

WASTRA BATIK AS A FASHION INTEREST AMONG GENERATION Z IN THE COMMUNITY OF REMAJA NUSANTARA (2023)

Wastra Batik Sebagai Minat Fashion Generasi Z Pada Komunitas Remaja Nusantara (2023)

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Abstract

This research investigates the interest of Generation Z in batik textiles as a fashion element within the teenager Nusantara Community in Jakarta. Batik textiles are perceived not only as a fashion statement but also as a medium for expressing cultural identity. Generation Z, growing up in the digital era, integrates batik textiles with contemporary fashion trends. Each batik fabric possesses unique features and symbolism reflecting Indonesian culture. The teenager Nusantara Community, established in 2020, strives to preserve batik textiles through various activities and campaigns. The study employs an ethnographic approach, focusing on interactions within the community, revealing that Generation Z in Jakarta has a strong inclination towards batik textiles. The research aims to identify the aesthetic values driving their interest and to understand the effectiveness of the community's preservation campaigns. Findings indicate that Generation Z incorporates batik textiles into their fashion choices, influenced by both aesthetic appeal and cultural resonance. While the teenager Nusantara Community plays a role in this trend, a cultural understanding gap was identified that requires addressing. Overall, the research provides insights into the cultural fashion interests of Generation Z and the aspirations of the new generation towards cultural heritage.

Introduction

Fashion is the result of a cultural process that is influenced by the values, beliefs and norms of a particular society. The clothes we wear reflect aspects of culture, including social status, religious beliefs, gender identity and personal style. For example, in some cultures, the act of wearing clothes that are too revealing is considered to be against ethical norms, whereas in other cultures, it is considered normal and acceptable. In addition, fashion can also serve as a means of expression to portray one's individuality and creativity. Through the clothes one chooses, one can showcase their personal characteristics, interests and principles.

Indonesia is a country rich with diverse cultures. From Sabang to Merauke, many tribes are scattered. One of the cultural heritage that is in the fashion category and still exists today is 'wastra'. Wastra or what is known as 'kain' by definition according to the Indonesian Dictionary is "Traditional fabrics that have their own meanings and symbols that refer to the dimensions of color, size, and material, for example batik, weaving, songket and so on (Kustiyah, 2017)." Wastra is a fabric that is used as women's and men's clothing. According to Kemenparekraf (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy) Wastra will be the leading fashion trend in 2023 (Aninda & Sunarya, 2023). This is supported by the Chairman of Indonesia Fashion Chamber (IFC), Ali Charisma, who said that the cultural element in fashion will be bigger in 2023.

In recent years, there have been a number of wastra-using communities in Jakarta. With the spirit of introducing wastra to Generation Z. The first community is called Remaja Nusantara (established since 2020), initiated by Oi (30 years old) and Rifan Rahman (31 years old). Through

the online campaign #BerkainIndonesia & #BerkainGembira on their Instagram account @remajanusantara_ they have 38,000 followers and have 1,000 community members on their Discord platform.

The research (Yusuf & Jaelani, 2022) aims to promote and educate the public about Indonesia's traditional textiles, or 'wastra'. This initiative, known as the "Rasa Wastra Indonesia" Movement, was initiated by Monique Hardjoko, a sociopreneur in the cultural field. The movement involves various activities such as the creation of gathering spaces, learning spaces, creative exhibition spaces, and love spaces. These activities involve various groups, from activists and wastra lovers to observers. The movement targets various layers of society, especially Generation Z and Millennials, with the aim of making wastras trendy and appreciated, enjoyed and preserved by the younger generation (Putra, 2017).

The #Berkaingembira campaign in building Generation Z's awareness of cloth culture by Santiyuda et al. (2023) shows how in the era of globalization and digitalization, the flow of information is growing rapidly and widely, including the spread of foreign cultural products via social media. Generation Z, as the original digital generation, is massively exposed. The study aimed to evaluate how the #BerkainGembira campaign on social media can help introduce local culture, especially the culture of cloth, to Generation Z (Sokolova, 2023). The results showed that the #BerkainGembira campaign on social media can help introduce local culture, especially the culture of cloth. The results showed that #BerkainGembira succeeded in raising Generation Z's awareness of the berkain culture through the sharing of creative content and the use of popular hashtags on Instagram, TikTok, Youtube, and Discord (Claretta, 2024). The involvement of public figures and influencers also increased the campaign's appeal to Generation Z. The research hopes that this kind of campaign will continue to grow and include younger generations, such as Generation Alpha (Beda, 2022).

Based on previous research, the main difference is the subject and focus of the research conducted. Although all studies talk about traditional clothing, previous studies focused on different textiles and cultures. The research methods and approaches are also different, such as data analysis, discourse analysis, and descriptive approach.

This research begins with the assumption that, the lack of understanding and interest about the meaning and symbols in wastra among Generation Z in Jakarta can be caused by the lack of educational activities about wastra in the Remaja Nusantara community. Or vice versa, the lack of understanding about wastra comes from the lack of interest of Generation Z in Jakarta to learn about wastra and only concerned with the aesthetic aspect of wastra as an assessment bps (Jakarta & Statistik Transportasi, 2020).

In this study, we will conduct research on the wastra preservation campaign for Generation Z in Jakarta by Remaja Nusantara and its influence on the interest & knowledge of Indonesian wastra. The campaign carried out by the two communities, successfully moved Generation Z to mix and match wastra in their daily outfit (Amed et al., 2019). However, wastra is not just about colors, patterns or materials. Wastra has its own element of symbol & meaning in every strand. With the campaigns that have been run by both communities, is there an educational element to the wastras used? Harmonizing the aesthetic and meaning of a wastra is an important thing to do. In order to become a wastra activist who has an understanding of the identity of Indonesian clothing from within. The objectives of this research include identifying and analyzing the interest of wastra to Gen Z in terms of aesthetic value in fashion mix and match, understanding the perception and knowledge of Generation Z wastra activists in Jakarta about Indonesian wastra, and measuring the effectiveness of the Remaja Nusantara campaign in increasing Gen Z's understanding of wastra (Barnard, 2014).

Research Methods

The first research methodology used in this research is qualitative ethnographic research method (Moleong, 1989). Qualitative research is a descriptive research method in the form of written language from the subject to be observed. The qualitative approach is carried out to explain and

analyze a phenomenon that occurs to individuals and groups, social dynamics, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs.

The second research methodology that will be used is the Ethnographic method. This method is used in researching a culture and its people. It is closely related to human life and nature. The Ethnographic method is useful in knowing and understanding the essence and complexity of a culture.

The object of this research is the phenomenon of Generation Z's interest in Wastra Batik in Jakarta with the research subject is the Wastra Batik preservation community called Remaja Nusantara (Fauzi, 2022). The research location was conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia. The time of this research was conducted since July 2023. The data used in this research are primary data and secondary data. Primary data in order for the data obtained to be valid and complete, the researchers used the Community Manager who was also a respondent and Community Members as respondents. Secondary data consists of: books related to the writing of this research, scientific articles, dictionaries, journals, Instagram account observations and other supporting archives.

The technique of collecting the data needed in this study, researchers used interview techniques, in this technique researchers interviewed directly the community manager and also members of the community. In the interview process, researchers asked for information through direct dialogue with the community manager and members of the community to obtain valid data. The interview results were obtained through an online and offline interview process with informants from the Remaja Nusantara Community.

Results and Discussion

Results

Descriptively analyzed the results of primary and secondary data collection and conducted discussions on: identifying how Gen Z assesses the aesthetics of wastra in fashion. Secondly, researched the perception and knowledge of Gen Z in Jakarta about wastra as an element of culture and fashion (The Business of Fashion, 2022). Finally, measuring the effectiveness of the 'Remaja Nusantara' campaign in increasing Gen Z's understanding of wastra, with the aim of providing understanding for the preservation and promotion of this cultural heritage.

1. The Aesthetic Value of Wastra in Shaping the Interest of Generation Z in Jakarta

Generation Z in Jakarta shows a strong inclination towards aesthetic values in their fashion choices, including the use of wastra. The aesthetic aspects of wastra, such as patterns, colors and designs, play an important role in attracting them. The aesthetic richness of wastra not only reflects visual beauty, but also becomes a tool of self-expression and identity for this younger generation. This shows that wastra aesthetics are not just decoration, but also a means to convey personal and cultural messages.

The analysis shows that the youth tend to gravitate towards wastras that have modern and innovative designs, while still retaining traditional elements. This reflects their desire to stay connected to their cultural heritage while also adapting to contemporary lifestyles. Therefore, the aesthetic value of the wastra is key in shaping their interest in the wastra

2. Generation Z Jakarta's Understanding of Wastra Meanings and Symbols

Generation Z in Jakarta's understanding of the meaning and symbols in batik wastra varies. Some of them have in-depth knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of the wastra, especially those who are involved in the Remaja Nusantara community or who have a background in arts and culture education.

However, there are indications that others have limited basic understanding of the meaning and significance of the wastra. This may be due to the lack of easily accessible sources of information or the lack of in-depth educational content in digital media and community activities. This lack of information is an obstacle to a broader understanding of wastra, especially for those who are new to wastra or who are more concerned with the aesthetic aspect rather than the cultural value.

3. The Role of the Remaja Nusantara Campaign in Increasing Understanding of Wastra

The campaign conducted by the Remaja Nusantara community through offline events has great potential to increase Generation Z's understanding and awareness of wastra identity. Through these events, such as workshops, exhibitions, and Pesta Batik, participants are given the opportunity to learn directly from wastra experts and artists. This interaction allows them to deepen their knowledge of the wastra-making process, the meaning behind the motifs, and the importance of wastra preservation.

These campaigns also helped connect the traditional values of wastra with modern life, making it more relevant and appealing to Generation Z. This offline event became an important platform for Remaja Nusantara to educate and generate new interest in wastra, while preserving and appreciating Indonesia's cultural heritage.

4. Remaja Nusantara Community and Generation Z

This research reveals that the Remaja Nusantara community has played a key role in bridging the rich heritage of Indonesian wastras with the aspirations and values of Generation Z in Jakarta. Through innovation, digital engagement, and educational initiatives, they have successfully integrated batik wastra into the context of contemporary fashion, making it relevant and appealing to the younger generation. The community has become a symbol of the synergy between tradition and modernity, celebrating the beauty of wastra batik as part of a vibrant cultural heritage

5. Wastra Aesthetics and Generation Z Interest

Research shows that the aesthetic value of wastra plays an important role in attracting Generation Z in Jakarta. Wastra aesthetics, which include design, color, and pattern, are not only seen as visual elements, but also as a medium of self-expression and identity. Generation Z tends to gravitate towards wastras that combine traditional elements with a modern twist, reflecting their desire to connect with cultural heritage while living a contemporary lifestyle.

6. Understanding and Appreciation of Wastra as a Cultural and Fashion Element

Although there are variations in the level of knowledge and understanding of wastra among Generation Z, the campaigns and activities conducted by Remaja Nusantara have significantly contributed to raising their awareness and appreciation of wastra as an element of culture and fashion. The lack of in-depth information and education on the meaning and symbols of wastra is still a challenge that needs to be overcome to strengthen this understanding.

7. Effectiveness of the Remaja Nusantara Campaign

The offline campaigns and events organized by Remaja Nusantara have proven to be effective in increasing Generation Z's understanding and awareness of wastra. These activities provide opportunities for the younger generation to learn directly from experts, experience wastra in a broader context, and understand the importance of preserving this cultural heritage. These campaigns have also successfully demonstrated how wastra can be integrated into modern life, making it more than just an element of fashion, but also a symbol of cultural pride and identity.

Komunitas Remaja Nusantara has played an important role in maintaining the relevance of wastra batik in the modern era, especially for Generation Z in Jakarta. They have successfully attracted the younger generation through an approach that combines tradition and innovation, education and self-expression. While there is still room for improvement, especially in the aspect of in-depth education about wastra batik, Remaja Nusantara's efforts have been an important step in preserving and promoting Indonesia's cultural heritage in the eyes of the younger generation. This research shows the importance of a holistic approach in preserving cultural heritage, where the integration of education, self-expression, and adaptation to changing times is key to reaching and engaging Generation Z.

Conclusion

This research investigates how batik wastra, as an important element of Indonesian culture, has been accepted and adopted by Generation Z in Jakarta, with a particular focus on the role of the Remaja Nusantara community. The following are the detailed conclusions drawn from the analysis and findings of the research that has been conducted.

1. Generation Z's Interest in Batik Wastra

Generation Z in Jakarta has shown a growing interest in batik wastra. This interest is mainly triggered by the aesthetic appeal of the wastra, which includes design, pattern and color. However, beyond the aesthetic aspect, this interest is also deepened by an understanding of the historical and cultural value of batik wastra. Generation Z, as a group known for their individuality, uses batik wastra as a tool to express themselves and their cultural identity.

2. The role of the Remaja Nusantara Community

The Remaja Nusantara community has played an important role in popularizing batik wastra among Generation Z. Through various initiatives such as workshops, social media campaigns and cultural events, Remaja Nusantara has successfully integrated wastra batik into the modern lifestyle. They have changed the perception of wastra batik from a traditional element to a contemporary and relevant fashion symbol for Generation Z.

3. Nusantara Youth Education Method

Remaja Nusantara has used various educational methods to increase Generation Z's understanding of batik wastra. These include workshops on how to wear wastra, discussions on the history and cultural value of wastra, and engagement with wastra artists and experts. These methods have been effective in raising awareness and appreciation of batik wastra, although there is still room to improve more in-depth education on the symbolism and meaning behind batik wastra. The Importance of Combining Tradition and Modernity: Nusantara teenagers have shown the importance of combining the traditional elements of wastra batik with modern trends and lifestyles. This approach not only maintains the relevance of wastra batik for Generation Z, but also paves the way for innovation and new interpretations of wastra batik that suit the needs and tastes of the younger generation

4. Challenges and Opportunities

While the Remaja Nusantara community has been successful in many aspects, there are still challenges faced in their efforts to educate and attract Generation Z. These challenges include creating more in-depth educational content, reaching a wider audience from different socio-economic backgrounds, and sustaining long-term Generation Z engagement. These challenges include creating more in-depth educational content, reaching a wider audience from various socio-economic backgrounds, and sustaining Generation Z's engagement in the long run.

From the analysis and findings of this study, several suggestions can be made for Remaja Nusantara and other related parties:

1. Improved Educational Materials

Enriching educational materials with more in-depth information about the history, symbolism, and meaning behind batik wastra, so that Generation Z can appreciate not only the aesthetic aspects but also the deeper cultural values

2. More Inclusive Programs

Develop programs and activities that are accessible to various layers of Generation Z, especially those from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, to ensure that batik wastra can be enjoyed and appreciated by all.

3. Cooperation with Educational Institutions

Collaborate with educational institutions to integrate knowledge of batik wastra into school and university curricula, thus encouraging early understanding and appreciation of batik wastra.

4. Utilizing Digital Technology

Increase the use of digital platforms and social media to disseminate knowledge about batik wastra more widely and interactively, reaching Generation Z audiences who are active users of digital technology.

5. Innovation in Batik Wastra Design

Encourage innovation in batik wastra design that combines traditional elements with modern touches to appeal to a wider Generation Z, while maintaining its rich cultural values.

This research provides an in-depth look into how batik wastra can be adopted and maintained in the contemporary social and cultural context, especially among Generation Z in Jakarta. The

suggestions put forward are expected to help Remaja Nusantara and other relevant parties in their efforts to continue preserving and promoting wastra batik as a valuable and relevant cultural heritage for the younger generation.

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