Work Ethic of Women Laweyan Batik Craftsmen During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Bachtiar Suryo Bawono¹, LV Ratna Devi Sakuntalawati², Mahendra Wijaya³, Ahmad Zuber⁴, Drajat Tri Kartono⁵

¹,²,³,⁴,⁵ Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

At the beginning of 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic crisis occurred which had an impact on the batik industry in Laweyan Village, namely a decline in sales of up to 60% and the threat of bankruptcy. The formulation of the research problem is what is the work ethic of women Laweyan batik craftsmen during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. There are two sampling techniques used in this research, namely snowball sampling which is used to look for informants for women craftsmen through key informants from the management of the Laweyan Batik Village Development Forum (FPKBL), and purposive sampling is used to find out whether the informant knows the data being sought. The research results found that women Laweyan batik craftsmen had a work ethic during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data was obtained through 10 dimensions of work ethic theory, which shows that female Laweyan batik craftsmen still had a work ethic when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. This research concludes that Laweyan Batik craftsmen still have a work ethic even though they are experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Keywords: COVID19 Pandemic, Women Batik Craftsmen, Work Ethic

This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based on data from the Ministry of Industry (Kemenperin), batik exports in 2018 were worth $803.3 million with a weight of 35.2 million tons. In 2019, the value of batik exports decreased by 3.37% to $776.2 million. The volume of batik exports also decreased by 7.6% to 32.5 million tons. The situation is increasingly difficult because Indonesia is one of the countries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the value of Indonesian batik exports decreased again by 31.3% to USD 532.7 million. Batik's export volume fell 28.8% to 23.1 million tons. Batik exports in the first quarter of 2021 amounted to $157.84 million. The amount of batik exported in this period was 6.64 million tons. Even though batik sales have decreased, the Ministry of Industry's assessment that the batik industry makes an important contribution to the Indonesian economy has not changed. The batik industry provides significant employment opportunities, employing 200 thousand workers and 47 thousand business units in 101 regional centers in Indonesia. According to the Ministry of Industry, there will be 2951 batik IMKMs in Indonesia in 2022.
Based on data from the Ministry of Industry (Kemenperin), batik exports in 2018 were worth $803.3 million with a weight of 35.2 million tons. The same thing was experienced by the Batik Center in Kampung Laweyan, Surakarta. Laweyan Batik Village admits that batik sales in Laweyan have experienced a significant decline during the pandemic. Based on a survey, batik craftsmen in Laweyan admitted that their income had decreased by 60%. This decrease in income is one of the impacts of the crisis resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic [2]. This topic became interesting when the COVID-19 pandemic reduced people's purchasing power and prioritized basic needs over purchasing batik cloth and tie-dyed clothing. Research data shows that during the COVID-19 pandemic, people experienced changes in consumption due to lower incomes, and basic needs such as food and household equipment were considered more necessary during social restrictions [3]. Previous research data shows that the cause of the decline in people's purchasing power is the increasing number of unemployed due to mass layoffs and layoffs which have an impact on decreasing people's income which ultimately has an impact on decreasing people's purchasing power. In the context of reduced income, people's financial spending patterns tend to shift towards their survival [4].

Mbock Mase's character in the Laweyan batik industry has a big influence on the work ethic of Laweyan women batik craftsmen. In the Mbock Mase era, society's stigma only focused on women as wing king condos. The stigma of Javanese women in the figure of Mbock Mase has a firm and innovative role and character [5]. The real reason why women manage everything in the batik industry is because the nature of the batik industry requires precision, subtlety, and beauty which is very in line with women's nature.

Little by little, they not only mastered the batik-making process but also gained knowledge about company management, from the batik process to marketing, financial management, and business development. Laweyan grew up amidst a social hierarchy between royal bureaucrats and commoners. Most of the economic power of the Laweyan family is controlled by the mother who plays the role of Mbock Mase [6].

Efforts to build the Laweyan economy with batik crafts without dependence on the kingdom in power at that time became Mbock Mase's work ethic for economic independence. This work ethic continues to this day among women batik craftsmen in Laweyan. The current struggle of Laweyan women is interesting to discuss because it has a long history in the past which is symbolized by the figure of Mbock Mase. Work ethic must start with realizing the importance of responsibility towards family and the work one is involved in. Every person who pursues a profession must have a better future orientation. In other words, any business undertaken by society must have a work ethic [7]. The decline in people's overall income and the decline in people's purchasing power have resulted in sales of Laweyan batik experiencing a significant decline. The growing societal paradigm is that batik is not a primary need so it is not prioritized. What is interesting about this research is whether the batik craftsmen in Laweyan still have a work ethic during the COVID-19 pandemic. The formulation of the problem in this research is what is the work ethic of women Laweyan batik craftsmen during the COVID-19 pandemic? With such a difficult situation, it is interesting to know why they still have the work ethic to maintain their business.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Work Ethic

In the formulation of Jansen Sinamo (2005), a Work Ethic is a set of positive behaviors rooted in fundamental beliefs accompanied by total commitment to an integral work paradigm [8]. Sinamo views Work Ethic as the foundation of authentic success. This view is influenced by his review of sociological studies since the time of Max Weber at the beginning of the 20th century and management writings in the last twenty years, all of which lead to one main conclusion; that
success in various areas of life is determined by human behavior, especially work behavior [9]. Sinamo (2005) prefers to use the term ethos because he finds that the word ethos contains the meaning not only of the typical behavior of an organization or community but also includes the motivation that drives them, main characteristics, basic spirit, basic thoughts, code of ethics, moral code, code behavior, attitudes, aspirations, beliefs, principles, and standards. Some people call this work behavior a habit or attitude of discipline, hard work, rationality, thriftiness, and profit-oriented [10].

The work ethic contains several positive values, which are relevant to what Weber said that good work must emphasize rationality, hard work, having an orientation towards material success, being frugal, creative, being able to work together, saving, and investing. [11]. According to Weber, work ethic is the attitude of society towards the meaning of work as a driver of business success and development. Work Ethic is a sociological phenomenon whose existence is formed by productive relationships that arise as a result of the economic structure that exists in society. [12]. According to Usman Pelly, work ethic is an attitude that arises from one's own will and awareness which is based on a system of cultural value orientation towards work. [13]. Mbok Mase has the character of hard work, discipline, and profit-oriented, which once caused conflict with the palace because he was considered to be at odds [14].

2.2 Women Batik Craftsmen

The term woman is given to a woman who has reached a certain age during her development, namely at the age of entering the adult development stage, namely 20–40 years old. Meanwhile, a girl who is under 20 years of age cannot yet be said to be a woman (adult) but is called a teenager or teenager until she reaches adulthood or reaches the age of 21 years. [15]. The definition of a woman according to psychologists is an adult woman; women (adults) who are in the age range of 20-40 years which in fact in the description are theoretically classified or classified as falling into the age range area of early adulthood or young adulthood. Craftsmen are people who have the skills to make crafts in the form of functional items and ornaments that are useful for fulfilling human needs. Batik is a cultural work of the Indonesian people, this is because long before Indonesian culture came into contact with Indian culture, batik has been a cultural treasure of Indonesia in the past.

2.3 COVID19 Pandemic

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) officially announced the extraordinary occurrence of the coronavirus or Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a global pandemic. Makes everyone flinch. Some may be unfamiliar with the term pandemic, but you can feel that something big is happening. Over time, it has been proven that the Covid-19 pandemic is indeed an extraordinary event. As of May 31, 2021, the virus had spread rapidly in at least 219 countries/territories, with a total global infection of more than 171.5 million cases and 3.7 million deaths. The high speed of the spread of this epidemic has had an enormous negative impact on the entire country, both in terms of health, social and welfare, and the economy [16].

3. METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods with a case study strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic is a major event that is interesting to discuss from various points of view. This research focuses on the work ethic of women batik craftsmen located in a large industry, namely Kampung Batik Laweyan. Data sources are divided into two, namely primary and secondary. Primary data in this research was obtained using interview techniques with female Laweyan batik craftsmen as the main informants. To obtain data validity, researchers used source
triangulation by conducting interviews with key informants, namely the chairman of the Laweyan Batik Village Development Forum (FPKBL). Secondary data was obtained through literature in the form of journals, books, and manuscripts [17].

Data collection techniques use observation, interviews, and documentation. There are two sampling techniques used, namely using a snowball to get informants starting from one person and increasing according to the direction and input of the first informant. The second technique is purposive sampling to determine whether the informant has the data sought or not. Data analysis techniques using data reduction, data presentation, and concluding [18].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The data generated from this research shows the work ethic of Laweyan batik craftswomen. Several informant answers were mapped according to the dimensions of work ethic theory. According to work ethic theory, 10 dimensions became a reference for questions to the four informants.

1. Work/work according to Laweyan characteristics.

According to four informants, the meaning of work for them is a form of worship. Working is not only about earning money but is also interpreted as worshiping God. Men and women have a responsibility to work together to obtain sustenance to meet children's needs. Laweyan batik craftswomen consider working to be a noble job if they are married.

"Work is worship, bro, as an effort to earn sustenance." (J/ 2023)

"Working is a form of responsibility as a parent towards your child." (P/2023).

2. The disciplined attitude in work carried out by women Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.

Laweyan batik craftswomen carry out a disciplined attitude in working since the morning so that they can easily earn a living. They received teachings from their ancestors to start work in the morning. This attitude is still maintained today, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to them, sustenance will be easier to obtain if work starts in the morning because people still get a lot of rest.

"Working hours have always been the same in the past, sometimes 6 to 4 o'clock. "My great grandparent said that if we work in the morning, we can easily earn a living." (P/2023)

"After morning prayers, I take care of the house and children first, then help my husband prepare for batik making. People used to say that when you wake up you have to be early so you can get to work immediately. "If it's still early in the morning, people are still resting a lot, so we still get some sustenance." (M/2023)

3. The hard work attitude of Laweyan batik craftswomen, according to Laweyan characteristics.

The hard work of Laweyan batik craftswomen is shown in their tenacity and ability to face challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they faced very difficult challenges. They continue to produce batik as a form of struggle for their family. They think that life should be beneficial to those closest to us. In Javanese philosophy, Urip Iku Urup, or life is burning. This philosophy is interpreted as a human being who must be useful to other people, especially family. Some inherited Mbok Mase's hard work so that their generation could emulate it.
"Life must be useful, as the Javanese say Urip Iku Urup. The main benefit of life is working hard for the family." (Y/2023)

"Madam, in the past, was a hardworking person, bro, we set an example because it's not just to be able to live, but to be an example for our children too." (J/2023)

4. The rational attitude in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.

The COVID-19 pandemic puts enormous pressure on survival Laweyan batik craftswomen. The decline in sales requires them to be able to survive during the global economic crisis. However, the majority of them maintain their jobs as batik craftsmen. The reasons vary, starting from their belief that batik is the only job they are good at, some say it is a hereditary inheritance that must be maintained. Laweyan Batik is interpreted as a valuable treasure for them.

"I'm not young anymore if I do another job I have to study again and I can't afford it. "My only skill is making batik, so I kept it even though I had little profit at that time (COVID-19 pandemic)." (M/2023)

"I am proud to be a Laweyan citizen. "If you close your business, it feels hard, because my wealth is this batik business" (P/2023)

5. The profit-oriented attitude in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.

Every business has a profit orientation. However, each business has its characteristics. Likewise, with Laweyan batik craftswomen. Laweyan batik craftswomen have a profit orientation which is interpreted as not only taking the form of money. They consider having regular customers also an advantage. So, they are very patient in serving various customer requests. They have the philosophy that Bathi Sitik Rapopo is always important. This means they are better off getting a small but steady or consistent profit. That is a strong reason for them to keep customers staying.

"Profit is not only money, but customers are also our assets as batik sellers." (Y/2023)

"The important thing is that Bathi Sitik Rapopo is important to remain constant. If we get big sales, it's rare and we don't feel calm." (M/2023)

6. The frugal attitude in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.

In the COVID-19 pandemic situation, wisdom is needed in managing money. Unstable economic conditions and declining purchasing power have forced Laweyan batik craftswomen to reduce expenses. In the data obtained, there are two types of suppressed expenditure, namely household expenditure and batik production expenditure. They emphasize that families prioritize fulfilling primary household needs. In the batik business aspect, they reduce production costs. Purchase materials for making batik such as wax, and fabric according to order requirements. Their batik production is adjusted to existing orders. They don't stock a lot of products to reduce losses because they avoid long sales.

"Save at home and produce batik. "Because certain things sell well, we don't stock a lot of them." (J/2023)

"The main expenses are food and basic family needs. "For batik, we buy materials such as wax and cloth according to our needs." (P/2023)
7. **The creative attitude in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.**

A creative attitude is one of the aspects possessed by Laweyan batik craftswomen, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. They must be able to sell more interesting and different products. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they created several creative designs, such as creating popular motifs that many buyers liked. They also use the marketplace for marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic made them switch from conventional marketing to online.

"Yesterday, during the pandemic, we created motifs that buyers liked the most." (Y/2023)

"Several modifications were made to look different from before the pandemic. Batik motifs are produced according to customer wishes. "Sales are also via online, there is the use of Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada and social media such as Instagram and Facebook." (M/2023)

8. **The attitude of cooperation in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.**

The COVID-19 pandemic forces everyone to work from home and learn online. The public is asked to carry out activities at home to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This momentum was used by the Laweyan batik craftsman family to work together to share the tasks of managing the batik business. Most of their children help with sales on marketplace platforms and social media.

"There is a division of tasks because children are now used to using technology, they help with advertising on Shopee and Instagram." (J/2023)

"Help the children, because they go to school from home. When they finish school, they help post on IG (Instagram), Facebook, Shopee" (Y/2023)

9. **The attitude of diligently saving money in work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.**

Laweyan batik craftswomen set aside the results of their work to save. This awareness arises because they don't know how long it will take for the COVID-19 pandemic to end. The economic crisis they experienced made many wise decisions to save the results of their work to prepare for bad possibilities in the future. The COVID-19 pandemic hit the industrial world, causing many of them to close down. This condition influences their actions to save.

"COVID-19 has caused many businesses to close down. We don't know when this will end. We are careful to set aside little by little the income from trading batik." (P/2023)

"We are afraid that COVID-19 will not return to normal soon. All tourist activities in Laweyan stopped, and customers dropped drastically. This is a form of precaution for us by saving." (M/2023)

10. **The attitude of being diligently invested in the work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, according to Laweyan characteristics.**

The slowdown in batik sales has prompted Laweyan batik craftsmen to try a side business. This business is to increase income to survive. Some of them try to trade food. They opened a food pre-order system for buyers who order first and then have it made. Even though it's not very big, they still sell food using a pre-order system. They were accompanied to make traditional
foods such as chicken Ungkep, Jadah, Wajik, Rengginang, Intip, and other traditional cakes. They sell online and keep customers for repeat orders.

"We have a side job making Jadah, Wajik to make a living and buy spices and vegetables" (P/2023)

"You still have a side job, bro, what people need during COVID-19 is food. So many people here (Laweyan) sell traditional food. I make peek, Rengginang, ungkep chicken. We offer it to friends in agencies and online." (J/2023)

4.2 Discussion

The COVID19 pandemic caused a decline in batik sales in Laweyan reaching 60%. People experienced a significant decline in purchasing power because many experienced layoffs. People tend to prioritize basic needs and batik is considered a secondary need. In this crisis condition, research results show that female Laweyan batik craftsmen still have a work ethic in facing the COVID19 pandemic.

The work ethic of women Laweyan batik craftsmen was found in the research data. Work ethic is the upstream of Max Weber's theory of Protestant Ethics. The theory of work ethic is taken from the literature put forward by Sinamo (2005) who has written extensively on the thoughts of Max Weber. There are 10 dimensions of the Work Ethic theory:

The first work ethic attitude is about the concept of work. Working is interpreted not only as earning money but also as worshiping God. Husband and wife have a responsibility to work together to obtain sustenance to meet the family’s needs. The concept of work for the Laweyan community is to get blessings from God. This blessing can be achieved if they have the intention to work for their family. They believe that if God gives blessings then their life will be given health, peace, and ease in every difficulty.

The second work ethic attitude is discipline in work. Laweyan batik craftswomen start work in the morning. According to the teachings of their ancestors, sustenance will be easier to obtain if work starts early in the morning. In the morning there are still few people active. This is an analogy that in the morning God spreads blessings to servants who sacrifice time to rest by working. They believe in this philosophy because it has become a social construct taught from generation to generation by their ancestors.

The third work ethic attitude is hard work. In the work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, they are diligent in the goals they want to achieve. They think that life should benefit other people. In Javanese philosophy it is called, Urip Iku Urup, or life is burning. This philosophy means that humans must benefit others. The most important person who receives benefits is the family.

The fourth work ethic attitude is being rational. This rational attitude is carried out in their work as Laweyan batik craftsmen. During the pandemic, they experienced a significant decline in sales. There are rational reasons for their survival during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reasons vary, starting from the condition of those who feel that making batik is the only job they are good at. When they are no longer young, it is no longer an option to change jobs. They prefer to survive and look for solutions to keep going even though it is difficult. Some reasons say that batik is a hereditary heritage that must be protected and preserved. Laweyan Batik is interpreted as a valuable treasure in their lives. There is a paradigm that the wealth within them is the batik business they are involved in. They feel that being a batik craftsman has pride because it has been passed down from generation to generation and Laweyan is the first place where batik was born in Indonesia.

The fifth work ethic attitude is profit-oriented. In the work carried out by
Laweyan batik craftsmen, Laweyan batik craftsmen have a profit orientation which is interpreted not only in the form of money. They consider having regular customers to be an advantage. So they are very patient in serving various customer requests and they take good care of them. They have the philosophy that both Sitik Rapopo Penting Ajek. This means that they are better off making small but steady or consistent profits.

The sixth work ethic attitude is implementing frugal living for the family. In the work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, they emphasize the family’s priority of fulfilling primary household needs. In the batik business aspect, they reduce production costs. Purchase batik-making materials such as wax, and fabric according to order requirements. Batik production is adjusted to existing orders. They do not stock products in large quantities to reduce losses by avoiding long-term sales.

The seventh work ethic attitude is creativity. Laweyan batik craftsman. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they made several creative designs, such as making popular motifs that many buyers liked. They also use the market for marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic made them switch from conventional marketing to online.

The eighth work ethic attitude is cooperation carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen within the family. During the COVID-19 pandemic, all schools were conducted online. Children are starting to get used to using technology during the COVID-19 pandemic. Laweyan batik craftswomen involve their children in marketing batik products. Most of Laweyan's children help in the sales department through the marketplace and social media platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, and Tokopedia as well as Facebook and Instagram.

The ninth work ethic attitude is diligently saving which is carried out by Laweyan batik craftswomen. The COVID-19 pandemic hit the industrial world, causing many businesses to close. They are worried about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This condition influences their actions to save as an effort to anticipate a prolonged crisis.

The tenth work ethic attitude is investing diligently. To strengthen their family's economy, they chose to try a side business. This business is to increase income to survive. Some of them tried to trade food. They opened a food pre-order system for buyers who order first and then make it. The marketplace for marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic made them switch from conventional marketing to online.

Figure 1. The framework of the work ethic of women Laweyan batik craftsmen
5. CONCLUSION

The ten dimensions above show that Laweyan batik craftswomen have a work ethic during the COVID19 pandemic. The work ethic of Laweyan batik craftswomen in managing batik businesses during the COVID19 pandemic is implemented with 10 attitudes. The first work ethic attitude is about the concept of work. Working is interpreted not only as earning money but also as worshiping God. The second work ethic attitude is discipline in work. Laweyan batik craftswomen start work in the morning. This is an analogy that in the morning God spreads blessings to servants who sacrifice time to rest by working. The third work ethic attitude is hard work. They think that life should benefit other people. In Javanese philosophy it is called, Urup Iku Urup, or life is burning. This philosophy means that humans must benefit others. The fourth work ethic attitude is being rational. The reasons vary, starting from the condition of those who feel that making batik is the only job they are good at. When they are no longer young, it is no longer an option to change jobs. Some reasons say that batik is a hereditary heritage that must be protected and preserved. Laweyan Batik is interpreted as a valuable treasure in their lives. The fifth work ethic attitude is profit-oriented. In the work carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen, Laweyan batik craftswomen have a profit orientation which is interpreted not only in the form of money. They have the philosophy that both Sitik Rapopo Penting Ajek. This means that they are better off making small but steady or consistent profits. The sixth work ethic attitude is implementing frugal living for the family. Batik production is adjusted to existing orders. They do not stock products in large quantities to reduce losses by avoiding long-term sales. The seventh work ethic attitude is creativity. They also use the market for marketing. The COVID-19 pandemic made them switch from conventional marketing to online. The eighth work ethic attitude is cooperation carried out by Laweyan batik craftsmen within the family. Most of Laweyan’s children help in the sales department through the marketplace and social media platforms such as Shoppee, Lazada, and Tokopedia as well as Facebook and Instagram. The ninth work ethic attitude is diligently saving which is carried out by Laweyan batik craftswomen. They are worried about the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This condition influences their actions to save as an effort to anticipate a prolonged crisis. The tenth work ethic attitude is investing diligently. This business is to increase income to survive. Some of them tried to trade food. They opened a food pre-order system for buyers who order first and then make it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the management of Laweyan Batik Village for allowing them to conduct research. And all the people who played a role in preparing this research.

REFERENCES


