

**How to Cite (APA Style):**

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/e.10.2.708-723>

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## Strengthening the work ethic of business actors in the Girilayu Batik industry

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Received:  
12 June 2025

Revised:  
28 August 2025

Accepted:  
28 August 2025

Published:  
31 August 2025

**Abstract**

*The batik industry, as part of Indonesia's creative economy and cultural heritage, faces challenges in maintaining competitiveness while preserving traditional values. This study aims to examine the work ethic patterns of batik entrepreneurs in Girilayu Village, Matesih District, Karanganyar Regency, and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors in strengthening them. A qualitative approach was employed through in-depth interviews, observations, and Focus Group Discussions with members of the Batik Giriarum association. The findings show that the work ethic of Girilayu batik makers is marked by flexible time management, independence, and economic motivation based on direct needs. The diffusion of productive values occurs through social agents such as group leaders and senior artisans. Supporting factors include collective culture, personal responsibility, and community support, while the absence of structured time management, incentive systems, and training serves as an inhibiting factor. Using Rogers' innovation diffusion theory, the study concludes that strengthening the community-based work ethic is crucial for sustaining local creative industries.*

**Keywords:** Batik Girilayu; creative economy; cultural heritage; Innovation Diffusion theory; work ethic

**INTRODUCTION**

The batik industry is one of the creative economy sectors that has high cultural, historical, and economic value in Indonesia. Batik is a cultural heritage of the Indonesian nation that has high philosophical, aesthetic, and historical value. This art not only reflects the richness of local culture but is also a symbol of national identity that has been recognized globally. The recognition of batik as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2009 further emphasizes the strategic position of batik in shaping the image of Indonesian culture in the eyes of the world. Based on data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022), the fashion sector including batik contributes around 17.7% of the total contribution of the national creative economy, making it one of the largest contributors after culinary. Therefore, the sustainability of the batik industry

does not solely depend on cultural recognition and market demand, but also on the commitment, discipline, creativity, and adaptability of its artisans and entrepreneurs (Setyawati & Indriyani, 2020). A strong work ethic will encourage innovation in product development, consistency in maintaining quality, and resilience in facing global competition. This condition is particularly important in specific batik production centers, where the preservation of tradition must go hand in hand with the ability to compete in a modern market.

One of the areas as a center for batik production is Batik Girilayu, which is located in Girilayu Village, Matesih District, Karanganyar Regency, Central Java. Batik Girilayu has distinctive patterns that depict Girilayu, including duku, mangosteen, and durian motifs which are natural products of Girilayu. Batik Girilayu, as a cultural heritage rich in aesthetic and historical value, faces significant challenges in increasing its competitiveness in the global market. Although the contribution of the batik craft sector to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) of Central Java reached 5.3% in 2021, only around 30% of batik entrepreneurs utilize digital marketing(Limano, 2021).

This condition shows a striking gap between the potential of Batik Girilayu and the low utilization of digital technology(Putri, M. A., & Santoso, 202 C.E.). An initial survey showed that 70% of Batik Girilayu craftsmen had not mastered the digital platform, and 65% of businesses still depended on the local market (Hidayatullah, 2021).In addition to external challenges in the form of low utilization of digital technology, the Girilayu batik industry also faces internal challenges, namely a weak work ethic. In the context of the creative industry, a strong work ethic is the main thing to encourage business sustainability and growth. A positive work ethic is reflected in an attitude of discipline, hard work, responsibility, and openness to innovation(Pranata, Y., & Utami, 2020).

The batik industry in Girilayu is not only part of the local cultural identity, but also the main source of livelihood for most of its people. The weak work ethic has an impact on low productivity, lack of innovation, and slow adaptation to market developments, thus worsening competitiveness amidst the tight competition in the creative industry(Alzyoud, 2018). Therefore, efforts are needed to strengthen the work ethic to encourage the sustainability of the Girilayu batik industry. A positive work ethic is reflected in an attitude of discipline, hard work, responsibility, and openness to change. In the batik industry, a strong work ethic is very important to encourage product quality, production continuity, and the ability to compete in the market(Sholihin, T. A., Fazriyani, F., Fadhilah, A. R. N., & Firdaus, 2024). However, Girilayu batik entrepreneurs have a more flexible work ethic where there is no fixed schedule for each activity and the implementation time is uncertain. Although being a batik maker is said to be the main job, in the process of making batik itself, mothers in Girilayu make batik after finishing their housework. So there are no regular working hours like jobs in the industry in general. Therefore, this study uses the theoretical framework of diffusion of innovation by Everett M. Rogers (Rogers, E. M., & Shoemaker, 1981)to understand the acceleration of the process of changing the work behavior of Girilayu batik industry business actors.

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Diffusion of innovation is fundamentally a key element in the process of community development. (Rogers, 2003) stated that diffusion is an integral part of the process of social change. Social change itself is defined as a dynamic that involves shifts in the structure and function of a social system (Soekanto, 2006). This change process takes place through three main stages, namely discovery, diffusion, and consequences. The discovery stage refers to the emergence of ideas, practices, or objects that are considered new by certain individuals or social units. The diffusion stage is the process of spreading new ideas or concepts to members of a social system. Meanwhile, the consequence stage reflects the impact or changes that occur in the social system as a result of the acceptance or rejection of the innovation. Changes can come from within the group (internal) or from outside (external), which can occur either unintentionally or as a result of interventions designed by external change agents. In this context, strengthening work ethics can be seen as a social innovation whose spread is greatly influenced by the role of key individuals or groups, communication media, and the socio-cultural environment (Miranda, M., Pereda, M., Sánchez, A., & Estrada, 2024)

Given the importance of the role of work ethic in supporting the sustainability of the batik industry, it is important to know the character of the work ethic possessed by batik craftsmen in Girilayu. This study aims to describe and understand the forms of work ethic that have developed among Girilayu batik entrepreneurs, as well as the factors that influence them. To help analyze how these work values spread and persist in the batik community environment, this study uses the theory of diffusion of innovation from Everett M. Rogers as a conceptual framework. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide an empirical picture of the internal dynamics of Girilayu batik SMEs in maintaining and implementing their work ethic.

**Review of literature**

Work Ethics and Strategic Development of Batik Pekalongan Indonesia from Islamic Business Perspective (Masrur, M., & Arwani, 2020). This study aims to examine the work ethic and business development strategies of batik entrepreneurs in Pekalongan from the perspective of Islamic business ethics. Using a qualitative approach through observation, interviews, and documentation, it was found that batik entrepreneurs run their businesses with a high Islamic work ethic, such as honesty, discipline, consistency, responsibility, and a spirit of innovation. Business development strategies include product innovation, digital-based marketing, strengthening friendship networks, and independent management of human resources and capital. Although the majority of strategies are in line with sharia principles, there are still challenges such as the use of interest-bearing loans from conventional banks and a lack of awareness of environmentally friendly waste management. These findings indicate the importance of integrating Islamic values in developing sustainable and ethical batik businesses. Research conducted by Muhamad Masrur and Agus Arwani (2020) regarding the work ethic and development strategies of Pekalongan batik entrepreneurs from the perspective of Islamic business ethics has strong relevance to this study. The study shows that the success of batik entrepreneurs is greatly influenced by the application

of an Islamic work ethic such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, consistency, and a spirit of innovation. This finding is in line with the focus of the research on strengthening the work ethic of batik entrepreneurs in Girilayu, who also face challenges in maintaining their existence amidst competition and dynamics of the local creative industry. Thus, the journal becomes an important reference in studying the values of work ethic that can be strengthened and developed to increase the competitiveness and sustainability of the Girilayu batik business.

The effect of work ethic on productive behavior of footwear craftsmen in Bogor Regency (Usman, A., Wahyuni, D., & Arief, 2020). The study entitled the effect of work ethic on productive behavior of footwear craftsmen in Bogor Regency (2020) by Usman et al in the journal *Dinamika Pembuatan dan Batik*, Vol 38, No 1, Page 65-78. This study aims to determine the effect of work ethic on the productive behavior of footwear craftsmen in Bogor Regency. The type of research used is quantitative with a research sample of 316 footwear craftsmen taken from 3 sub-districts in Bogor Regency. Data analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using LISREL. The results of the study stated that Work Ethic influences the productive behavior of footwear craftsmen in Bogor Regency with a contribution of work ethic to productive behavior of 27%, with the rest being influenced by other factors such as motivation, job satisfaction, etc. The relevance of Usman *et al's* research (2020) to the study of Strengthening the Work Ethic of Girilayu Batik Industry Business Actors is related to the influence of work ethic on the productive behavior of business actors.

Community Empowerment and Innovation as a Strategic Business Resilience Effort for Batik and Weaving Business Actors (Kusnanto, A., Runturambi, A. J. S., & Rofii, 2024). Research entitled Community Empowerment and Innovation as a Strategic Business Resilience Effort for Batik and Weaving Business Actors (2024) by Kusnanto *et al* in the *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, Vol 12, No 2. Page 01-49. This study aims to analyze the factors that influence the economic resilience of the batik and weaving industry in Indonesia, with a focus on MSMEs in Pekalongan, Yogyakarta, and Sengkang (South Sulawesi). This study uses the theory of National Resilience and Resource-Based View (RBV) and descriptive qualitative research with data collection techniques using observation, interviews and documentation. The results of the study stated that batik and weaving business actors highly value competitor analysis and the adoption of best practices in competition. Government support through community empowerment programs has proven to be important for the growth of this industry, by providing training, education, and market expansion. Effective collaboration between the government, business actors, and stakeholders is key to creating a supportive business environment, so as to encourage the development of the batik and weaving sector and improve overall welfare. The relevance of Kusnanto *et al's* (2024) research to the study of Strengthening the Work Ethic of Girilayu Batik Industry Business Actors is related to collaboration between business actors, government and stakeholders to encourage the development of the batik sector and improve the welfare of business actors.

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**METHOD**

This study used qualitative research, which was described as a methodological approach employed to understand social phenomena in depth by collecting descriptive data such as interviews, observations, and textual analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This methodology was applied to investigate the work ethic of Girilayu batik industry business actors. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including the head of the association, the secretary of the association, and batik artisans. Rich qualitative data were collected to understand efforts, knowledge transfer, and interactions in cultural preservation (Moleong, 2017). Qualitative research offered insight into the complexity of cultural sustainability efforts, exploring diverse perspectives and experiences (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This approach aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the work ethic of Girilayu batik industry business actors.

**Respondents**

The informants in this study consisted of two main groups, namely the core administrators of the association who were tasked with coordinating all types of activities of business actors. On the other hand, several business actors also acted as resource persons, especially from members of the association. It is hoped that participants can provide information and perceptions regarding the work ethic of batik industry business actors. The involvement of these two groups is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the work ethic of girilayu batik industry business actors.

**Procedures**

The main methods used in data collection were Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews with participants selected through purposive sampling. By using purposive sampling, the selected participants were expected to have relevant knowledge and experience related to the research topic, thereby enriching the depth and breadth of the data collected (Nehe, Satyawati, & Dwikurnaningsih, 2024). The interviews were conducted face-to-face at the Rumah Batik Giriarum showroom.

**Data analysis**

The data collected from the series of interviews were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative analysis method. This approach involved a detailed description of the strengthening of the work ethic of batik craftsmen in Girilayu. The analysis process involved the interpretation of the collected data using Everett M. Rogers' Innovation Diffusion Theory framework. The selection of this theory was intended for the process in which an innovation was communicated through certain channels at a certain time among members of a social system, with four main components: innovation, communication channels, time, and social systems. Thus, this analysis was expected to produce a deep understanding of the four main components that influenced the work ethic of batik industry business actors.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION****Overview of Girilayu Batik Business Actors**



Batik Girilayu is one of the batik industry centers located in Girilayu Village, Matesih District, Karanganyar Regency. This village is known to have a long history in preserving batik as a cultural heritage, which is passed down from generation to generation. In Girilayu Village, batik making activities have become part of the daily lives of the community, especially women. This batik center is part of an association called Batik Giriarum, which is a forum for coordination, training, marketing, and economic empowerment for local batik makers. This association oversees at least 12 batik groups, the majority of whose members are housewives who already have batik skills.

The existence of the Batik Giriarum association provides an organizational structure that supports the sustainability of the local batik industry. This association acts as a liaison between batik entrepreneurs and the local government, training institutions, and the wider market. In addition, the association is also active in holding technical training on batik, the use of natural dyes, motif development, and small business management. In their production activities, most batik makers in Girilayu still apply a home industry system. This means that batik making activities are carried out flexibly in their respective homes, allowing batik makers to adjust their work with other domestic activities. This system supports the sustainability of informal production, but also has its own challenges in terms of consistency of quality and speed of production.

Distribution of batik products from Girilayu covers local and national markets, with the main segments being hand-drawn batik cloth, combination of stamped-hand-drawn batik cloth, to finished products such as shirts, dresses, and batik accessories. However, most batik makers still sell their products through conventional mechanisms such as exhibitions, local galleries, and individual orders, with limited use of digital technology. This condition shows that batik entrepreneurs in Girilayu are a community that has great potential in developing a creative economy based on local culture. They work in a collaborative pattern through batik groups and associations, but still face challenges in terms of production management, modern marketing, and regeneration of young workers. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of business actors through training, mentoring, and development of business ecosystems is very important in maintaining the sustainability of the Girilayu batik industry amidst the flow of modernization.

### **Work Ethic Pattern of Girilayu Batik Business Actors**

Unlike the formal industrial work system that applies fixed working hours, batik makers in Girilayu work with a rhythm and schedule that is adjusted to the conditions of each individual or family. Based on the interview results, the batik mothers in Girilayu Village have a flexible work ethic pattern. This flexibility arises because most batik activities are carried out at home and are carried out as part of domestic daily activities. Batik activities after completing household chores, such as cooking, cleaning the house, or taking care of children. Therefore, the start time and duration of work are very dependent on personal activities. There are batik makers who start working in the morning, there are also those who only start batik in the afternoon, evening, or even until the evening. The statement from one of the informants:

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*"The mothers here do nyanting or batik after they finish their housework, basically when they are done taking care of the house, they do batik with a canting, sometimes they do batik even when they are going to sleep" (Mrs. Wiyanti, Batik Craftsman)"*

In addition to time flexibility, the work pattern of Girilayu batik makers is also characterized by a tendency to make stock of batik cloth in advance before there is an order from a buyer. This strategy is carried out as a form of anticipation of fluctuations in market demand and to maintain product availability if at any time a buyer comes directly to the Rumah Batik Giriarum Showroom or the gallery of the batik group. In practice, batik makers prefer to complete several pieces of batik cloth as stock rather than waiting for an order first before starting to make batik.

However, this does not mean that the batik makers reject the order system. If some buyers or partners order batik with certain motifs or colors, they will still work on it according to request. This means that even though they tend to work based on stock, their work patterns remain responsive to consumer needs. The following are statements from informants:

*"Usually we stock up first, miss, so we don't have to wait until there is an order to make batik, but if there is an order, we will accept the order and work on the order first" (Mrs. Yuli, Batik Craftsman of the Wahyu Asih Group)*

This approach is considered more flexible and profitable because they can remain productive without the pressure of certain targets, but remain open to commercial opportunities from outside. This pattern shows how Girilayu batik entrepreneurs strive to maintain production continuity independently, while maintaining control over their own work rhythm. In other words, there is a balance between production orientation based on stock and response to market demand. The batik maker's work ethic is not limited by time pressure or quantity targets, but rather focuses more on perseverance and production sustainability. This way of working shows a unique style, different from the work system in factories that must comply with strict working hours and certain targets. In Girilayu, batik making is seen more as part of daily activities. This work is done diligently, but without pressure or strict rules from outside. This is also influenced by local culture, family life patterns, and because most batik businesses there are still home-based or small-scale. This flexible work ethic does provide space for comfort and work quality, but on the other hand it can also be a challenge when faced with the need to increase production capacity or market expansion that demands speed and consistency. Therefore, understanding traditional work patterns is important as a basis for developing empowerment strategies that do not eliminate local values, but are still able to answer the challenges of modernizing the creative industry.

**The Process of Work Ethic Diffusion Through Change Agents**

The work ethic of batik makers in Girilayu is characterized by high flexibility of working hours. There are no fixed or standard working hours, so batik entrepreneurs tend to adjust their batik making time to their daily rhythm and activities. They prefer to stock batik fabrics in advance rather than relying solely

on orders. However, when there is an order, they will also immediately adjust and work on it. This pattern illustrates an adaptive work attitude but also shows a lack of structure in managing time and work targets.

Diffusion of innovation is a process in which a new idea, value, or practice is disseminated through certain channels in a social system. In the context of batik craftsmen in Girilayu Village, this diffusion of innovation can be observed through the process of changing work patterns that are more oriented towards productivity and business independence, which directly impacts the strengthening of their work ethic (Suryana., 2013). The work ethic that develops among Girilayu batik craftsmen cannot be separated from how these work values are understood and disseminated. One of the innovations that emerged in work practices was the tendency of craftsmen to produce batik cloth as stock first without having to wait for orders. This pattern became a kind of social innovation that changed the way craftsmen viewed production management. They began to realize that waiting for orders to come in was not the only strategy to survive in business, but the availability of ready-to-sell products was also an important asset in adjusting to market dynamics.

The spread of such work values did not happen suddenly. Communication between craftsmen, both formally through regular batik group meetings under the auspices of the Batik Giriarum association, and informally in daily interactions, became the main channel in disseminating this innovation. Agents of change such as group leaders, association administrators, and batik makers who had already been successful, played an important role in setting an example and motivating other members. One informant said that he started making batik in the morning because he followed the habits of his friends in the group who had already implemented time discipline. This shows how interpersonal influence and role models are key in the process of adopting innovation. However, this change process takes time. Not all craftsmen immediately changed their work patterns. Some still maintain high time flexibility in working, considering that making batik is a home activity that can be done at any time. Even so, slowly the values of discipline and efficiency began to take hold, especially after they saw that craftsmen who implemented this work pattern tended to have more stable production and were able to meet market demand quickly.

The social system of the Girilayu community based on family and mutual cooperation is actually a strength in itself in supporting the process of innovation diffusion. These values of togetherness are an effective medium in spreading new values, including a more productive work ethic. However, this social system can also be a challenge if the values of flexibility and passive attitudes towards change are maintained. Therefore, strengthening the work ethic in Girilayu is not enough through an individual approach, but needs to be done through community-based collective strengthening. Thus, the process of innovation diffusion in the context of strengthening the work ethic of Girilayu batik craftsmen is the result of the interaction between new values that are introduced, communication between individuals in the batik community, the active role of change agents, and the dynamics of work culture in the local social system. This process shows that changes in work values in traditional



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communities such as Girilayu require a contextual, gradual approach, and involve many parties in the social system.

**Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Work Ethic Diffusion****1. Supporting Factors****a. Flexibility as a form of productive adaptation**

Flexibility of working hours is one of the important characteristics in the work system of batik makers in Girilayu which is a driving factor in the diffusion of work ethic. The absence of rigid working hours or binding time structures allows batik makers to adjust their batik activities with their work in everyday life. Where the majority of batik makers in Girilayu are mothers who are housewives, so they have domestic and social responsibilities, such as taking care of the household, caring for children, and being involved in activities in their community.

Flexibility of working hours is a form of productive adaptation of batik makers in Girilayu. Productive adaptation is the ability of individuals to continue carrying out economic activities while adjusting to the social and cultural conditions faced. In this case, batik work does not require full-time presence and can be done gradually in between the batik makers' free time, for example after finishing housework or when there are no other activities. This provides space for batik makers to remain productive without having to sacrifice other social roles. In addition, this contributes to the sustainability of work. The absence of rigid structural pressures, such as daily targets or formally determined working hours, batik makers tend not to experience psychological fatigue or excessive pressure. Thus, they can carry out batik activities as activities that are integrated with everyday life.

**b. Independence and personal responsibility**

The work system that occurs in the batik makers in Girilayu is non-formal and not strictly structured. Thus, the factors of independence and personal responsibility become very dominant. The absence of formal supervision, either from superiors or work institutions that regulate directly, places the batik makers in a position as work subjects who are fully responsible for time management, production planning, to achieving their own targets. This requires responsibility and the ability to regulate the work rhythm independently. The batik makers must be able to determine when and how long they work, and how to prioritize the scale between batik work and other domestic and social activities. Thus, fostering a work ethic based on self-discipline and intrinsic motivation, where productivity does not depend on external pressure, but rather on the drive from within the individual himself.

The independence that occurs in the batik work system in Girilayu ultimately contributes to the formation of an adaptive and responsible work attitude. The batik makers are aware of the importance of maintaining work continuity, so that the quality of production results will be regular even though they are not limited by formal rules. This also

affects the attitudes of the batik makers, where they can learn to manage time efficiently, set personal targets, and evaluate their own work results. This process can also be considered a form of experiential learning that takes place informally but is effective in forming a strong work character.

c. **Economic motivation based on immediate needs**

Work motivation in informal work systems such as those practiced by batik makers in Girilayu is often situational and rooted in immediate economic needs. This means that decisions to increase work intensity or speed up production completion are not always triggered by long-term targets, but rather are more influenced by urgent needs, either to meet household needs or to respond to sudden increases in market demand.

This is influenced by economic needs, when there are orders from consumers, either in small or large quantities, the batik makers show high adaptive capacity by immediately adjusting their time and workload. Thus, the flexibility of working hours becomes an important instrument that allows them to respond to economic opportunities quickly and efficiently. Therefore, pragmatic economic motivation shows that, although batik makers are not bound by a formal work structure, they still have an internal drive to be productive and increase work intensity when their economic needs increase.

d. **Supportive Collective Culture**

Batik makers in Girilayu are members of a Giriarum association, which has a strong work culture based on collective values, such as togetherness and mutual cooperation. This collective culture acts as a social mechanism that supports the internalization of work ethics, especially in the context of work that is not regulated by a formal system or standard organizational structure. Thus, batik making activities are not only interpreted as economic activities, but also as part of cultural identity. Batik is not just an art product, but a symbol of local pride that is inherent in the daily lives of the community. This condition encourages the development of collective awareness that involvement in batik making activities is a form of cultural preservation as well as an economic contribution to families and communities.

The values of togetherness of the batik makers in Girilayu are reflected in the work practices that are often carried out in groups, within the scope of small community groups in the village. In this context, the spirit of mutual assistance and sharing of experiences between batik makers becomes a source of moral strengthening and work motivation. Although there is no binding work structure, the collective culture creates effective informal social control, where individuals are encouraged to work hard and responsibly because they feel they are part of a shared value system. This social support also allows for the process of learning and transferring knowledge organically, without having to rely on formal training. Beginner batik makers often learn directly from their parents or fellow more senior batik makers. This process not only transmits technical skills, but also instills a work attitude, perseverance, and love for the batik profession.

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**2. Inhibiting Factors****a. Lack of clear time structure and discipline**

The absence of a clear structure and time discipline is a factor that inhibits the productivity of batik makers in Girilayu. In practice, the absence of standard working hours and the absence of systematic production targets make the work process very dependent on the will and personal rhythm of each individual. This condition creates a tendency to postpone work or work inconsistently. When there is no external pressure or binding work standards, some business actors tend to underestimate the urgency of completing work. Thus, it can cause a decrease in productivity without being realized, because work results are not measured consistently and work time is not utilized optimally.

In addition, the absence of a target-based work planning system also has implications for weak orientation towards long-term achievements. Batik makers tend to work only when there are orders or urgent economic needs, not based on a planned production strategy. This makes it difficult to increase the scale of the business or enter a more competitive market, because the work cycle is not based on measurable time and output calculations. Thus, although a flexible work system provides freedom and space for adaptation, the absence of a clear time structure remains an obstacle to optimizing work ethic and productivity.

**b. Lack of incentive systems or ongoing quality control**

The work practices of batik makers in Girilayu, which are independent and based on orders or personal stock, are one of the factors that hinder the improvement of work quality and efficiency due to the absence of a sustainable incentive and quality control system. A loose work system, without operational standards or consistent quality control, tends to produce a work rhythm that is not directed at improving performance continuously.

The absence of formal incentives, whether in the form of financial rewards, professional recognition, or greater market opportunities, weakens the drive to improve product quality and work efficiency. Batik makers only try to improve the quality or speed of production when there is a specific request from consumers or when economic needs are pressing. Under normal conditions without such external pressure, there is no system that encourages batik makers to continue to carry out technical innovation, evaluate work results, or improve the quality standards of their products. As a result, product quality tends to be unstable, and batik makers lack the awareness to adapt to evolving market standards, both in terms of design, technique, and production timeliness. In the long term, this can hinder the competitiveness of Girilayu batik products in the wider market, as well as slow down the process of professionalization of the batik makers themselves. This argument gains empirical support from research by (Edy, 2018), which finds that the implementation of design and technical quality management significantly enhances both technical and economic

efficiency among batik SMEs in Central Java. Their study underscores that structured quality practices such as standardizing design and process controls lead to better economic outcomes compared to unregulated, informal production systems .

**c. Overly relaxed or permissive work culture**

Flexibility in time and work rhythm can be an advantage in the context of the informal economy, in the long term a work culture that is too relaxed or permissive can actually be an obstacle to the growth of professionalism and expansion of production scale. Among Girilayu batik makers, this flexibility sometimes develops into a permissive attitude towards targets, quality, and work efficiency. As a result, batik activities are often positioned only as a support for the household economy rather than as a profession that can be developed seriously.

This permissive attitude is reflected in a work mentality that is oriented towards meeting basic needs (subsistence), not towards achieving or developing long-term capacity. Many batik makers do not feel motivated to increase production capacity, expand market networks, or consistently improve product quality. This culture reinforces the tendency to work reactively, namely working only when there is an order or economic need. Thus, weakening awareness of the importance of continuity, professionalism, and innovation in production.

This permissive work culture risks perpetuating economic stagnation at the household and community levels. Without internal or external encouragement to develop, batik makers remain in an unstructured informal work circle and find it difficult to reach a wider market or high added value. In addition, the lack of discipline and competitive spirit also complicates collective efforts to form more professional and competitive business institutions or communities. This is in line with the findings of (Nisa, R. K., Maryam, S., & Aryati, 2020), which show a significant difference in productivity, work motivation, and work experience between daily batik workers, who operate in a more structured manner, and freelance batik workers, who tend to work informally. This condition indicates that without clear work structures and incentives, batik makers are likely to remain trapped in unproductive work patterns and face difficulties in building sustainable competitiveness.

**d. Limited access to time management training**

One of the fundamental challenges in strengthening the work ethic and increasing the productivity of batik makers in Girilayu is the limited access to time management training. In the context of informal work that is carried out independently, the ability to manage time strategically and develop an entrepreneurial mindset is a crucial aspect for the economic growth of individuals and communities. However, without external guidance or access to adequate training programs, many batik makers do not yet have the knowledge or basic skills to manage an effective and results-oriented work rhythm.

**How to Cite (APA Style):**

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/e.10.2.708-723>

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The lack of training has an impact on low awareness of the importance of short-term and long-term work planning. Many batik makers carry out batik activities spontaneously and unmeasured, so that productive time is often divided by household activities or other social activities that do not contribute directly to increasing income. Without the ability to design work schedules, set targets, or calculate production time and costs efficiently, the economic potential of batik activities is difficult to optimize. This issue is supported by research conducted in Semarang City, Indonesia, where entrepreneurship training was found to contribute significantly by 14.5% to the productivity of SMEs (Suminar, T., Yusuf, A., & Utsman, 2020). The findings suggest that in the absence of structured training interventions, such as those focused on time management and entrepreneurial practices, batik makers and informal artisans more broadly may struggle to achieve productivity improvements and effective work planning.

**CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that the work ethic of batik industry entrepreneurs in Girilayu Village has distinctive characteristics, namely being flexible, integrated with domestic activities, and based on economic motivation based on direct needs. The home work system carried out by batik makers, the majority of whom are housewives, allows them to adjust their batik making time to their daily rhythm of life. This flexibility reflects a form of productive adaptation to local social and cultural conditions. However, on the other hand, this high flexibility also poses a challenge in creating a more disciplined, measurable work pattern that is oriented towards long-term business development.

The work ethic in Girilayu developed through a process of innovation diffusion, where work values such as responsibility, independence, and productive initiative were spread through social interactions within batik groups and the Batik Giriaram association. The role of change agents such as group leaders, senior batik makers, and association administrators became very important in instilling a more consistent and professional work spirit. A strong collective culture, a spirit of mutual cooperation, and a sense of ownership of the batik cultural heritage became social capital that supported the spread of productive work values.

However, there are a number of significant inhibiting factors, such as the absence of a formal work structure, the absence of an incentive system and quality control, and the lack of access to time management and entrepreneurship training. In addition, an overly permissive work culture and subsistence orientation (just meeting daily needs) also slow down the process of modernization and increasing the competitiveness of the Girilayu batik industry amidst increasingly competitive market competition.

Therefore, strengthening the work ethic of Girilayu batik entrepreneurs requires a holistic and contextual approach, while maintaining local cultural values but gradually introducing more structured, efficient, and growth-oriented work principles. Community approaches, time management training, creating incentive systems, and strengthening collective capacity through



associations are key strategies that can encourage work ethic transformation among actors in this culture-based creative industry. Thus, the sustainability and professionalization of the Girilayu batik industry can be achieved without having to sacrifice the traditional roots that are their identity.

## AUTHOR STATEMENTS

This research involved all stages, with researchers playing specific roles. All Authors collected data, analyzed the data and wrote the findings together, wrote the discussions and checked the manuscript with the journal template. **Mahendra Wijaya, Sri Hilmi Pujihartati** and **Sudarsana** supervised, advised, and proofread. **Yustia Atsanatrilova** Adi is responsible for organizing article. **Alfina Ananda Putri** and **Dinda Andira** is focused on writing an journal, conceptualization, analysis, and completed revisions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to Allah SWT for His blessings, guidance, and strength throughout the completion of this research. We extend our special thanks to all participants, especially the Girilayu batik entrepreneurs and members of Batik Giriarum, who generously shared their time and insights during the observation and interview sessions. We would also like to thank the Girilayu village government for their assistance in data collection and analysis.

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**Conflict of Interest Statement:** The authors declare that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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