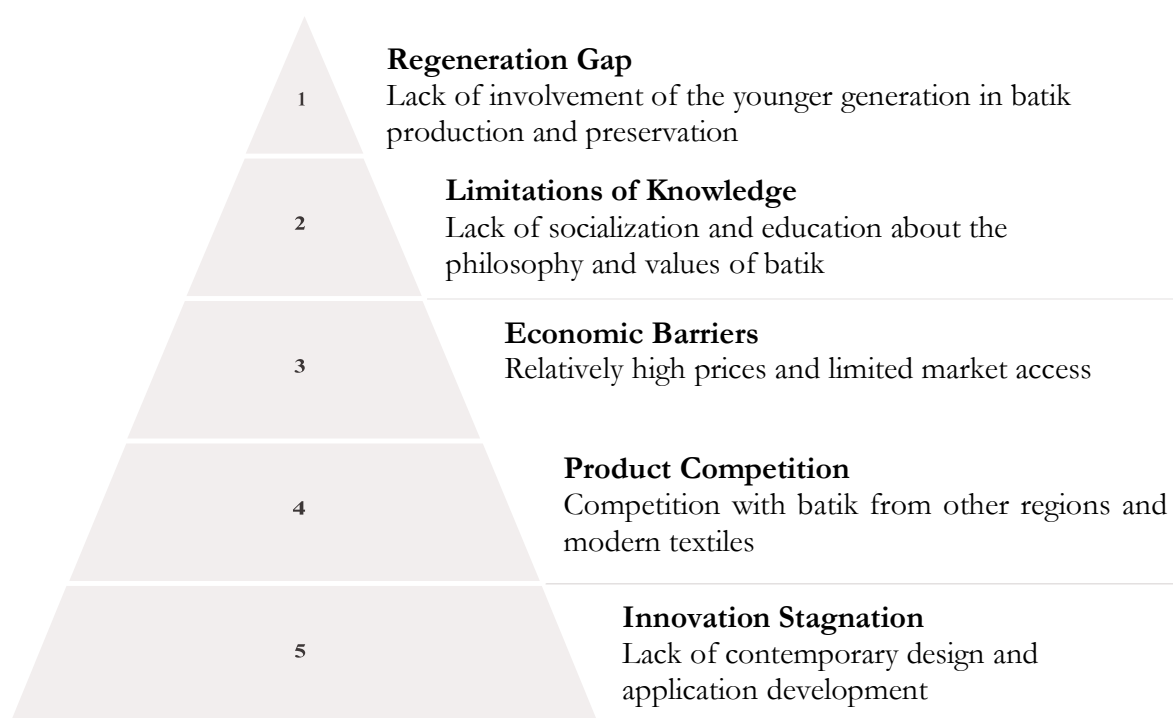
An analysis of the Sleman community's perception reveals several supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the position of the Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity. Understanding these factors is important for formulating a more effective strategy to strengthen cultural identity through Sleman's distinctive batik. Supporting Factors (see Figure 3):



**Figure 3. Supporting Factors in Strengthening Parijoto Salak Batik as Cultural Identity**

*Note: The figure highlights two main supporting factors: government policy support, which includes regulations, creative economy programs, and budget allocations; and creative economy potential, reflected in the unique market value, tourism integration, and export opportunities of Parijoto Salak batik.*

Inhibiting Factors (see Figure 4):



**Figure 4. Challenges in the Sustainability of Parijoto Salak Batik**

*Note: The figure outlines five key challenges hindering the sustainability of Parijoto Salak batik: regeneration gap due to low youth involvement; limitations of knowledge regarding its philosophy and values; economic barriers from high prices and limited access; product competition with other batik and modern textiles; and innovation stagnation caused by lack of contemporary design and development.*

From an economic perspective, the high price of the Parijoto Salak hand-drawn batik is also an obstacle to wider market penetration. The relatively high price reflects the quality and complexity of the manufacturing process, but simultaneously makes it less affordable for most local people. On the other hand, limited market access causes many craftsmen to have difficulty selling their products at decent prices, thus reducing their motivation to maintain production quality. This study found a complex dynamic between supporting and inhibiting factors, where several factors influence each other and are contextual based on geographic location, social groups, and time periods.

### **3.9. Solutions to Economic Challenges**

Based on a comprehensive analysis of the economic challenges faced by Batik Parijoto Salak, this study proposes several strategic solutions to address them. The first solution focuses on strengthening the financial resources of batik artisans by establishing a solid and professional artisan cooperative. This cooperative could serve as a platform for the collective purchasing of raw materials to obtain more economical prices, as well as a savings and loan institution that provides low-interest financing to its members. Mrs. Endang Wilujeng welcomed this idea positively:

*“If there is a cooperative that can help us buy fabric and dyes at wholesale prices, it would greatly reduce production costs.”*

The second solution to overcome marketing challenges is digital marketing and e-commerce training for artisans and Batik Parijoto Salak traders. This training program includes strategies for utilizing social media, developing online stores, product photography, and storytelling techniques to communicate the cultural value of batiks to a wider audience. Mr. Aditya Tri Cahyo emphasized the importance of this solution:

*“In the digital era, a strong online presence is essential. By effectively utilizing digital platforms, Batik Parijoto Salak can reach national and even international markets without requiring significant physical investments.”*

The third solution involves cross-sector collaboration to create synergy in the promotion and development of products. This collaboration could be carried out with Sleman’s culinary industry by incorporating the Parijoto Salak motif into packaging for local food products, with the tourism sector by integrating batik workshops into tour packages, or with other MSMEs to create innovative products based on this motif. Mr. Barokah provided a concrete example:

*“In some tourist villages, visitors can make their own Batik Parijoto Salak souvenirs. This not only increases economic value but also promotes the cultural significance of batik to tourists.”*

This collaborative approach would create an interconnected economic ecosystem among various business players in Sleman, while expanding the promotion of Batik Parijoto Salak.

### **3.10. Solutions to Cultural Challenges**

To address the identified cultural challenges, this study proposes several comprehensive solutions that focus on education, creativity, and the integration of traditional values into contemporary contexts. The first solution is the development of systematic cultural education programs in schools on the values and history of Batik Parijoto Salak. This program can be integrated into the local curriculum, covering the introduction of motifs, basic batik techniques, and the philosophy behind the motifs. Mr. Heri emphasizes the importance of early education:

*“Children need to learn about their cultural heritage from a young age. By understanding the values and beauty of Batik Parijoto Salak, they will grow up with pride in their local identity.”*

The second solution is to organize contemporary fashion design competitions using the Parijoto Salak motif, specifically targeting teenagers and the younger generations. This competition encourages creative interpretations of traditional motifs in the context of modern fashion, which is more relevant to contemporary lifestyles. Mr. Aditya Tri Cahyo suggested

*“that this design competition could bridge traditions and modernity. Providing a space for young people to experiment with the Parijoto Salak motif will make them feel connected to and proud of this cultural heritage.”*

The results of these competitions could be showcased in an annual fashion show attended by various community groups, creating broader exposure and shifting the perception that batik is suitable only for formal attire. The fourth solution is to develop a mentoring program between senior artisans and young individuals interested in the art of batik making. This program can be implemented as a certified internship or regular course that provides incentives for participants, such as scholarships or opportunities to exhibit and sell their work. Mr. Barokah highlighted the importance of knowledge transfer:

*“The traditional techniques and philosophies of batik-making must be passed down directly from one generation to the next. Without this process, the profound knowledge of Batik Parijoto Salak could be lost.”*

This mentoring program would not only focus on batik-making techniques, but also on business and innovation aspects, allowing young participants to see the promising economic potential of this traditional craft.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Research on the local people's perceptions of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity of Sleman has revealed complex dynamics in the construction and negotiation of local cultural identity in the contemporary era. The main findings indicate that Batik Parijoto Salak has significant potential as a marker of Sleman's cultural identity, but this position is still in the process of being formed and faces various challenges in its internalization into the wider community. Public perception studies reveal differences that are affected by age, education level, participation in the batik sector, and access to cultural information. Compared to the younger generation and the general population, the older generation and those who are directly involved in batik manufacturing have a greater understanding of and respect for it. The research also found several facilitating and restricting variables that affect the status of Batik Parijoto Salak as a cultural identity. The key supporting elements are government policy support, the strength of cultural stories surrounding outstanding regional products, possibilities for a creative economy, and the influence of cultural groups.

To establish Batik Parijoto Salak as a viable cultural identity for Sleman, this study proposes an integrated strategy that incorporates cultural, educational, economic, and political factors. This plan must include mutually supportive synergy between a wide range of parties, including local governments, batik communities, educational institutions, commercial players, and the general public. This article highlights that cultural identity is a dynamic process that is constantly negotiated and reconstructed through intricate interactions between tradition, innovation, and contextualization in modern life. This contributes to a wider discussion about local cultural identity in the age of globalization. Given these changes, Batik Parijoto Salak serves as a means for Sleman to constantly redefine and negotiate their shared identity in the face of significant social, economic, and cultural upheaval, as well as a cultural relic.

#### **Ethical approval**

This research did not require ethical approval.

#### **Informed consent statement**

This research did not require informed consent.

#### **Authors' contributions**

Not Applicable.

#### **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

#### **Data availability statement**

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author due to privacy reasons.

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#### **Notes on Contributors**

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