

## **CREATIVITY ON BATIK ARTIST: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

Batik is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages. It is made by waxing technique on cloth (Doellah, 2003). Technically, batik is divided into two, by using canting and stamp or called cap. This research will be focused on batik by using canting. This process begins with making of the concept; create the patterns, waxing by canting, coloring, until boiling the cloth. Creativity is needed by a batik artist both on traditional or modern batik. This research will be emphasized on artistic creativity. It is a phenomenological study. Participants in this study are two people with characteristics of batik artists (not only for commercial purposes), making batik, domiciled in Yogyakarta. All participants will be interviewed about creativity based on Torrance Test of Creativity Test (Torrance, 1996), included four elements of creativity: fluid structure, flexibility, originality, and skills to incorporate. The result shows that creativity on batik is used in the concept, technique, and media. In traditional batik, creativity is used to fulfill the standard pattern with stuffing picture/motif. In modern one, creativity is needed more in the concept, making, how batik artists can unite some ideas to be a matching pattern in a cloth. In coloring techniques, creativity is required to produce beautiful colors, by using natural or synthetic materials. The use of natural materials requires a high level of creativity, as more effort is required to produce new colors from limited materials.

**Keywords:** creativity, batik, batik artist, phenomenological study

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Creativity can be interpreted as the ability to generate different ideas from common. Most study on creativity is more focussed in organizational settings (Girdauskienė & Savanevičienė, 2012), both in industry (Agbor, 2008; Martins & Terblanche, 2003) or education contexts (Feldman & Benjamin, 2006; Rawat, Qazi, & Hamid, 2012 ). Creativity is judged as the key to success. Therefore, creativity is related to the innovation people done (Jauk, Benedek, & Neubauer, 2014; Squalli & Wilson, 2014). In that context, creativity is judged to encourage an organization to produce a new product while maintaining competitiveness.

Study of creativity at the individual level begins to explain the dynamics of one's creativity (Torrance, 1962, Weisberg, 2006). There are some factors can affect creativity, such as intelligence (Aitken Harris, 2004; Antonio, Lanawati, Wiriana, & Christina, 2014; Batey, Furnham, & Safiullina, 2010; Furnham & Bachtiar, 2008; Plucker & Esping, 2015, 2015) and personality (Aitken Harris, 2004; An, Song, & Carr, 2016; Antonio et al., 2014; Batey et al., 2010, 2010; Furnham & Bachtiar, 2008; Jauk et al., 2014).

Meanwhile, creativity is divided into two categories: scientific and artistic creativity (Feist, 1998). This research is emphasized on artistic creativity. Therefore, research on artistic creativity is less than that of scientific creativity. This research will take the context of batik artists in Indonesia, especially in Yogyakarta.

This study aims to understand the creativity on batik artist context. This research is part of the ongoing research at the Faculty of Psychology Gadjah Mada University. Some research data was taken with the approval of the team.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Creativity**

#### **2.1.1 Creativity definition**

Torrance explains that creativity is the ability possessed by the individual to become more sensitive to the problems existing, then develop a hypothesis to solve it (Bart, Hokanson, & Can, 2017; Bart et al., 2017; JC Kaufman & Baer, 2006). Creativity is seen as multidimensional. As a construct of individual differences, some studies begin to assess creativity as a dependent variable (Batey, & Furnham, 2006).

Some researchers consider creativity as divergent thinking (DT) (Batey, 2006; Batey, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2010; Batey et al., 2010; Furnham & Bachtar, 2008) define creativity as divergent thinking (DT). While An et al. views DT as one model of creativity (An et al., 2016). When creativity is seen as DT it will positively correlate with fluid intelligence (gf) (Batey, Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2009; Furnham et al., 2008 in Batey, Furnham, et al., 2010).

However, Runco (Runco, 2008) considers that creativity is not the same as DT. DT does encourage the emergence of various original ideas. However, this is not enough for creativity.

Some researchers use the DT test to measure the level of creativity (Runco, 2010 in Jauk et al., 2014). They view creativity as a creative potential meaningful to the cognitive ability of individuals to produce something new and useful (Barron, 1955; Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Stein, 1953 in Jauk et al., 2014). Commonly, DT tests using are the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (Torrance, 1966 in Jauk et al., 2014), the Guilford tests (Wilson et al., 1953 in Jauk et al., 2014), or the Wallach and Kogan tests (Wallach & Kogan, 1965 in Jauk et al., 2014).

#### **2.1.2 Elements of Creativity**

Torrance (1988) mentions four elements of creativity, namely: (1) fluid structure, some interrelated ideas and meaningful responses. A high fluid structure is represented by more ideas appear related to the stimulus; (2) flexibility, showing some different ideas or responses. Someone who has a high degree of flexibility can see a problem from different ways; (3) originality, shown by some ideas rarely thought of by others, represents the explorative, constructive, and original thinking of the individual. People with a high degree of originality are able to produce high scores on problem solving; and (4) skills to incorporate, demonstrated by subject ability to combine some ideas to produce more interesting thing.

## **2.2 Batik**

### **2.2.1 Batik**

Batik has been recognized as cultural heritage of Indonesia. It is made by waxing technique on cloth (Doellah, 2003). Various batik motifs grow and develop in Indonesia. Based on the primary study of batik artists in Yogyakarta, found two types of batik artists based on the media used. First, batik batik on cloth. This type of batik we often encounter in everyday life. The production of this batik cloth can be made into clothes or left to batik cloth.

The second type of batik is batik painters. Batik painters are people who make batik on canvas. Although using the canvas as a medium, they still use canting and night. These two tools distinguish between batik painters and painters in general. The results of these batik paintings are mostly exhibited in the gallery.

Technically, batik is divided into two, by using canting and stamp or called cap. This research will be focused on batik by using canting. This process begins with making of the concept, create the patterns, waxing by canting, coloring, until boiling the cloth.

Based on the motif, batik divided into traditional and modern one. In traditional one, there is a standard pattern cannot be change by anyone. Motif utamanya diturunkan dari generasi ke generasi tanpa ada

perubahan. The main motive is passed down from generation to generation without any change. In the past, someone wanted to create a motive had to go through a very long process, like meditation. While in modern batik, a batik artist is more independent to determine the motives they want. In terms of coloring, modern batik uses a more diverse color.

### **3. METHOD**

A qualitative phenomenological was utilized to explore what the meaning of creativity on batik context based on their experience (Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., Larkin, M., 2010). It aims to understand the creativity on batik artist context.

#### **3.1 Participant**

Two participants were involved in this study with characteristics: batik artists (not only for commercial purposes), making batik, domiciled in Yogyakarta. The first subject (FE) is female batik artist only focusing on traditional batik. The second (MA) is male and more focusing on modern batik. The participant will be interviewed about their experience in batik and their thought about creativity in batik context. Participant received informed consent from the researcher before the interview.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

This study used a qualitative study by using in-depth interview. Multiple data collection techniques are used in this study, such as interview, direct observation, and document study.

Interviews were conducted once face to face. All participants will be interviewed about creativity based on Torrance Test of Creativity Test (Torrance, 1996), included four elements of creativity: fluid structure, flexibility, originality, and skills to incorporate.

#### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The interviews were held face to face and were recorded audio. The recordings were transcribed by researcher herself. Then, researcher asked participant to review the written transcript. After that, the researcher classifies the results of interviews into several categories, namely (1) creativity definition based on them, (2) fluency, (3) flexibility, (4) originality, (5) elaboration, and (6) process to be creative.

### **4. RESULT**

#### **4.1 Creative definition based on batik context**

Creativity can be seen from several aspect (1) desain, (2) colouring technique, (3) media they used. According to FE, creativity is the ability to putt of their ideas into a cloth while maintaining its prime motive. Though its main pattern is predetermined, creativity is needed to unite personal ideas into the patent motif, thus becoming a unified whole.

Meanwhile, according to MA, the creative batik is seen from itsdesign. This design comes from the artits's ideas. Batik design carrying a spesific theme can be regarded as a creative batik. For different shapes will be united and drawn on a sheet of cloth. High creativity is required to incorporate the various patterns into a beautiful unity.

The creativity of batik also can be seen in terms of coloring. Generally, batik uses two types of dye; natural and synthetic materials. Natural dye materials are fewer than synthetic ones. The color choices are limited. So, to produce a new color, a batik must be creative in mixing the natural materials. While in modern batik, batik can be more creative in producing new colors that they want. By using synthetic dyes, batik can produce more new colors for his work.

From the media ways, commonly batik is painted on cotton cloth. It is easier to absorb the color. However, the use of other media in batik is also permissible, for example silk or wood cloth. The use of batik media can affect the creativity of a batik artist. If using cotton cloth, they can more freely pour their creative ideas.

#### **4.2 How to get creativity?**

Both participants agree that creativity is something that can be learned. However, genetic factors also affect this ability. With practices, a batik artist can hone their creative skills. With this learning process, when looking at a stimulus on the fabric to be batik, they can respond more quickly. MA proves his statement by

training children and adolescents in batik. The learning process can help them in training their sensitivity, so as to be able to convert the ideas acquired into an image.

Meanwhile, according to FE, genetic factors cannot be ignored in this case. Batik born in batik family, generally able to produce batik better than those who do not have batik families. However, FE also acknowledged the possibility of children born from batik parents used to see batik activities early on, even some of them have learned to make batik since school age. Length of time acquainted with batik makes them easier in the birth of a batik design, execute on cloth, and more skilled in mixing colors.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

Creativity is needed by batik artist, both in traditional or modern ones. Generally, the concept of creativity by Torrance can encompass creativity in the batik context. Fluid structure in batik can be seen from the many ideas that can be produced batik artist in a time. Then combine those ideas into a harmonious unity. So, can produce a more interesting thing (skill to incorporate)

Flexibility refers to the artist's ability to see things from different way. In traditional batik, creativity is used to fulfill the standard pattern with stuffing picture / motif. Although it has the same prime pattern, it can produce some different batik images while maintaining its trademark.

The originality of batik artist ideas also determines their level of creativity. Creative batik artist have diverse ideas that are the result of their own thinking. This idea can be obtained from viewing objects directly in nature then modifying them into an image; through the process of contemplation into an interactive batik concept with the viewers.

Batik artist's freedom to express and put of their ideas influences the level of creativity. The more freely they put of the idea, the higher their level of creativity.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Based on the description, it can be concluded that: (1) creativity on batik context can be explained by creativity definition mentioned by Torrance, (2) creativity on batik is used in the concept, technique, and media, (3) creativity is a skill can be learned, (4) the freedom of batik artist to express their ideas may influences their level of creativity.

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