

Polytechnic Students' Perception of The Wearing Batik on Campus

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Abstract

Batik is a textile art that has been around for a long time and it is one of the origins of Malaysian identity. Batik, which is a significant icon in Kelantan and Terengganu in particular, must be conserved and promoted so that the future generations would be aware of its legacy. The east coast batik industry may be enhanced by encouraging the students to wear batik on campus hence, encouraging the next generation to appreciate and be interested in wearing batik as an apparel. The goal of this research is to find out about students' perceptions on the use of batik on campus, especially in Malaysian Polytechnics. The students' perceptions on the use of batik were measured by identifying variables of self-awareness (internal), interest or outer factor (external) that the students have towards batik apparel. This research employs a quantitative method in which the data were gathered by distributing survey questionnaires to Malaysian Polytechnic students via Google Forms. The findings of this research revealed that the students have a good reaction by providing feedbacks that can be used as batik apparel to be styled

Keywords: Batik, textile art, student perception, formal wear

1.0 Introduction

Malaysia has a diverse range of local handicrafts. Malaysian batik is recognised as a globally renowned local craft by the World-Asia Pacific Craft Council (WCC-APR). Malaysia's craft industry is divided into metal products, land products, forest products, textiles, and various crafts. Batik is one of the textile -based handicraft products. Thus, batik is a technique for decorating fabrics with pattern designs that uses wax as a retainer to prevent color from penetrating other parts of the fabric that has been patterned.

In Malaysia, batik is a superior handicraft. According to history, humans discovered the traditional method of making batik in the 15th century AD. The Malays used to use potatoes as a taster, but now batik fabrics are created and improved using modern tools. Since 1910, our country has had a batik industry, particularly in the state of Kelantan.

The art of batik is one of the cultural roots that form the Malaysian nation's identity. The batik industry, however, began to decline but was revived in 2003. Naturally, it is difficult to forge a national identity and uphold the nation's dignity. Therefore, proactive and ongoing steps must be taken to re-establish it. The Malaysian government has spent millions of ringgits to promote the batik art industry in an effort to elevate it. The proverbial phrase '*tak kenal maka tak cinta*' emphasises the significance of aggressive promotional activities to introduce batik art to the Malaysian community, which is increasingly marginalising tradition and culture. This is because our society is less exposed to traditional practises and handicrafts that are our ancestors' heritage. The government has imposed a new policy on civil servants, requiring them to wear batik clothing on Thursdays and at official functions. In a roundabout way, our society will be made aware of the

significance of the requirement for civil servants to wear batik, as well as the true motivation of the government in enforcing this rule.

The Handicraft Development Corporation and the Malaysian External Development Corporation also responded and supported the government's efforts to realise the same goal, which is to restore the greatness of batik art. One of the organisations assisting with this goal is the National Craft Institute (IKN). IKN is a centre of excellence in craft education that can produce skilled manpower with the latest technology, craft entrepreneurs and become a reference centre, research and conservation of the country's heritage. IKN's role is to train new batik entrepreneurs who want to learn more about the industry. Furthermore, the government has implemented an Intensive Trade Incentive Scheme to assist craft entrepreneurs in exploring new markets in the Middle East, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In other words, the mission to elevate the art of batik can undoubtedly be accomplished with a well-organized and perfect work agenda.

Batik art is also taught in schools as an approach to students to the culture of the archipelago. Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation through the 1Student 1Kraf Tour program (J1M1K) held various initiatives to expand the knowledge of learning batik art and the industry to the public. Many other parties have contributed to the empowerment of batik art whether in handicrafts, textiles, art, or fashion. By encouraging students of higher learning institutions, especially polytechnic students to style batik to campus on certain days, it shows that the generation is trying to uplift and support the government's efforts to elevate Malaysian batik in the eyes of the world.

2.0 Problems statement

Students are the next generation of national leaders who will elevate and protect the country's artistic heritage. However, in the context of research, the use or styling of batik today is more focused on Malaysian polytechnic lecturers or staff. Only a few students choose to wear or style batik while attending college. Among the issues identified are:

1. Young people, especially students, are unable to distinguish between Malaysian and foreign batik, such as Indonesian batik.
2. Young people are beginning to marginalise the art of national batik heritage by refusing to wear it as a style of dress for official events or holidays.
3. The economy of the Malaysian batik industry is declining; and
4. The Indonesian batik market is rapidly penetrating the Malaysian market.

Therefore, this study was conducted to see students' perceptions of the use of batik on campus to be used as an option as a formal dress or corporate dress of the Malaysian polytechnic in certain events or occasions.

3.0 Objective

The study focused on Malaysian polytechnic students' perceptions of the concept and appropriate use of batik on campus, as well as their compliance with the dress code established at their respective polytechnics. The study's respondents were Malaysian polytechnic students from various

fields of study, and data were collected at random. Researchers hope to accomplish several goals in the study, including:

1. determining the level of awareness on the use of batik among students.
2. identifying students' perceptions of the use of batik.
3. identifying students' interest in wearing batik.

4.0 Literature review

The term "batik" is thought to be derived from two words: "amba," which means "write," and "dot". Therefore, the term batik means "writing dots" which can be explained as dots that design a motif on the surface of the fabric. This clearly shows that the term batik itself refers to the technique for producing batik. Generally, wax is used in batik techniques. However, other materials, such as concentrated starch or concentrated mud, can also be used to create patterns on fabric, acting as a barrier to colour absorption to other areas on the fabric surface. In general, no one knows for certain where batik originated, so its precise location cannot be determined. However, most researchers believe the batik technique dates back 2000 years. This technique is thought to be a legacy of the past from countries such as India, China, Japan, Egypt, Africa, Java, and others.

Batik originated in Indonesia and is derived from the Javanese word *tik*, which means "to drop or write dots." Furthermore, batik is also referred to as *ambatik*, which means painting, writing, colouring, or dripping. Batik industry in Malaysia pioneered by Su Ishak in Kelantan in 1911. In the Malay world, the kind of batik called Batik Pelangi has been introduced since 1770. The most of batik factories in Malaysia are in Kelantan and Terengganu. From a historical standpoint, the early development of batik in Malaysia is thought to have begun in the 15th century AD, between 1770 and 1800. In the early stages of batik production, tying and dyeing techniques were used instead of wax to produce "Pelangi" batik. This technique is a direct influence of products from India, Japan, and China (Azmi, Umor, Ismail, Abdullah, Ali & Kamaruzaman, 2009). Batik lukis (canting), batik blok, and batik skrin are popular batik production techniques in Malaysia among batik entrepreneurs. Technically, each type of batik differs in terms of technique, but it all involves several stages of the same process, namely painting, coloring, and final finishing. This batik production technique necessitates creative skills and handiwork to produce innovative, appealing, and high-quality batik products that can compete with other textile products. Haji Che Su bin Haji Ishak (1877-1938), En. Yusuf bin Haji Che Su (1927), Haji Awang (1912), Haji Ali bin Ismail (1932), and Haji Abdul Rahman (1950) are among the Malaysian figures who made significant contributions to the development of the batik industry, particularly in Kelantan and Terengganu.

5.0 Methodology

This research is a quantitative survey. Data were obtained from a questionnaire distributed to students online using google form. A total of 420 respondents were involved in this study. Respondents were selected among polytechnic students aged from 18 years to 30 years from various study

programs. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software version 20.0. Frequency is used to descriptively analyze respondents' perceptions. Mean descriptive analysis is used in this study's data analysis.

6.0 Findings

6.1 Item reliability

The term "item reliability" is frequently used to describe internal stability and consistency (Creswell, 2005, Creswell, 2010; Pallant, 2001; Sekaran 1992). Cronbach's alpha values are frequently used to assess the internal consistency of a construct (Cronbach 1946; Norusis 1977). Cronbach Alpha values greater than 0.60 are frequently used as an indicator of an instrument's dependability (Pallant 2001). According to Sekaran (1992), a reliability value less than 0.60 is low and unacceptable, an Alpha value between 0.60 and 0.80 is acceptable, and an Alpha value greater than 0.80 is considered good. Cronbach Alpha values were used by the authors in this study to determine the reliability of the questionnaire items.

To assess the reliability of the research instrument, the set of questionnaire items was analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Table 1 shows that the alpha value (Cronbach) for the 10 items tested in the study was 0.785, indicating that the items of the constructed questionnaire have a moderate and acceptable level of reliability.

Table 1: Reliability analysis
questionnaire items

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.785	10

This questionnaire's findings are divided into four sections: demographics, students' awareness of the use of batik, acceptance, and student interest in the use of batik on campus.

6.2 Demographic information

The study's respondents are Malaysian polytechnic students aged 18 to 30 years and older. In this study, a total of 420 students were chosen at random. The questionnaire was distributed online over the course of two weeks using a Google form. The sample included 175 male students and 245 female students from Malaysian polytechnics who participated in various study programmes and were of various races and religions. As shown in Table 2.1, respondents were divided into five age groups: I 18 - 20 years, (ii) 21 - 23 years, (iii) 24 - 26 years, (iv) 27 - 29 years, and (v) 30 years and above.

Table 2.1: Distribution of respondents by age category

Age Category	No of Respondents
18 – 20 years	313
21 – 23 years	91
24 – 26 years	11
27 – 29 years	-
30 years and above	5
Total	420

Aside from information on the distribution of respondents by age category, the study respondents were also divided by polytechnic. According to Table 2.2, only 9 of the 36 polytechnics provided feedback, with most of the respondents being students of Tun Syed Nasir Syed Ismail Polytechnic (PTSN), which has 105 students.

Table 2.2: Distribution of respondents by polytechnic

Malaysian Polytechnic	No of Respondents
Politeknik Ibrahim Sultan (PIS)	77
Politeknik Melaka (PMK)	81
Politeknik Sultan Idris Shah (PSIS)	16
Politeknik Mukah Sarawak (PMU)	7
Politeknik Mersing (PMJ)	59
Politeknik Hulu Terengganu (PHT)	47
Politeknik METrO Tasek Gelugor (PMTG)	15
Politeknik Tun Syed Nasir Syed Ismail (PTSN)	105
Politeknik Besut (PBT)	11
Total	420

6.3 Students' awareness of batik wearing

This section describes the respondents' awareness of the wearing batik in Malaysia. According to Table 3.1, there are several factors that contribute to the marginalisation of the use of batik. A total of 205 students (49%) said that using batik is not an option because it is influenced by western culture. Following that, a total of 130 students (30%) stated that they had less exposure to the use of batik in Malaysia. Meanwhile, 71 students (17%) thought batik was unimportant to pass down. The remaining seven students (3%) stated that other factors caused the use of batik to be increasingly marginalized.

Table 3.1: Factors that cause the use of batik to be increasingly marginalized

Factor	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Considered unimportant to inherit	71	17
Lack of exposure	130	31
The influence of western culture	205	49
Others	7	3
Total	420	100

Table 3.2 shows the students' understanding of the use of batik in Malaysia. Most students are aware of the existence of batik in Malaysia and can tell the difference between Malaysian and foreign batik. Despite the fact that the majority of students do not own any batik clothing, half of them are willing to spend money on it. However, almost 83% of students agreed to style batik clothes to campus.

Table 3.2: Students' awareness of batik wearing

Students' Awareness	No of Respondents	
	Yes	No
1. You are aware of the practice of wearing batik in Malaysia.	391	29
2. You can differentiate between Malaysian batik and foreign batik such as Indonesia	229	191
3. You are willing to go shopping to buy batik garment	299	108
4. Your family members are involved in the batik manufacturing industry, either directly or indirectly.	40	380
5. You have a batik clothing collection.	161	259
6. You once purchased batik clothing.	286	134
7. You will select batik items as souvenirs or gifts.	302	118
8. You are experienced in making batik	67	353
9. You have agreed to wear batik on campus.	347	73

6.4 Students' interest in wearing batik

This section describes the respondents' interest in the use of batik as apparel on campus, whether for class, ceremonies, or official polytechnic events. Table 4 shows the items that respondents are interested in when it comes to styling batik garment. A total of 284 students (68%) stated that they are more interested in purchasing batik garment because of the unique motifs or patterns used as batik decoration. Furthermore, according to their favourite colour, 138 students (33%) chose dark colours, and 142 students (34%) chose pastel colours as the colour of choice for batik clothing. Cotton fabric is the most popular among students, with 190 students (45%) believing

it is appropriate for Malaysia's weather and environment. Batik clothing with floral patterns, such as flowers and plants, piqued the interest of 300 students (71%). Furthermore, 270 students (64%) selected “batik canting” as the type of batik for styling on campus, and 273 students (65%) selected batik as a suit or garment to be styled. Students on campus prefer to style batik garment only once a week, which is 282 people (67%). Among the most recent activities for students to style batik garment was while attending an official ceremony, which included 245 students (60%).

Table 4: Distribution of students' interest in batik wearing

Students' Interest	No of Respondents	Percentages (%)
1. Things that make you interested in buying batik clothes: Unique motifs or patterns	284	68
2. Favorite color for your batik garment: Dark colors (blue, purple, green etc)	138	33
Pastel colors (beige, peach, cream etc)	142	34
3. Suitable fabrics for batik garment on campus: Cotton fabric - medium thick easily absorbs sweat	190	45
4. Motives that interest you to wear batik: Flora elements (flowers, plants)	300	71
5. Types of batik that are suitable for use on campus: Batik Canting	270	64
6. Batik clothing style chosen while on campus: As a suit or a garment	273	65
7. Students' preferred types of batik clothing: Attending ceremonies and events in formal attire	282	67
8. Frequency of appropriate batik worn on campus: Once a week	390	93
9. Your most recent activity while dressed in batik: Attend official functions	245	60

6.5 Student acceptance of batik wearing

The division of these levels used to determine the level of acceptance and applicability of the design will be interpreted based on the mean score table shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Mean score interpretation

Mean Score	Interpretation
1.00 – 2.00	Very Low
2.01 – 3.00	Low
3.01 – 4.00	Medium

4.01 – 5.00

High

According to the results of the analysis as in Table 5.2, the highest mean for ten (10) variables that are fabric that is not crumpled suitable for batik clothing for students on campus is in the range of 4.44. While the average price for contemporary batik is very suitable for young people today, it is also very high at 3.99. Following that, the use of batik will be more appealing if matched with accessories that have a median range of 3.94. With a mean of 3.93, the use of batik is very popular today. The mean of batik clothes suitable for making uniforms for campus activities, on the other hand, is at a medium to high level of 3.91. The use of contrasting colours on batik clothing is the most popular among young people, with a mean of 3.82. While the average cost of affordable batik clothing is \$3.80. There are three (3) variables with a low mean, namely the selection of geometric patterns is more suitable for wearing batik on campus at value 3.67, batik clothing pieces do not meet the tastes of today's young people at value 3.49, and complicated batik clothing care at value 3.29.

Table 5.2: Table of mean score levels for each variable

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1. The use of batik is very relevant nowadays	3.93	.967	420
2. Contemporary batik is very suitable for today's youth	3.99	.902	420
3. Contrasting colours on batik clothing are more popular among young people.	3.82	.953	420
4. The geometric pattern selection is more appropriate for the use of batik on campus.	3.67	.978	420
5. Difficulty in caring for batik clothing	3.29	1.112	420
6. Reasonably priced batik clothing	3.80	1.019	420
7. Wearing batik with accessories will make it more appealing.	3.94	.974	420
8. Batik clothing does not appeal to the tastes of today's youth.	3.49	1.067	420
9. Batik clothing is appropriate as a uniform for campus activities.	3.91	1.047	420
10. Non-crumpled fabric can be used to make batik clothing for students on campus.	4.44	.802	420

6.6 Correlation

The Davies scale (1971), as shown in table 6, is used to examine the relationship between the two items.

Table 6: Davies (1971) Guidelines for the interpretation of effect size for correlation.

Coefficient	Effect size interpretation
0.70 – 1.00	Very strong
0.50 – 0.69	Substantial
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate
0.10 – 0.29	Low
0.01 – 0.09	Negligible

According to table 6.1, the Pearson correlation value for the items is the use of batik very relevant nowadays, and batik clothing is appropriate to be uniform for campus activities. The value of r is 0.404. The value of r indicates a moderate relationship between these two items. Based on this study, the significant value of $p = 0.00$. and is less than the value of (0.05), indicating that there is a significant relationship between the use of batik is very relevant today and suitable to be standardised for campus activities.

Table 6.1: The relation between the use of batik is very relevant nowadays and batik clothing is appropriate as a uniform for campus activities.

		The use of batik is very relevant nowadays	Batik clothing is appropriate as a uniform for campus activities.
The use of batik is very relevant nowadays	Pearson Correlation	1	.404**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	420	420
Batik clothing is appropriate as a uniform for campus activities.	Pearson Correlation	.404**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	420	420

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Referring to table 6.2 shows the Pearson correlation value for contrast colour items and geometric patterns suitable for batik wear and contemporary batik is very suitable for today's young people $r = 0.465$. The value of r indicates that there is a high intermediate relationship between these two items. Based

on this study as well, the significant value of $p = 0.00$. and is smaller than the value of $\alpha (0.05)$, and indicates that there is a significant relationship between contrasting colours and geometric patterns suitable for batik wear and contemporary batik is very suitable for today's youth.

Table 6.2: The relationship between contrasting colours and geometric patterns is suitable for the use of batik and contemporary batik is very suitable for today's young people

		Contrasting colours and geometric pattern is more appropriate for the use of batik	Contemporary batik is very suitable for today's youth
Contrasting colours and geometric pattern is more appropriate for the use of batik	Pearson	1	.465**
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	420	420
Contemporary batik is very suitable for today's youth	Pearson	.465**	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	420	420

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

7.0 Discussion

According to the study's findings, students agreed to wear batik clothes as formal clothing or uniforms when attending certain campus ceremonies or events. Students prefer to use fabrics that are not crumpled as batik clothing for students on campus. Students also select contemporary batik that is appropriate for young people like them to style. They also choose to match accessories to look attractive when styling batik clothes.

Several things can be suggested based on the findings to meet the needs of students, such as the type of fabric to be used, the cut or style of clothing that suits their group, and the appropriate accessories to be matched to attend a specific event.

Among the suitable fabrics or materials for use are those derived from cotton fibres or known as cotton. Cotton fabric is ideal for wearing in hot and humid climates such as Malaysia. It is simple to use and does not necessitate complicated maintenance. Cotton fabric is light, comfortable, quick to dry, and absorbs sweat. Other fabrics with similar properties, such as viscose, fuji, and voile, can also be used. Students may also select a contemporary batik pattern in which the decoration or pattern appears more modern and appropriate for young people who prefer a simple and minimal style. Watches, glasses, brooches, and jewellery that are appropriate for a more simple and elegant ceremony or formal event can also be chosen to match.

8.0 Conclusion

After conducting a study on Malaysian polytechnic students about their perceptions of the use of batik on campus, the positive response demonstrated that students' acceptance of the use of batik on campus is still relevant today and can be expanded to preserve the country's craft heritage. Batik should be promoted so that future generations can learn about Malaysian batik by encouraging the use of batik on campus, particularly in Malaysian polytechnics, and by providing additional support to the east coast batik industry.

Producing batik fabric with floral motif designs that have been modified to be simpler, more attractive layout and a combination of techniques and colours to suit the tastes of the younger generation are some things that should be suggested so that students look more confident when styling batik clothes. Furthermore, some clothing designs will be projected in accordance with the wear criteria of students on campus to attend polytechnic events or official ceremonies.

Finally, precious pearls such as batik art, which is the nation's identity and image, as well as traditional heritage, should be preserved. So that the next generation can appreciate and be proud of the long-preserved local culture. It is time for the local batik industry to evolve into a competitive industry capable of displaying the nation's authority and earning international respect.

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