

**Cultural Enchantment and Multicultural Innovation:
Empowering creativity and disability inclusion through *gulijat*
textiles in indonesia's creative industries**

**Encantamento Cultural e Inovação Multicultural:
Capacitando a criatividade e a inclusão da deficiência na indústria
criativa da indonésia por meio dos textéis *gulijat***

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ABSTRACT: *Gulijat* is a textile innovation rooted in Indonesia's cultural heritage, combining traditional folding and pinching techniques with contemporary artistic expression. It reflects Indonesia's multicultural landscape and serves as a medium for social empowerment. In collaboration with Tiara Handicraft, this research examines *Gulijat* as a strategy for product diversification and disability inclusion in Indonesia's creative industries. Tiara Handicraft began as an initiative to address employment barriers for individuals with disabilities and evolved into a cultural enterprise where artisans contribute to and shape Indonesia's textile arts. Many have established independent

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businesses while maintaining collaborations with Tiara Handicraft. The study adopts a qualitative approach, using ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews, and participatory design analysis at Tiara Handicraft in East Java (2022). Data collection includes firsthand engagement with artisans, documentation of the *Gulijat* production process, and analysis of workshop dynamics. The research explores artisans' creative decisions, social interactions, and the cultural significance of their craft. The study also examines how *Gulijat* textiles construct identity, foster artistic autonomy, and challenge traditional perceptions of disability in Indonesia's creative industries. Alfred Gell's technology of enchantment framework analyzes how *Gulijat*'s intricate techniques and symbolic motifs shape consumer perceptions, highlighting the link between material culture, craft, and social narratives. The findings reveal that artisans view *Gulijat* as a platform for artistic expression and social recognition, with consumers responding positively to its unique aesthetics and embedded cultural meanings. *Gulijat* fosters economic independence, preserves local craftsmanship, and amplifies the artistic voices of individuals with disabilities. Tiara Handicraft models disability empowerment within sustainable creative industry practices, demonstrating how cultural production merges tradition, innovation, and social inclusion.

KEYWORDS: *Gulijat*, Cultural Heritage, Disability Inclusion, Creative Industries, Multicultural Innovation, Textile Craftsmanship, Social Empowerment

RESUMO: *Gulijat* é uma inovação têxtil enraizada no patrimônio cultural da Indonésia, combinando técnicas tradicionais de dobradura e pinçamento com expressão artística contemporânea. Essa prática reflete o caráter multicultural do país e atua como um meio de empoderamento social. Em colaboração com a Tiara Handicraft, esta pesquisa examina *Gulijat* como uma estratégia para a diversificação de produtos e a inclusão de pessoas com deficiência na indústria criativa da Indonésia. Inicialmente concebida como uma iniciativa para combater barreiras no emprego de indivíduos com deficiência, a Tiara Handicraft evoluiu para uma organização cultural que empodera artesãos, permitindo-lhes contribuir ativamente para o cenário têxtil indonésio. Muitos desses artesãos estabeleceram seus próprios negócios, mantendo colaborações contínuas com a Tiara Handicraft. O estudo adota uma abordagem qualitativa, baseada em observação etnográfica, entrevistas em profundidade e análise de design participativo no espaço da Tiara Handicraft, localizado em Java Oriental (2022). A coleta de dados inclui imersão direta na produção artesanal, documentação detalhada do processo de confecção dos tecidos *Gulijat* e análise das dinâmicas ateliê-artesão. A pesquisa investiga as decisões criativas, interações sociais e a relevância cultural dos artesãos, além de examinar como os têxteis *Gulijat* constroem identidade, promovem autonomia artística e desafiam as percepções convencionais sobre deficiência na indústria criativa indonésia. A análise fundamenta-se na teoria do Encantamento Tecnológico de Alfred Gell, examinando como as técnicas complexas e os padrões simbólicos dos

tecidos Gulijat influenciam as percepções dos consumidores, articulando cultura material, artesanato e narrativas sociais. Os resultados revelam que os artesãos percebem Gulijat como uma plataforma de expressão artística e reconhecimento social, enquanto os consumidores respondem positivamente à sua estética inovadora e aos significados culturais que incorpora. Os tecidos Gulijat incentivam a independência econômica, preservam o artesanato tradicional e ampliam a presença artística de indivíduos com deficiência na indústria criativa. A Tiara Handicraft exemplifica um modelo de empoderamento sustentável, demonstrando como a produção cultural articula tradição, inovação e inclusão social, promovendo a diversidade cultural dentro da economia criativa global.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Gulijat, Patrimônio Cultural, Inclusão Da Deficiência, Indústrias Criativas, Inovação Multicultural, Artesanato Têxtil, Empoderamento Social

1. Introduction

The production of craft or handicrafts is a significant absorber of labor for developing countries, including Indonesia (Gandhiadi, 2019; Novani et al., 2015; Suryathi & Gede, 2018). With small initial capital, flexible working hours, the convenience of working from home, and the freedom to manage a business, the main attraction causes the number of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the handicraft sector to continue to grow. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many SMEs went out of business due to falling market demand (Agustina & Yosintha, 2021). Therefore, the government, through the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, has collaborated with the National Crafts Council (*Dewan Kerajinan Nasional or Dekranas*) to carry out various funding and coaching efforts to encourage the competitiveness of SMEs. On the other hand, the role of craft production in Indonesia in overall exports has been insignificant. Data from the Central Statistics Agency show that in 2018 Indonesia's exports were still dominated by products from natural resources such as oil and gas fuel, iron and steel, to wood pulp (Handoko et al., 2019). In order to maintain and improve SMEs, innovations are needed so that they can increase market interest again.

Gulijat cloth is a designation for cloth decorated with a combination of folding and pinching. *Gulijat* stands for Javanese Indonesian “*gulung-lipat-jumput-ikat*” (roll-fold-pinching-tie). This name and technique came about as an effort to develop “*jumput*” cloth, one of the traditional Javanese fabrics, combined with the Shibori technique from Japan, whose motifs are made of folds. “*Jumput*” is a pinching-tie-dye technique produced by pinch-tying tightly on several parts of the cloth using coins, marbles, balls, and others, or sewing several parts of the cloth to form a pattern, then dipping these parts in the clothes dye and untying the knots or stitches (Ratyaningrum & Muwardani, 2005). The motifs produced from this technique are different from *jumput* and shibori fabrics. Seeing the

motives generated by the *Gulijat* technique, an idea arose to collaborate with MSMEs as a product variety that can be produced.

Based on observations and interviews conducted on Monday, 11 April 2022, it is known that Tiara Handicraft used pinching-tie-dye as a product raw material but only to fulfill orders. Seeing the motifs produced from the *Gulijat* technique, an idea arose to use this cloth for various products that could be produced at Tiara Handicraft. *Gulijat* fabrics (the name for textile products from the *Gulijat* technique) will add to the diversity of textile materials used to manufacture products and add to the theme of the product series so that there is a differentiating value to be used as promotion for certain activities.

In addition, handicrafts, which are one of Indonesia's superior products, are produced by skilled and diligent hands that require concentration and peace of mind in the process, such as Titik Winarti, owner of Tiara Handicraft. Furthermore, when Tiara Handicraft was almost closed in 1999 when Indonesia was experiencing a financial crisis, a disabled person named Sardoyo, a friend of Titik Winarti, suggested that the business not be closed and continue working with the disability community. Furthermore, recruitment was carried out again until 2006 the number of employees had reached 63 people. Seeing the ongoing developments, the focus of “hire” has shifted to “empowering.” The products made at Tiara Handicraft use patchwork sewing, contrast sewing, embroidery, and embroidery techniques. Various cotton motifs include plaid, polka dots, *Batik* motifs, and flowers. Therefore, *Gulijat* cloth is also used as an empowerment activity for disabilities in Tiara Handicraft.

The phenomenon of disability inclusion in social work and creative industries highlights an urgent need for systemic change (Gur & Klein, 2024; Tören & Açı, 2024). People with disabilities often face discrimination, social stigma, and limited access to economic opportunities due to negative perceptions of the job market (Bruce Tsui & Tavitiyaman, 2024). Many industries hesitate to employ individuals with disabilities, citing misconceptions about productivity and capability (Bruce Tsui & Tavitiyaman, 2024). Such exclusion perpetuates cycles of poverty and dependency within disabled communities. Organizations like Tiara Handicraft play a pivotal role in breaking these barriers through inclusive work environments that recognize and cultivate the talents of people with disabilities.

Urgency arises in expanding this empowerment model within creative industries to promote economic independence and social inclusion for people with disabilities. Integrating disability focused social work with creative industries fosters individual growth, enhances cultural diversity, and enriches products like *Gulijat* textiles. Empowerment through creativity supports the development of disabled individuals as entrepreneurs, artisans, and agents of social change, addressing economic and social dimensions of disability inclusion.

2. Methods

This research applies a qualitative methodology centered on ethnographic engagement, cultural discourse analysis, and theoretical interpretation within the context of Tiara Handicraft (Mills, 2019). The study explores the social, cultural, and creative dimensions of *Gulijat* textiles, situating them within Indonesia's evolving multicultural craft landscape. The research moves beyond material transformation and focuses on artisanal agency, cultural identity, and creative autonomy in textile production.

Data collection is based on participant observation, in-depth interviews, and visual ethnography, allowing a comprehensive understanding of how artisans conceptualize, create, and attribute meaning to *Gulijat* textiles. Ethnographic fieldwork at Tiara Handicraft includes direct engagement with artisans, documentation of the textile-making process, and an analysis of workshop interactions. The interviews involve artisans, workshop facilitators, and cultural stakeholders, focusing on the narratives, techniques, and artistic philosophies of *Gulijat* textile production.

The theoretical framework is anchored in contemporary theories of cultural creativity, materiality, and social inclusion, emphasizing the intersection of craft, identity, and agency. Glăveanu's (2016) theory of distributed creativity provides a critical lens for examining how creativity in textile production emerges from social interactions, embodied practices, and shared cultural knowledge. This perspective challenges the traditional view of creativity as an individual act and highlights how collective experiences, historical traditions, and evolving cultural influences shape artisanal innovation.

In addition to cultural creativity, the study draws from Homi Bhabha's (1994) theory of hybridity, which explains how cultural practices—including textile-making—exist in a state of negotiation between tradition and contemporary transformation. *Gulijat* textiles embody hybrid cultural expressions, blending Javanese resist-dyeing traditions, contemporary aesthetic interpretations, and the unique artistic sensibilities of disabled artisans. This hybridity challenges rigid distinctions between traditional and modern craft, positioning *Gulijat* textiles as fluid cultural artifacts that reflect Indonesia's multicultural identities.

The concept of cultural materiality frames the analysis of *Gulijat* textiles as more than aesthetic objects (McDonnell, 2010), recognizing them as narrative-bearing artifacts that encode histories, identities, and social values. Material culture theory underscores how *Gulijat* textiles act as sites of meaning-making, where artisans engage with symbolism, emotional expression, and communal memory. The fabric's textural folds and dye-resist motifs are not merely decorative but serve as visual lexicons that communicate artisans' personal and collective experiences.

Technology of enchantment informs the study's examination of how *Gulijat* textiles captivate and influence consumer perceptions (Gell, 2006). The unpredictable yet harmonious patterns created


through the *Gulijat* technique evoke aesthetic fascination, sensory engagement, and cultural resonance. The study investigates how perceived beauty, authenticity, and artisanal labor shape consumer appreciation of *Gulijat*, reinforcing its status as a cultural commodity embedded with symbolic and economic value.





The data interpretation process involves thematic coding and narrative analysis, identifying patterns of meaning in artisans’ creative processes, consumer reception, and broader cultural implications. Field notes, interview transcripts, and visual documentation are analyzed through discourse analysis (de Bernardi, 2022), which examines how language, power, and representation shape perceptions of *Gulijat* textiles as both an artistic and social movement.

3. Result

Batik, a well-known work of art in Indonesia, is a long cloth adorned with various motifs and serves many purposes (Steelyana, 2012). It is not limited to being used solely as clothing. However, it has also become an iconic symbol of Indonesian culture, with *Batik* motifs now found in various applications, such as bus and book cover motifs. The use of *Batik* motifs in these diverse contexts is rooted in the aesthetic appeal and beauty of *Batik* motifs. The application of *Gulijat* fabric in the products produced at Tiara Handicraft begins with creating motifs using the *Gulijat* technique, which combines folding, tying, and knotting techniques. The *Gulijat*-patterned fabric is then used to create textile products, primarily wallets, and bags (Table 1).

Table 1. *Textile product designs using Gulijat fabric that have been developed*

Motif Name	Folding & Tying Techniques	Dyeing Process	Colors Used	Product Applications
	Diamond folds, back-and-forth pattern, edge tying	Dip-dyeing in 2 rounds	Red & Blue	Wallets, Bags
Bang Biru Kotak				

	Lengthwise & triangular folds, pleating at edges	Immersion dyeing in 2 rounds	Red & Blue	Wallets, Bags
Bang Biru Wajik				
	Lengthwise folds, small sections, clamped with popsicle sticks	Dipping technique	Red & Brown	Wallets, Bags
Bang Seling Moto Deron				
	Folded into fan shape, midpoint marking, tight tying	Dipping technique	Brown	Wallets, Bags
Segitiga Kipas				
	Medium folds, small triangle shapes, tight tying	Dipping technique	Brown	Wallets, Bags
Wajik Nastiti				
	Diamond-shaped folds with sharp ends, tight tying	Dipping technique	Green	Wallets, Bags
Junjung Drajat				
	Diamond folds, clamped with popsicle sticks, repeated pattern	Dipping technique	Green	Wallets, Bags
Ombak Sumilir				



Ceplok Merakati

Triangular folds,
clamped with sticks,
pleats at triangle tips

Dipping
technique

Brown

Wallets,
Bags



Wajik Biru

Square folds,
clamped at corners
with popsicle sticks

Dipping
technique

Blue

Wallets,
Bags

The art of creating *Batik* is widely accessible, allowing individuals to create these motifs freely. *Batik* competitions, *Batik* coloring competitions, and competitions to create *Batik* cloth are common, reflecting the popularity of *Batik* and its cultural significance. The intricate process of making *Batik* - particularly in the written or conventional *Batik* process, which utilizes the *Gulijat* technique- requires specialized skills to achieve optimal results in beauty and quality. The beauty of *Batik* motifs also holds potential for utilization in the creative economy (Mayangsari et al., 2015).

In the business realm, entrepreneurs must always consider profits and losses. Maintaining consumer confidence in the quality of products is crucial to ensure continued consumer loyalty and repeat purchases (Rahman & Gong, 2016). Tiara Handicraft, a production base for *Batik* products, has faced challenges in production. However, people with disabilities who are part of Tiara Handicraft demonstrate high diligence and care and are committed to producing high-quality products. Nevertheless, the need to constantly innovate with new products and materials to cater to market demands and trends remains.

The introduction of new products requires influential publication and promotion to generate awareness among the public. Therefore, well-prepared and strategic promotional tools are essential, as introducing new products requires concerted effort. Market education is also vital to educate consumers about the unique characteristics of the new products. The uniqueness of applying the *Gulijat* technique lies in the motifs resulting from combinations of jump technique, roll technique, and folding technique, combined with pinch-fold, jump-fold-bundle, jump-roll-bundle, or fold-rollbundle, along with one or more processes of coloring (Muhajir et al., 2020; Ratyaningrum et al., 2022; Ratyaningrum & Muwardani, 2005). Diversification, which involves offering various products, is a strategic approach to avoid over-reliance on a single product and to increase profitability while mitigating risks.

The *Gulijat* technique presents a unique opportunity for diversification and innovation in Indonesia's *Batik* industry. With its intricate technical processes and inherent enchantment, *Gulijat* has the potential to become a flagship product of Indonesia's creative industry. However, seizing this opportunity requires investment in product development, innovation, marketing, and support from various stakeholders. By leveraging the enchantment of *Gulijat* and exploring new markets and collaborations, the *Batik* industry in Indonesia can continue to thrive and contribute to the country's cultural heritage and economic growth. The resulting designs are then developed into functional products that are commonly used daily (Figure 1).

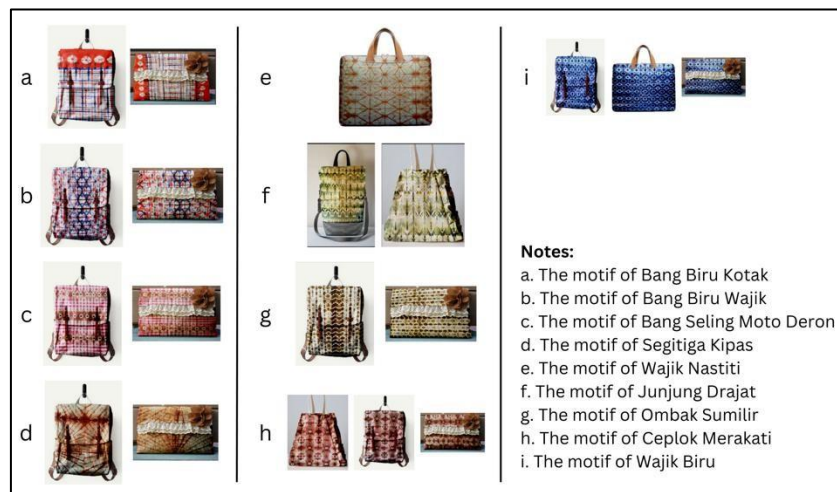


Figure 1. The development of *Gulijat* into functional products

Product diversification is evident in applying the *Gulijat* motif technique as a strategy by Tiara Handicraft to expand its product offerings and introduce distinct characteristics compared to its previous products. This strategy aims to cater to different customers' needs and preferences.

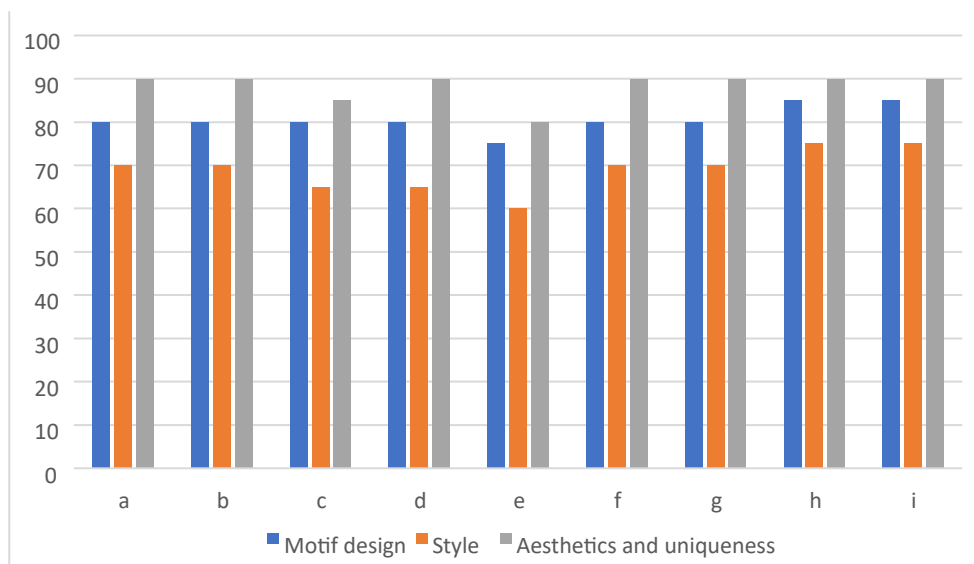


Figure 2. Graphic of consumer interest in *Gulijat* products (Survey given to 100 respondents from Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia)

Consumer perception of product attractiveness is highlighted through the statement's mention that consumers agree that *Gulijat* has attractive motif variations (Figure 2). This emphasizes the importance of subjective evaluation of product attributes, such as design, style, and aesthetics, in influencing consumer behavior and purchase decisions (Figure 2). Innovation in textile technique is also a relevant perspective, as the statement mentions that consumers agree that *Gulijat* can be a new model for textile innovation. This suggests that the *Gulijat* motif technique is innovative in textile production, offering unique features that differentiate it from traditional techniques.

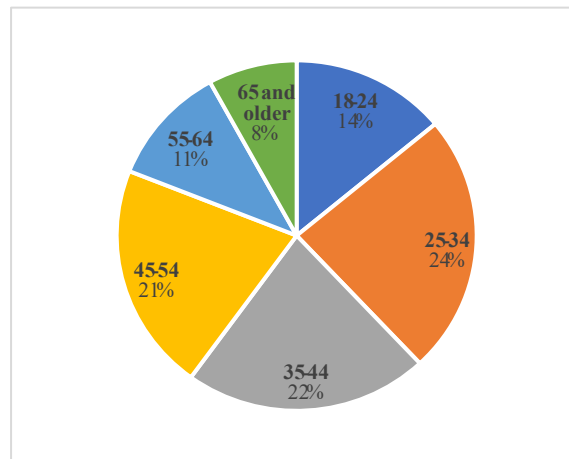


Figure 3. Graph of perceptions between motifs and *Gulijat* products on consumer age segmentation (Survey given to 100 respondents from Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia)

The statement emphasizes the importance of consumer segmentation, consumers feel that *Gulijat* needs to target young consumers' preferences for product innovation (Figure 3). This suggests that understanding and catering to the preferences and needs of specific consumer segments, in this case, young consumers is essential in product development efforts. The theoretical perspective underlying the statement incorporates concepts of product diversification, consumer perception of product attractiveness, innovation in textile technique, and consumer segmentation, which collectively contribute to understanding Tiara Handicraft's efforts in introducing the *Gulijat* motif technique as a new product diversification strategy.

4. Discussion

Over the years, *Batik* production in Indonesia has faced various challenges due to the changing cultural and local societal landscape influenced by global trends (Maryunani, 2019; Novani et al., 2015; Wahono & Hara, 2019). Nevertheless, textile production did not decline suddenly due to rapid industrialization, or the late arrival of deindustrialization caused by mechanized job concentration. The spinning of yarn with wheels and cotton disappeared relatively quickly. At the same time, weaving survived longer by utilizing imported European yarns, where textile production for the local market disappeared in the early 20th century and continued on a small scale in certain regions

(Hoogenboom et al., 2010). One of the threats to local *Batik* artisans also comes from the influx of *Batik Cap* textiles into the domestic market. *Batik Cap* also known as stamped *Batik*, is a method of creating batik patterns using a stamp (*in Indonesian: cap*) to apply wax resist onto fabric (Ratyaningrum & Muwardani, 2005). *Batik Cap* textiles are cheaper and have caused a gradual decline in demand for local *Batik* yearly.

If we look back several decades, the textile industry in Indonesia began to attract Chinese entrepreneurs, and in 1936 the first factory was established, followed by other factories in the following years. The entry of China into this business shifted production from rural to urban areas and from household factories to more giant factories (Weeren-Griek, 1949). Therefore, when positioning the current *Batik* industry, product development becomes necessary to anticipate the decline in *Batik* activities due to various factors. Apart from the shift from handwritten to stamped *Batik* and the emergence of *Batik* printing, the rapid decline in textile production activities is due to the failure of the government to provide protection and assistance to small-scale businesses. When the production center has shifted to modernized and export-quality concentrated industries, there is still a tiny space for traditional textiles in the domestic market. Although the traditional textile market only survives on a small scale in certain regions, the textile industry, especially *Batik*, can survive amid modernization due to its quality human resources and support from the tourism sector (Hochstrasser, 2011; Novani et al., 2015). Therefore, business owners should seize this opportunity by developing various attractive and diversified textile products. Like the Central Java Textile Association (API) that aims to make Yogyakarta the center of national creative textile innovation, the *Gulijat* technique and fabric can become a new flagship product of Indonesia's textile industry.

The competition in the *Batik* market in Indonesia has become more interesting with the implementation of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) in 2007 (Novani et al., 2015). A comparative study on the impact of ACFTA revealed that the average import value reached 10 million USD per year before the policy was implemented. After implementation, the import value increased dramatically to 30 million USD in 2013 due to reduced import duties. Indirectly, this has stimulated the development of artisans in the *Batik* industry who are elaborating on the technological issues of *Batik* production. *Gulijat* act as an innovative *Batik* technique providing a unique and unparalleled impression. Therefore, *Gulijat* is trying to position itself as a diversified textile product in Indonesia's creative industry through Tiara Handicraft as its agent.

Enchantment, according to Alfred Gell (2006), lies in the technical procedures that are objectively expressed through the technology of enchantment in the context of *Gulijat* made by people with disabilities at Tiara Handicraft. Through the expert workmanship of artists with disabilities, these technological processes create a source of mesmerizing appeal or enchantment, as is particularly obvious in *Gulijat*. To put it another way, the magic of *Gulijat* is found in the fine, complex, and

significant technical details made by people who, in spite of their physical constraints, create works of art with outstanding aesthetic value. *Gulijat* demonstrates a deeper kind of enchantment in addition to its aesthetic beauty, supporting Gell's theory that enchantment is intrinsic to all technical practices, even those created by those with impairments. Similar to Gell's explanation of batik, *Gulijat* is a prime example of how intricate technical procedures may combine attractive artistic expressions with social realities.

The intersection of disability and social work within Indonesia's creative industries reveals multi-layered dynamics rooted in cultural traditions, socio-economic structures, and evolving concepts of inclusion (Sampurno, 2023; Sampurno et al., 2024). Tiara Handicraft's journey with *Gulijat* textile production exemplifies how creative enterprises can become transformative spaces for marginalized communities, particularly for people with disabilities. The shift from traditional employment models to empowerment-focused frameworks reflects broader changes in how disability is understood in both global and Indonesian contexts. In Indonesia, societal perceptions of disability have historically been influenced by cultural norms, religious beliefs, and social stigmas. Disability was often viewed through a lens of pity or dependency, with limited recognition of the potential contributions that individuals with disabilities could make to society (Combs et al., 2025). This perspective aligns with charity model of disability, where people with disabilities are seen as passive recipients of aid rather than active participants in social and economic life (Nóra Menich & Tausz, 2024). Tiara Handicraft's evolution disrupts this narrative from being established initially to "employing" individuals with disabilities who faced systemic exclusion from mainstream industries. Tiara Handicraft transitioned toward an empowerment model that fosters entrepreneurship, selfreliance, and agency.

Disability arises from societal barriers rather than individual impairments, which, in Tiara Handicraft's context, barriers include physical inaccessibility, deep-rooted cultural stigmas, and economic structures that limit opportunities. It makes artisans involved no longer defined by their disabilities but recognized for their skills, creativity, and cultural contributions. In the broader landscape of Indonesian social work, this transformation signals a shift from protective and rehabilitative approaches to those emphasizing self-determination, capacity building, and social participation (Anderson et al., 2024; Levy et al., 2025). Historically, Indonesian social work focused on providing support services aimed at "helping" individuals with disabilities adapt to society. However, emerging practices advocate for inclusive models that position individuals with disabilities as active agents of change and the importance of enabling environments where marginalized groups can define their roles and identities on their terms (Kulbok-Lattik et al., 2024).

Cultural citizenship in the practice of *Gulijat* refers to the right to participate in creating and expressing cultural identities within a society (Hadley et al., 2024; Pfeifere, 2022). Through *Gulijat*,

artisans with disabilities claim their space in Indonesia's cultural landscape. Their artistic expressions reflect personal narratives, community histories, and national identities, challenging the dominant cultural narratives that often exclude disabled voices. This participation goes beyond economic inclusion; it reshapes how society views disability, shifting from narratives of deficit to ones of creativity, resilience, and contribution (Chang et al., 2024; Jiang, 2024). Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage plays a significant role in shaping these dynamics. Traditional Indonesian textiles—such as *Batik*—carry deep cultural significance, often associated with regional identities, spiritual beliefs, and social status (Jayawinangun et al., 2024). *Gulijat* emerges as a contemporary interpretation of these traditions, blending local craftsmanship with global influences. The fact that artisans with disabilities are at the forefront of this innovation challenges the assumption that traditional cultural practices are static or exclusive. Instead, *Gulijat* illustrates how culture can be dynamic, inclusive, and transformative, reflecting the diversity of those who create it.

The role of social work in this context extends beyond traditional boundaries. Social workers involved with Tiara Handicraft do not merely provide support services; they engage in capacity building, advocacy, and organizational development, especially in emphasizing collaborative partnerships between researchers, practitioners, and community members. At Tiara Handicraft, these principles manifest in practices that involve artisans with disabilities in business planning, product design, and strategic decision-making, ensuring that their voices are integral to the enterprise's direction. Integrating social work within creative industries reflects a broader trend toward recognizing social enterprises as vehicles for inclusive development (Tören & Açı, 2024).

Social enterprises like Tiara Handicraft do not measure success solely in financial terms. Their impact is also evaluated based on social outcomes, such as increased economic independence for marginalized groups, shifts in public attitudes toward disability, the promotion of cultural diversity, a symbol of empowerment, resilience, and cultural pride. Current theoretical discussions frequently depict the creative industry as a means to promote social inclusion, cultural diversity, and sustainable economic development (Dong Lin & Campbell, 2024; Hadley et al., 2024; Salas et al., 2021; Samuel R. C. Arnold Aishani Desai & Trollor, 2024; Wall-Andrews & Luka, 2022). We insufficiently examine and represent the practical implementation and real-world implications of these theoretical aspirations, especially regarding the inclusion of disabled populations.

Gulijat textiles exemplify a significant case study that goes beyond product design innovation, illustrating the active contributions of disabled artisans to cultural narratives, the challenge of stereotypes, and the enhancement of aesthetic and symbolic aspects of creativity. The *Gulijat* initiative demonstrates that individuals with disabilities can serve as central agents of creativity and innovation, thereby challenging existing paradigms and reshaping theoretical assumptions regarding disability's role in the creative economy. This initiative provides essential insights into the dynamic intersections

of empowerment, identity formation, and socioeconomic inclusion within the creative industry, thereby enhancing current academic discussions.

5. Conclusion

The evolution of *Batik* in Indonesia reflects a rich tapestry of cultural heritage interwoven with globalization, economic transformation, and social change. Renowned for its intricate motifs and profound symbolic value, *Batik* transcends traditional boundaries, finding expression in diverse contemporary applications. Its aesthetic appeal and cultural resonance have facilitated widespread adoption beyond conventional textiles, signifying Indonesia's identity on a global scale. Within this broader cultural framework, the *Gulijat* technique emerges as a distinctive innovation, combining traditional *Batik* artistry with experimental methods involving folding, tying, and dyeing. These processes result in unique, vibrant patterns that embody both creative expression and technical mastery.

Tiara Handicraft is pivotal in advancing *Gulijat* as an innovative textile product while navigating complex challenges within the *Batik* industry. Market competition, globalization, and shifts in industrial practices have necessitated adaptive strategies to sustain cultural enterprises. The diversification of *Gulijat* products, including wallets, bags, and other functional textiles, reflects a strategic response to evolving consumer demands. This approach integrates cultural preservation with contemporary market trends, ensuring relevance in domestic and international markets.

The involvement of artisans with disabilities in *Gulijat* production signifies a transformative shift in Indonesia's creative industries. Moving beyond traditional employment models, Tiara Handicraft fosters an empowerment-based framework emphasizing agency, creativity, and inclusion. Artisans are recognized as skilled contributors to Indonesia's cultural heritage, challenging conventional perceptions of disability and redefining narratives rooted in dependency or social marginalization. This inclusive model embodies principles of cultural citizenship, where individuals actively participate in shaping collective cultural identities and narratives.

Social work principles are embedded within Tiara Handicraft's operational framework, extending beyond conventional support services to encompass capacity building, advocacy, and participatory decision-making. Artisans engage in business planning, product development, and strategic initiatives, reinforcing their role as active agents in the enterprise's growth. This integration of social and economic objectives positions Tiara Handicraft as a model for inclusive development, where cultural production serves artistic and transformative social functions.

Economic dynamics, particularly implementing the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), have intensified competition within Indonesia's *Batik* market. The influx of mass-produced textiles has posed significant challenges to traditional artisans. However, these conditions have also created

opportunities for differentiation through product innovation and cultural branding. *Gulijat's* distinctive characteristics, derived from meticulous craftsmanship and unique design techniques, offer a competitive advantage. Aligning with global trends that value authenticity and ethical production, *Gulijat* products resonate with diverse consumer segments seeking meaningful cultural artifacts.

Strategic marketing and consumer education are critical in enhancing *Gulijat's* market presence. Collaborative ventures with fashion designers, interior decorators, and tourism sectors can create new avenues for cultural expression and economic growth. These partnerships facilitate the integration of traditional artistry into contemporary lifestyles, expanding the reach and impact of Indonesian textile heritage. Persistent systemic barriers continue to affect individuals with disabilities in Indonesia, including limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Tiara Handicraft's inclusive practices address these disparities, offering a model of how creative industries can foster empowerment and social participation. The enterprise demonstrates that cultural production can function as a transformative space, promoting self-reliance and challenging societal stigmas associated with disability. *Gulijat's* development reflects the dynamic interplay between cultural heritage, social inclusion, and economic innovation. The technique represents a fusion of traditional craftsmanship and contemporary creativity, highlighting the potential of Indonesia's *Batik* industry to adapt and thrive amid changing global landscapes. Investment in product diversification, inclusive business practices, and strategic collaborations remain essential for sustaining this growth.

This study is significant as it demonstrates how disability-inclusive practices can alter conventional perceptions of innovation within the creative industries. This situates *Gulijat* textiles within broader theoretical discussions regarding inclusive creativity and economic empowerment. The *Gulijat* textile project illustrates that disability is not merely a charitable concern but can serve as a catalyst for innovation, authenticity, and competitive differentiation in creative markets. Artisans with disabilities contribute unique expressions of creativity, shaped by their lived experiences, resilience, and adaptability, to *Gulijat* textiles. This infusion enhances the cultural and aesthetic value of the textiles, enriching product diversity and consumer engagement. The positioning of *Gulijat* textiles as creative products and culturally and ethically significant artifacts aligns with current discussions on sustainable development, ethical consumption, and socially responsible business practices.

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