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Batik Smock at The Galbita Gallery Home Industry in Banaran Village, Sukoharjo, Central Java.

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to describe the process of making batik smocks produced by the Galbita Gallery Home Industry. This research is a descriptive qualitative research. This research is focused on the comparison of smock techniques in fabrics with batik combined with smock techniques. Data collection was obtained by observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The subject of this study is Home Industry Galbita Gallery, and the object of the research is the batik smock at Home Industry Galbita Gallery. The research instruments are the researcher himself accompanied by observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation guidelines, as well as using voice recording aids, cameras, and notebooks. The technique of checking the validity of the data was obtained by triangulation. Data analysis is carried out by collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study show that batik smocks are made at Home Industry Galbita Gallery by combining two techniques, namely the smock technique and the batik stamp technique. The smock and batik combination smock technique produces fabrics with different uniqueness and aesthetic value. The smock technique offers an elegant three-dimensional texture, while the combination of smock and batik creates a fabric with richer and more artistic dimensions and colours. Both are valued in the world of textiles and fashion because of their uniqueness and high added value.

Keywords: Batik smock, smock technique, manufacturing process

ABSTRAK
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan proses pembuatan batik *smock produksi Home Industry Galbita Gallery. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Penelitian ini difokuskan pada perbandingan teknik smock di kain dengan* batik *kombinasi teknik smock. Pengumpulan data diperoleh dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek pada penelitian ini yaitu Home Industry Galbita Gallery dan objek penelitian yaitu* batik *smock di Home Industry Galbita Gallery. Instrumen penelitian adalah peneliti sendiri disertai dengan pedoman observasi, pedoman wawancara, dan pedoman dokumentasi, serta menggunakan alat bantu rekam suara, kamera, dan buku catatan. Teknik pemeriksaan keabsahan data diperoleh dengan triangulasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan cara pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan menarik kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa: terdapat proses pembuatan* batik *smock di Home Industry Galbita Gallery dengan cara menggabungkan 2 teknik yaitu teknik smock dan teknik* batik *cap. Teknik smock dan* batik *kombinasi smock menghasilkan kain dengan keunikan dan nilai estetika berbeda. Teknik smock menawarkan tekstur tiga dimensi yang elegan, sementara kombinasi smock dan* batik *menciptakan kain dengan dimensi dan warna yang lebih kaya dan artistik. Keduanya dihargai dalam dunia tekstil dan fashion karena keunikan dan nilai tambahnya yang tinggi.*

Kata Kunci: *Batik smock, teknik smock, proses pembuatan*

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INTRODUCTION

Batik is a traditional craft that has existed since the 17th century. It is a skill and expertise passed down through generations by our ancestors. The origins of batik in Indonesia are closely tied to the development of the Majapahit, Solo, and Yogyakarta kingdoms. Indonesian batik is regarded as the most advanced, unique, and complex form of batik compared to those from other countries (Supriono, 2016). Traditional Indonesian batik is distinguished not only by its patterns and motifs but also by the tools and materials used in its production.

The motifs of Indonesian batik are highly diverse. In the modern era, these motifs have been updated and innovated to align with contemporary trends. Batik is not merely a fabric adorned with intricate ornaments but also embodies profound symbolic meanings. Each design and colour often reflects philosophical, historical, and cultural identity values. According to Trixie (2020), the number of documented batik motifs has reached 30 distinct types. Along with the evolution of time and market preferences, batik techniques have also advanced. From traditional patterns, batik has expanded into various methods such as stamped batik, printed batik, screen-printed batik, and, eventually, smock batik. These developments align with efforts to preserve the significance of batik in modern contexts while adapting to the ever-changing market demand.

Smock batik is a unique batik technique that remains relatively new and distinctive. Smock batik artisans are predominantly from Central Java, Indonesia. This technique began gaining popularity in the 1990s when smock batik was first recognised, and artisans started creating unique and attractive smock patterns. Smock batik involves using the smock technique, which is a method within the sewing craft. The process involves stretching the fabric, creasing it horizontally, then vertically, resulting in specific shapes on the dyed sections. This technique produces a smocked effect on the fabric, adding texture and introducing a new dimension to the world of batik.

Smock batik has been well-received in the market due to its unique technique and its ability to create modern and experimental designs. This development is inseparable from the efforts of artisans and designers further to explore new techniques and motifs in batik fabric. Smock batik not only symbolises the beauty of batik but also reflects the richness of its aesthetic value, embodied in every pattern and colour. The aesthetics of smock batik encompass the harmonious selection of colours, motifs, and compositions, showcasing its beauty and uniqueness. Thus, the aesthetics of smock batik craftsmanship not only involve the visual appeal of the motifs created through the smock technique but also include the creative and innovative processes of combining various traditional techniques to produce unique works of art. In Indonesia, batik is a highly esteemed art form with significant aesthetic value.

One city renowned for its batik industry is Solo, which earned it the title of Batik City. Solo is a municipality consisting of six regencies: Klaten, Boyolali, Sragen, Karanganyar, Sukoharjo, and Wonogiri. The regencies of Sragen, Sukoharjo, and Karanganyar are among the central batik production areas in the Solo region.

Galbita Gallery is one of the batik artisans located in Sukoharjo Regency. The owner of Galbita Gallery, Bambang Purwo Widodo, is a well-known batik craftsman. Bambang has produced various types of batik using different techniques, with smock batik being one of his creations. Research on smock batik remains scarce and underexplored, resulting in limited knowledge of this technique. Therefore, this study aims to observe several smock batik crafts at the Galbita Gallery. The researcher examines these works due to their uniqueness, determining that smock batik deserves further exploration. The study seeks to delve deeper into and uncover the process of creating smock batik at the Galbita Gallery home industry.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through direct observation, interviews with artisans, and document analysis. The smock-making technique and the combination of smock and batik are analysed in detail, including the tools and materials used, process stages, and specific techniques applied.

The qualitative research method is based on the philosophy of post-positivism or interpretivism. It is used to study objects in their natural context, where the researcher serves as the key instrument. Data collection techniques are carried out through triangulation (a combination of observation, interviews, and documentation). The data obtained tend to be qualitative, and data analysis follows an inductive or qualitative process. The results of qualitative research aim to understand meanings, capture uniqueness, construct phenomena, and formulate hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2023: 09)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Background of The Home Industry Galbita Gallery

Home Galbita Gallery Home Industry is a small-scale business specialising in batik production. It is located in Banaran Village, Rt/04, Pondang, Grogol District, Sukoharjo Regency, Central Java. Sukoharjo Regency comprises 12 districts, 17 urban villages, and 150 rural villages. Known as "The House of Souvenir," Sukoharjo is home to many residents who produce local products as souvenirs, with batik being one of its signature items. Numerous batik production centres are spread across various districts in Sukoharjo, including Banaran Village, where batik home industries are prevalent.

Many workers in the batik industry in Laweyan originate from Banaran Village, which is located in the northernmost part of Grogol District, bordering Laweyan Urban Village in Surakarta City. The batik industry in Banaran Village has gained international recognition, with products exported to countries such as the United States and Europe. Among the textiles produced in Banaran are tie-dye fabrics, stamped batik, and others.

An interview conducted on March 2, 2024, with Mr Bambang Purwowidodo revealed that he founded Galbita Gallery Home Industry with his son, Mr Galang Pacitra Yogyawan. Born on October 17, 1961, Mr. Bambang has been dedicated to the art of batik since his university days. He began exploring batik with his friend, Mr. Sujoyono. After completing his education, he taught in Lampung for a year before joining PT Batik Keris. Although initially a teacher, his passion for batik eventually led him to resign and pursue a career in the industry.

In 1988, Mr. Bambang started working at PT Batik Keris, but in 2005, he left to join Aneka Sandang Buana, where he worked until 2007. That same year, he and his friend established their own batik business, Batik Priya Tampan. After seven years, in 2013, he decided to leave the venture.

In 2014, after leaving Batik Priya Tampan, Mr Bambang and two colleagues founded Tentrem Rahayu Batik, focusing on exporting batik. However, after three years, he decided to move on and briefly worked at Ratna Maya Batik for three months.

Drawing on his extensive experience, Mr. Bambang eventually established his batik industry in 2017 with his eldest son, Mr. Galang Pacitra Yogyawan, naming it Galbita Gallery. The name "Galbita" was derived from the names of his three children: Galang Pacitra Prayoga, Naza Tantra Abi Yoga, and Tantriyuta Maryam Septiana combining "Gal" from Galang, "bi" from Abi, and "ta" from Yuta.

Initially, Galbita Gallery operated a factory in Manang Village, Grogol District, Sukoharjo. However, in 2023, the factory was reclaimed by its owner, and Galbita Gallery transitioned into a home-based industry. All production is now carried out collaboratively by Mr Bambang and his son, with additional support from suppliers for tasks they cannot handle alone.

Since its inception, Galbita Gallery has been exporting batik, particularly to the United States. Drawing on Mr. Bambang's international experience from his time at PT Batik Keris, the business successfully navigated international markets for three years. However, challenges arose during the COVID-19 pandemic, halting exports and increasing raw material costs. The rising prices of batik products affected consumer purchasing power, yet Mr. Bambang remains resilient in continuing production.

Galbita Gallery produces various types of batik, including smock batik, straight-fiber batik, and mendeley batik. These diverse products aim to introduce the public to a broader range of batik styles, blending traditional and modern innovations.

B. Production Process

1. Smock Technique:

Picture 1. Smock Technique

The smock technique is a sewing art involving folding and creasing fabric to create a three-dimensional texture. This process requires precision and high manual skill. The tools and materials used include fabric (cotton, linen, silk), dye, sponges, and containers such as buckets and basins. Below are the detailed steps in the smock-making process:

a. Fabric Selection:
   Select fabric with appropriate texture and durability for smocking. The fabric must be of high quality to maintain the folds' shape.
b. Washing the Fabric:
   The fabric is washed with water before smocking and left to dry on a rack until excess water is reduced.
c. Creasing Fabric:
   The fabric is placed on a flat surface, such as a table or floor, and aligned to create straight lines. The creasing process is done manually, with one hand arranging the fabric and the other forming the gathers. Repeated up-and-down motions produce irregular folds. It is crucial to avoid overly tight creasing, as this may hinder the penetration of soda ash, which creates the desired colour effect. Additionally, the folds' size must be carefully managed to ensure uniform colour distribution.

Picture 2. Creasing the Fabric

d. Fabric Coloring:
   Smock batik uses Remazol dyes using either three-color or four-color techniques. The "5/6 formula" is applied, meaning the first colour is applied six times, followed by the second colour five times, and repeated alternately. The fabric is then sun-dried, and soda ash is sprinkled to enhance colour effects.

Picture 3. Fabric Coloring

e. Final Stage:
Once dry, the fabric is treated with a water glass to lock in the colour and prevent fading. The waterglass is left for two hours before the fabric is washed and dried again.

Picture 4. Final Stage

2. The Smock Technique Combined with Batik:

Picture 5. Smock Batik

The smock batik production process merges two traditional techniques: batik and smock. Smock batik dyeing involves folding the fabric and applying colour with a dye-soaked sponge. According to Mr. Bambang (March 2, 2024), production speed depends on weather conditions, with sunny weather accelerating the process and cloudy days slowing it down. The following outlines the processes involved in creating smock batik:

a. Color Mixing
During the colour mixing stage, the colour composition is adjusted based on the fabric length and the desired colour intensity. Darker shades require more dye, while lighter tones require less. A plastic bag containing the dye is filled with water in a measured amount. The water is

added until the dye fully dissolves, and then the dye solution is transferred to a small bucket. According to Galang (March 3, 2024), "The weight of the dye in the plastic is pre-set to 100 grams, except for exports, where I weigh it myself because of specific recipes. The darker the shade, the more grams of dye are needed; for lighter shades, less dye is used.

Picture 6. Colour Mixing

b. Washing the Fabric
Before smocking, the fabric must be washed with water and air-dried briefly to reduce the moisture content. Washing removes starch and dirt from the fibers. During drying, the fabric should not be wrung out but allowed to drip dry. The fabric must remain slightly damp to facilitate the dyeing process, as excessive moisture may cause the colours to fade, while overly dry fabric may hinder dye application. Managing the fabric's moisture level is key to achieving the desired outcome.

c. Creasing Fabric (Smock)
After washing, the fabric undergoes the smocking process. The fabric is laid on a carpeted floor, spread out, and aligned. The smocking involves creasing the fabric using both hands: the left hand arranges the fabric while the right-hand forms a fold through an up-and-down motion. The folds must be irregular to avoid creating linear patterns during dyeing.


Picture 7. Creasing the Fabric

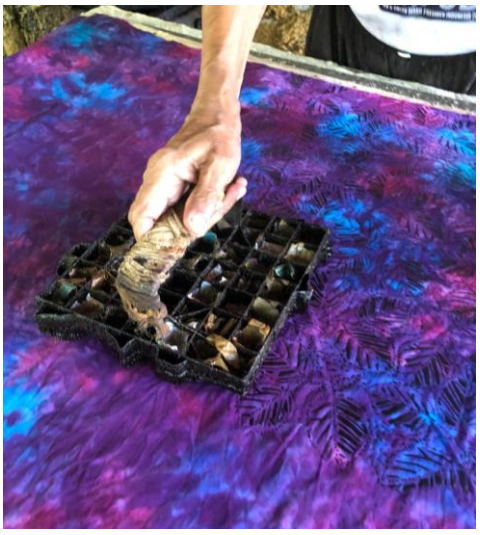
It is important to avoid overpacking the folds, as this may prevent the soda ash from penetrating, thus diminishing the colour effects. Furthermore, the folded size should be moderate to ensure even colour distribution.

d. Base Dyeing
Once smocked, the fabric is base-dyed to create motifs later covered with wax. Smock batik uses Remazol dyes, employing either a three-colour or four-colour technique. The "5/6 formula" is applied, meaning six dye dabs are made in a row, followed by five below, in a repeated sequence. The dyeing process involves dabbing a sponge soaked in dye onto the fabric. The sponge is lightly pressed to avoid excessive dye application. Once dyed, the fabric is sun-dried.

Picture 8. Base Dyeing

After drying, soda ash is sprinkled evenly over the fabric to enhance colour effects, followed by another round of drying. Waterglass is then applied to fix the colours, left for two hours, washed, and dried.

e. Batik Stamping Process
Unlike hand-drawn batik, stamped batik uses a pre-heated stamp and wax, eliminating the need for initial pattern creation. The fabric is placed on a padded stamping table with optimal moisture levels to prevent sticking. The stamp and tray are heated, ensuring the wax penetrates the fabric thoroughly.



Picture 9. Batik Stamping Process

Fabric stamping can commence once the tray and the stamp have been sufficiently heated, causing the wax to melt. Before applying the stamp to the fabric, it is lightly splattered to prevent

the wax from pooling or creating uneven patches. When stamping the fabric, the stamp is pressed gently to ensure the wax fully penetrates the fabric fibers.
The stamping process begins at the fabric's edges, and it is crucial to align the stamped motifs precisely to achieve a neat and cohesive result. Their texture can distinguish the front and back of the stamped fabric: the front has a raised and smooth finish, while the back feels rough and uneven.

f. Color Removal Process
After the batik stamping process is completed, the next step involves removing the colour from the areas of the fabric not covered by wax. This colour removal process is carried out using chemical agents to eliminate undesired colours, allowing the fabric to return to its original white state so it can be recoloured with a different hue. The dye covered by the wax remains unaffected by the chemical agents, as the wax serves to protect and preserve the desired patterns and colours.

Picture 10. Colour Removal Process

In the colour removal process, two different substances can be used: liquid and powdered chlorine (crystal form), as well as sulfuric, sir, sodium hydrosulfite, and liquid soda ash. Both types of substances serve the same purpose.
The colour removal process using powdered and liquid chlorine begins by soaking the waxed fabric in a container filled with liquid chlorine. The fabric is soaked until its colour starts to fade, with the soaking duration depending on the darkness of the colour. After being dipped in liquid chlorine, the fabric is air-dried briefly. Subsequently, the fabric is immersed in a mixture of powdered chlorine and hot water. This dipping process does not need to be prolonged; the fabric is removed once the colour begins to fade. Afterwards, the fabric is air-dried again, during which the colour will continue to fade. However, the drying process should not be too lengthy, as it may damage the fabric and cause it to disintegrate. Once the colour is removed, the fabric must be thoroughly cleaned by washing it at least three times to ensure it is completely free of residual chemicals.

g. Fabric Creasing (Smock)
After the colour on the fabric has been removed, the next step is the fabric smocking process. This process is similar to the first smocking process, where the fabric is laid out on a floor carpet, then spread and arranged in rows. Once the arrangement is complete, the fabric can then be pleated. The pleating process is carried out using both hands, with the left hand used to arrange the fabric while the right hand creates pleats in the fabric. The pleating is done with repeated up-and-down motions, and the pleats on the fabric must be maintained in a non-parallel or irregular pattern, as this can create line shapes during the dyeing process. In the second pleating process, the pleats are slightly looser compared to the first pleating.
It is important to note that while pleating, the fabric should not be made too tight, as this will reduce the space for soda ash to penetrate, preventing the desired colour effects created by the soda ash. Additionally, the size of the pleats should be carefully controlled to avoid them being too large, as this may result in uneven colour spreading across the fabric.

Picture 11. Fabric Creasing Process

h. Background Coloring Process

After the fabric has been smocked, the next step is the background dyeing process. The goal of background dyeing is to add colour to the fabric that has been bleached. This background dyeing follows the base dyeing process and can be done using either the 3-color or 4-color technique with the 5/6 ratio. In Smock batik dyeing, the 5/6 formula is applied, meaning that the first colour blotting is done six times in parallel, followed by five times below it, and this technique is repeated continuously. According to Gilang (March 6, 2024), "In background dyeing, a colour different from the base colour is used. The background colour can be darker or lighter depending on preference."

The dyeing process is carried out by dabbing a sponge soaked in dye onto the fabric. The sponge is first dipped into a bucket containing the dye, and then the sponge is gently dabbed onto the fabric twice without applying too much pressure, ensuring that the dye used is not excessive. Once the dyeing is completed, the fabric is left to dry under the sun.

Picture 12. Background Coloring Process

After the fabric is dried, soda ash is evenly sprinkled over the fabric. The amount of soda ash applied in background dyeing is more significant than in base dyeing. Soda ash serves to enhance the effect on the fabric's colour. After applying soda ash, the fabric is left to dry again until completely dry. Once the fabric is fully dry, it is treated with waterglass. Waterglass functions to lock the colour in place, preventing it from fading. The water glass is left to sit for two hours in a closed area, after which the fabric is washed.

i. *Ngelorod*

Ngelorod is the final step in the batik-making process. After all other steps are completed, the next phase is *melodic*. This process is carried out to remove the wax layer from the fabric by boiling the fabric in hot water until the wax is detached from the fabric.

The *melodic* process begins by boiling water in a pot. Once the water reaches its boiling point, the fabric is placed into the pot. While the fabric is in the pot, it is stirred with a wooden stick to ensure that all layers of wax are removed. Once it is determined that no more wax remains on the fabric, the fabric is washed with soap and then dried.

Picture 13. *Ngelorod*

There is a significant difference between the final results of the smock technique and the combination of smock and batik techniques, which is due to the different processes involved. Fabrics made using the smock technique have a unique and appealing three-dimensional texture. The pleated patterns create an elegant and classic visual effect. However, the aesthetic variation is generally limited to the pleating and stitching patterns. The final result of the traditional smocked fabric appears neat and structured with clear pleating patterns, heavily reliant on the craftsman's skill in creating patterns and stitching the pleats.

In contrast, the combination of smock and batik techniques produces a fabric with richer dimensions and colours. The colourful batik motifs and textured smock patterns create a more artistic and dynamic final product. Fabrics created using the combination of smock and batik techniques possess high aesthetic value due to the complex combination of patterns and colours. The outcome presents a harmonious blend of batik motifs and smock textures, resulting in a visually striking product.

Additionally, both techniques add unique value to the fabric. The smock technique adds value through its texture and distinctive pleating patterns. Smocked fabric is often used in children's clothing, traditional attire, and decorative accessories. This fabric can be applied to various products, including clothing, pillows, and wall decorations. This technique can also be combined with embroidery techniques to further enhance its aesthetic value.

On the other hand, the combination of smock and batik techniques not only elevates the fabric's aesthetic value but also enhances its cultural and artistic worth. Products made with this technique are often valued higher in the market due to their complexity and beauty. Fabrics made with the smock-batik combination technique are suitable for high fashion garments, traditional fabrics for special events, and exclusive decorative accessories. These products also have great potential for export to international markets that appreciate high-quality textile products.

Overall, both the smock technique and the smock-batik combination technique offer unique qualities and added value, making them highly appreciated in the textile and fashion industries.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and research on Batik Smock at the Home Industry Galbita Gallery in Banaran Village, Sukoharjo, Solo, Central Java, the following conclusions can be drawn.

Industry Galbita Gallery is a batik home business in Sukoharjo, Central Java, founded by Mr. Bambang Purwowidodo and named after his three children. The company successfully exported batik to the United States for three years until it was halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The rising cost of raw materials has posed a challenge; however, Mr. Bambang remains determined to continue his enterprise.

The batik smock production process at Home Industry Galbita Gallery combines two techniques: the smock technique and the cap batik technique. The smock and smock-batik combination techniques result in fabrics with distinct uniqueness and aesthetic value. The smock technique offers an elegant three-dimensional texture, while the combination of smock and batik creates fabrics with richer dimensions and more artistic colours. Both techniques are highly valued in the textile and fashion industries for their uniqueness and high added value.

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