

The Role of the Government in Preserving Ikat Weaving as a Cultural Tourism Product in Malaka Regency

Sisilia B. B. DE. O. Cermeta¹ Yudha Eka Nugraha¹ Pasifikus Mala Meko¹

¹Tour and Travel Business, Politeknik Negeri Kupang, Indonesia

Correspondence: E-mail: sisiliacermeta4@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study seeks to ascertain the government's role in safeguarding ikat as a cultural tourism asset in Malacca Regency. This study employs a qualitative research methodology focusing on the informant, the Head of the District Tourism Office. Malacca, Tua Adat, artisan weavers, and visitors. Utilizing data collecting methodologies such as observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. The data analysis method employs data reduction, data presentation, findings, verification, and triangulation to ascertain the government's role in safeguarding ikat as a cultural tourism asset in Malacca Regency. The findings indicate the government's role in Malacca Regency, which includes engaging the local community in activities associated with weaving, organizing events, and fashion shows that feature woven products. The government frequently incorporates woven products into various activities for promotion and has established a distinctive ikat weaving studio showcasing the creations of local artisans in Malacca Regency, thereby fostering the development of ikat as a significant product for the region.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is acknowledged for its abundant natural and cultural resources, exhibiting a remarkable mix of ethnicities, languages, and traditions from Sabang to Merauke. This diversity has established Indonesia as a compelling destination for both domestic and international travelers. Regrettably, despite the nation's significant cultural and tourism potential, numerous assets remain underexploited or inadequately maintained, resulting in various locations and cultural expressions experiencing physical, visual, and ecological deterioration (Liliweri, 2017).

Traditional handwoven textiles, especially in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), are a persistent kind of cultural heritage that endures beyond generations. This province is distinguished for its several forms of ikat weaving, including Sumba ikat, Kupang ikat, Timor cloth, Buna, and Lotis. These crafts possess artistic and cultural significance while also serving as vital sources of employment, economic empowerment, and communal welfare. To far, there has been no regional legislation (Peraturan Daerah or Perda) specifically aimed at the preservation and development of ikat weaving in NTT, a deficiency that undermines long-term cultural sustainability (Setiawan & Suwarnigdyah, 2014).

Malaka Regency, a recently created administrative region resulting from the partition of Belu Regency in NTT, boasts a profound cultural heritage, particularly in its weaving practices. The region is populated by four principal ethnic groups—Tetun, Kemak, Bunaq, and Dawan—each possessing unique motifs, techniques, and philosophies in textile creation. The Tetun people are the majority, and their weaving patterns frequently embody significant social and spiritual values. Vertical lines on men's garments represent their obligation to family welfare and spiritual ties, whilst circular designs on women's textiles denote protection and their domestic function.

Ikat weaving in Malaka transcends mere fabric, functioning as a cultural emblem integral to the community's social fabric, especially in marriage rituals and youth conflict resolution. The distinctiveness of the themes, techniques, and foundational concepts embodies the collective identity of Malaka's populace, who exhibit fervent dedication to preserving and transmitting this history across generations. Amelia (2021) emphasizes that initiatives to conserve ikat weaving in Ende—launched in 2004 and persisting until 2018—have engendered substantial societal alterations, especially in cultural values, education, and economic practices.

Muda (2021) underscores the significance of safeguarding traditional knowledge within weaving communities by meticulously recording the production method, decorative motifs, and fabric composition, as exemplified by the Bliransina weaving group. This highlights the necessity for cultural preservation initiatives to extend beyond economic considerations and encompass the systematic transmission of indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship.

In Malaka, local government initiatives have actively contributed to cultural preservation by enforcing laws that require the usage of traditional woven cloth in government offices every Tuesday and Friday. The populace is encouraged to don traditional ikat (Tais) during formal occasions, including Independence Day festivities, the anniversary of Malaka Regency, and official welcoming ceremonies. Numerous competitions, festivals, and cultural performances have been created to reinforce local identity and promote the virtues inherent in traditional textiles.

However, the conservation and advancement of woven textiles as a cultural heritage encounter various obstacles. Karlina (2021) highlights multiple challenges impacting the sustainability of the lurik weaving industry in Klaten, such as delays in raw material supply,

obsolete production machinery, and a primarily aging labor population. She also emphasizes that management quality, product innovation, and a focus on workmanship are essential for the sustainability of traditional weaving enterprises. The findings indicate that the survival of weaving as a traditional activity relies on community engagement, legislative endorsement, and adaptable solutions to address economic and generational shifts.

Malaka ikat textiles, particularly those from Marobo, have been innovatively transformed into diverse products and showcased in national and international shows. The variety of patterns, colors, and cultural tales embedded in these textiles renders them both aesthetically attractive and commercially and culturally significant. Consequently, it is imperative to improve the competitiveness, quality, and marketability of Malaka's ikat weaving as a premier cultural tourism offering.

Ikat Weaving

Ikat weaving is a textile art style of significant cultural importance, transmitted through generations throughout many regions of Indonesia. Irma Hadisurya (2013, p. 102) defines ikat weaving as a technique in which specific threads are tied prior to the weaving process to produce the fabric's design. This technique entails securing specific threads to prevent dye absorption during the dyeing process, thereby revealing the intended patterns upon the removal of the ties. Widayanti (2008, p. 21) elucidates that in ikat weaving, both the weft and warp threads are immersed in dye, while the knotted threads remain uncolored. Upon the removal of the binding, the designs or motifs designed by the weaver are unveiled on the fabric.

Setiawati (2007, p. 9) asserts that weaving is an old textile craft that entails the arrangement of two sets of threads, known as the warp and the weft, on a loom, which are then transformed into fabric featuring diverse themes and patterns that embody the culture and aesthetics of a community. This method necessitates considerable expertise, as the intricate nuances in each design and motif embody the ideologies and cultural values of its creators (Suharyono et al., n.d.).

Craftsmanship fundamentally denotes the human capacity to produce objects that fulfill practical functions while also embodying artistic significance. Suharso (2011, p. 403) characterizes craftsmanship as a manifestation of diligence, effort, and competent labor that culminates in the creation of a tangible product. Craftsmanship embodies a nation's cultural heritage, reflecting the identity of its populace and its customs, transmitted through generations. Consequently, craftsmanship is intrinsically artistic and intimately connected to the historical and social context of its genesis society. Every meticulously created item, such as ikat weaving, exemplifies the variety of shape, design, and utility within a community's social and cultural existence (Ambarwati, 2011).

Ikat weaving is intricately linked to cultural tourism. Ismayanti (2010) posits that cultural tourism is a form of tourism centered on locations, customs, ceremonies, and experiences that represent the identity of a nation or ethnic community. Ikat weaving serves as a significant cultural draw, presenting not only aesthetic appeal but also a profound understanding of the philosophies and meanings inherent in each motif and design of the fabric (Syabana et al., 2018).

The tradition associated with ikat weaving is essential for its preservation. Hinson et al. (2010, p. 78) characterize tradition as the transmission of information, traditions, and ideologies between generations. This tradition is not just a historical practice but also functions as a conduit connecting the past and the future, assuring the continuity and relevance of values and practices. Muhaimin (2017, p. 78) contends that tradition is

frequently synonymous with customs, which are societal norms adhered to in daily life. Consequently, tradition serves as a social adhesive that fortifies communal identity.

Traditional dress is a significant element of tradition, functioning as a marker of a region's cultural identity, as noted by Sugiyanto (2015, p. 1). Traditional attire, particularly that crafted from ikat weaving, embodies the ideals and pride of its wearers. Kristiani and Bemoe (2016, p. 11) assert that traditional attire is donned by community members in accordance with their norms and traditions. Koten et al. (in Furiyanti, 2018, p. 85) further assert that traditional attire serves as a hallmark of a community, embodying their identity and status within the social framework.

In conclusion, ikat weaving transcends mere textile craftsmanship. It serves as a cultural emblem that encapsulates the philosophical, social, and economic ideals significant to the communities that uphold it. The preservation of ikat weaving is crucial for sustaining aesthetic appeal and cultural diversity, as well as for strengthening community identity and augmenting economic prospects via cultural tourism (Meira et al., 2013; Syabana et al., 2018).

Conservation

Preservation denotes a systematic, ongoing, and cohesive procedure designed to sustain the survival of an object or tradition, so averting its extinction or deterioration. Widjaja, as referenced in Jacobus (2006), characterizes preservation as a dynamic, adaptable, and selective endeavor to maintain anything over time in a deliberate and lasting fashion. Alwasilah (2006) asserts that preservation is influenced by both internal and external elements, necessitating that the strategies or procedures employed be customized to the particular demands and cultural environment (Simiati, 2022).

The term "preservation," as defined by the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI, n.d.), originates from the word *lestari*, which signifies unchangeable, enduring, and sustained. When prefixed with *pe-* and suffixed with *-an*, it transforms into a verb denoting the act of conserving or safeguarding something against destruction or degradation. Culturally, preservation encompasses the protection, enhancement, and sustainable use of cultural heritage (Hofman et al., 2022).

Cultural preservation entails initiatives aimed at maintaining a culture's vitality while avoiding its stagnation in historical forms (Sedyawati, 2008, p. 152). Koentjaraningrat (2000 p. 181) defines culture as an intricate system of concepts, behaviors, and human creations transmitted across generations. He delineates three cultural dimensions: the conceptual system (ideas, values, and standards), the patterned behavior system (culture practices), and the material manifestations of human creativity. Successful cultural preservation must encompass these three dimensions to guarantee cultural significance and continuation within society (Meo et al., 2023).

Culture will vanish if it is no longer enacted. Consequently, preservation must be rooted on active community engagement and routine utilization. Ranjabar (2006) contends that local cultural preservation must be dynamic, adjusting to evolving circumstances while maintaining fundamental traditional values. This setting delineates three essential stages of cultural revitalization: cultivating awareness, participating in collaborative planning, and inciting cultural innovation (Mukhlis & Ariqa, 2023).

In conclusion, preservation transcends mere maintenance of the status quo or conservation of the past; it constitutes a purposeful, adaptive endeavor focused on protecting both tangible and intangible cultural assets to ensure their continued significance, functionality, and relevance in contemporary society.

The Function of Government

In sociological research, the term "role" denotes the dynamic facet of an individual's position or social standing. Soekanto (2012, p. 212) elucidates that a role materializes when an individual discharges their rights and responsibilities in accordance with their societal position. This role is inseparable from prestige due to their interdependence. Levinson, as referenced in Soekanto (2009, p. 213), delineates three dimensions of role: first, the norms associated with an individual's societal position; second, the capabilities an individual possesses within a social framework; and third, the individual's conduct, which is essential for sustaining the social structure.

The government's participation is vital in regional development, particularly in supporting small and medium companies (SMEs), which frequently serve as the foundation of local economies, including traditional crafts like weaving. Sumodiningrat (2005, p. 55) delineates the responsibilities of municipal governments in this context, encompassing numerous essential roles. Local governments, as entrepreneurs, are tasked with invigorating business activity through the introduction of innovative products, the establishment of production processes, and the effective organization of operations. The government acts as a coordinator, ensuring that development initiatives are linked and synchronized to achieve the set objectives (Acs et al., 2015).

Moreover, local governments facilitate development by enhancing both physical and cultural environments and controlling spatial planning to promote economic growth (Fahmi et al., 2017). The government, in its capacity as a facilitator, fosters company establishment and expansion by promoting investment, offering resources, and coordinating activities such as industrial park brochures and the allocation of commercial spaces for small entrepreneurs (Prasetyo, 2020).

Furthermore, it underscores that the government is an entity of authority, which is not inherently associated with military forces (Pierre & Peters, 2020). Kjaer (2023) differentiates "government" as a static institution from "governance," which is a dynamic process of executing state functions. Siagian (2009, p. 8) asserts that governance encompasses collaborative efforts grounded in rationality, efficiency, and effectiveness to attain national objectives.

The contemporary notion of governance, as articulated by Sedarmayanti (2004), pertains not solely to the administrative functions of the state but also includes administration, direction, development, and the involvement of all societal constituents. Governance encompasses three primary entities: the government, the business sector, and civil society, each fulfilling a complementary function. The government executes regulatory and facilitative roles, the private sector drives economic dynamics through market activities, and civil society serves as a social monitor while promoting participation.

Ndraha (2003) categorizes governance into two primary types: centralized and deconcentrated governance. Deconcentrated governance is categorized into central and decentralized governance, with decentralization enabling local governments to more effectively address local challenges, including cultural preservation (Faguet, 2014).

This decentralist approach is evident in the Anglo-Saxon model, which prioritizes local community sovereignty, extensive public engagement in policy-making, and the accountability of public officials to legislative entities (Loughlin, 2007). The engagement of local people in cultural preservation, particularly in traditional weaving, can be optimized more successfully within this framework.

Rasyid in Suroso (2007, p. 2) asserts that government includes the functions of regulation, management, and leadership in the administration of state activities for the public good. This

underscores that the government's involvement extends beyond policy formulation to include the execution of tangible measures aimed at societal development and the preservation of local cultural assets through synergistic cooperation among the state, economic stakeholders, and communities (Bevir, 2012).

Cultural Tourism Offerings

A product is defined as any item that producers provide to consumers to satisfy their needs and aspirations. Products may manifest as actual commodities, services, experiences, or concepts (Kotler et al., 2009). In tourism, the notion of a product is expansive, incorporating not only physical elements but also social, cultural, and environmental facets. A cultural tourism product denotes a synthesis of aspects that provide cultural experiences to tourists via engagement with local traditions, arts, ceremonies, and lifestyles (Pidadari & Nuryanti, 2021).

Heryanto (2015) elucidates that a product is the outcome of a production process designed to satisfy consumer demands. Kotler, Armstrong, and Tjiptono (as stated in Supriadi, 2016, p. 36) define a product as anything that can capture market interest and deliver happiness, regardless of whether it is bought, utilized, or experienced. Kotler et al. (2009) identify various indices of product variation, including size, price, appearance, and availability. Size denotes the tangible structure and configuration of the product, which is observable and quantifiable. The price denotes the monetary worth attributed to a product or service, signifying the advantage obtained by the consumer. Appearance pertains to the aesthetic allure of the product, which profoundly influences consumer impressions, encompassing elements such as packaging design and color coordination. Product availability pertains to the diversity and volume of items present in the market and the accessibility for consumers.

Suwantoro (2004, pp. 48–49) classifies tourism products into two primary categories within the tourism sector. The initial category is the subjective tourism product, encompassing initiatives designed to inspire individuals to travel and offer them opportunities to relish travel experiences. This category includes sectors associated with marketing, finance, and insurance. The second category is the goal tourist product, encompassing business activities reliant on the expansion of the tourism sector, including housing, transportation, souvenirs, recreational facilities, and tourism management entities (Liu et al., 2020).

Tourism products have unique traits that differentiate them from other product categories. A notable aspect of tourism products is their immobility—they cannot be conveyed to the buyer. The consumer (the visitor) must travel to the location where the product is available (Suwantoro, 2004). Furthermore, the creation and consumption of tourism products transpire concurrently and in the same locale, as the tourism experience must be directly experienced. Tourism items are assessed not on physical criteria, but on the quality of service and the whole experience. This renders it unfeasible for consumers to evaluate or sample the goods in advance. Moreover, tourism products predominantly depend on human labor and minimally on automation, rendering service quality essential to the total offering. The tourism sector is intrinsically high-risk (Olorunniwo et al., 2006).

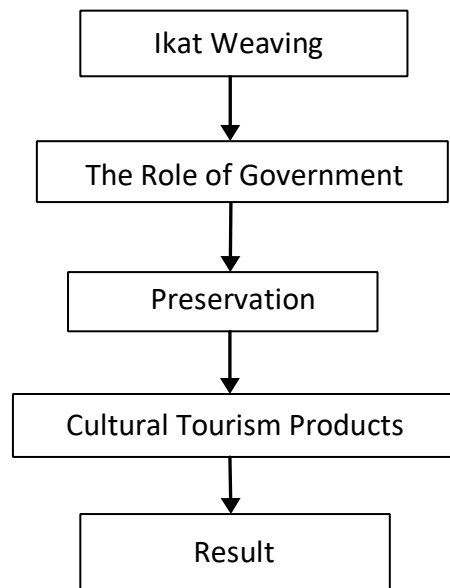
Middleton (2001, p. 122) provides a more exhaustive description of tourism products, characterizing them as a synthesis of three fundamental elements: tourist attractions, destination amenities, and accessibility. Tourist attractions constitute the principal impetus for travel; amenities encompass the diverse ancillary services at the location, such as accommodation and gastronomy; and accessibility pertains to the convenience with which travelers can access the destination, encompassing transportation and infrastructure (Benur & Bramwell, 2015).

Clarke and Middleton (as referenced in Gunawan, 2009, p. 17) elucidate that tourism products have multiple levels. The core product serves as the principal allure designed to fulfill the essential requirements of the target market. The enabling product comprises items or services essential for tourists during the consumption of the core product, like information services or tour guides. The supporting product comprises supplementary items or services intended to augment the value of the main offering and differentiate it from competitors; these must fulfill or surpass consumer expectations to guarantee satisfaction. The augmented product includes accessibility, ambiance, customer engagement with the service organization, customer involvement, and interactions among tourists. When integrated with the primary product, these components create a comprehensive tourism experience (Zhou et al., 2020).

A cultural tourism offering is a multifaceted entity that provides more than mere cultural experiences. It is bolstered by several supplementary elements that augment its attractiveness and marketability. Effective management of the three fundamental components—attraction, facilities, and accessibility—alongside consideration of all product layers, would substantially influence the competitiveness of a cultural destination and enhance the sustainability of culture-based tourism in the future (Kim et al., 2021).

Research Framework

According to [Uma Sekaran in Business Research \(as cited in Sugiyono, 2017, p. 60\)](#), a theoretical framework is a conceptual model that illustrates how theory relates to the various factors that have been identified as significant issues. Accordingly, the researcher's theoretical framework is presented in the diagram below:



METHODS

Research Methods

Based on the issues addressed, this study employed a qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of phenomena experienced by research subjects—such as behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions—through a descriptive approach within a natural setting (Creswel, 2007). This method utilizes data in the form of words and language to explain phenomena within a specific context and relies on various data collection techniques, including in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis (Tisdell et al., 2025). Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes understanding complex meanings and social contexts through direct interaction between the researcher and the research subjects (Saldaña, 2021).

Research Object

According to Supriati (2012, p. 38), the object of research refers to the variable being examined by the researcher at the location where the study is conducted. Therefore, this research will be carried out in Malaka Regency. In general, the research object provides a comprehensive overview of the research area or target of the study, which includes regional characteristics, organizational structure, main functions, and other relevant aspects in accordance with the mapping of the research area (Satibi, 2011, p. 74).

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection strategies are essential in research, as the primary aim is to acquire valid and pertinent data. Inadequate data collection methods may result in data that fails to satisfy the requisite requirements of research quality (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study employed many strategies for data collection, including observation, interviews, documentation, literature analysis, and triangulation.

Observation was utilized as a primary strategy for field data collecting. Flick (2022) asserts that observation is a data collection approach including the direct examination of research participants to attain a more profound comprehension of the phenomenon. Moreover, rigorous documentation of observational findings is crucial for preserving the impartiality and validity of the data (Angrosino, 2007).

Interviews functioned as the principal approach for obtaining information from research participants. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) characterize interviews as a verbal exchange between the interviewer and the responder, intended to elicit comprehensive information via organized or semi-structured procedures.

The documentation approach was employed to track existing data through written documents, including archives, notes, or other historical information. Bowen (2009) contends that documentation allows researchers to acquire factual data that corroborate the results from observations and interviews.

The literature study entailed the analysis of pertinent academic materials, including books and scholarly papers, to establish a robust theoretical framework and to get a thorough comprehension of the research setting (Webster & Watson, 2002).

Ultimately, triangulation was employed to augment data validity through the integration of several approaches and data sources. Denzin (2017) defines triangulation as a data

gathering approach that amalgamates observation, interviews, and documentation to enhance the dependability of the acquired information.

2.4 Analytical Methods for Data

Qualitative data analysis is a methodical approach to collecting, managing, and interpreting non-numerical data acquired via interviews, observations, and documents, aimed at uncovering patterns, themes, and profound meanings associated with the events under investigation (Sandelowski, 1995). This study does data analysis in two primary phases: data reduction and data display.

Data reduction denotes the process of condensing, filtering, and concentrating raw data into pertinent and significant information. This phase encompasses coding, classifying, and extracting principal themes from field data. The primary objective of data reduction is to assist researchers in comprehending and deriving conclusions from the obtained data (Mezmir, 2020).

Following data reduction, the subsequent step is data presentation. Data presentation entails structuring the condensed data into an organized and intelligible structure, including narratives, tables, graphs, or matrices. This stage enables the information to be organized in a manner that promotes more profound analysis of the data. Effective data presentation facilitates the formulation of findings and the execution of sound judgments (Mezmir, 2020; Watkins, 2017).

Utilizing these two strategies allows researchers to successfully manage qualitative data, facilitating a more thorough comprehension of the research setting and improving the reliability and validity of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

A General Overview of Ikat Textile Weaving in Malaka Regency

The ikat weaving of Malaka Regency consists of two regions, namely:

Foho Ikat Weaving (Highlands/Mountain Region)



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 1. Ikat Weaving with Foho Regional Motif

Foho (Highland/Mountain) ikat weaving features several traditional motifs, including lizards, snakes, and others. According to ancestral beliefs, weavers in ancient times would summon snakes to observe their patterns and colors directly, allowing them to replicate these natural designs in their textiles. As a result, the snake motif in Foho ikat reflects both aesthetic

inspiration and cultural significance. Additionally, Foho ikat is generally considered more valuable due to its lengthy production process and the use of natural dyes, which highlight the unique characteristics of this regional weaving tradition. The motifs in Foho ikat are also noted for their precision and clarity, making them distinct from other styles

Fehan Ikat Textile Weaving (Lowland Area)



(Source by the Researcher, 2022)

Figure 2. Ikat Weaving with Fehan Regional Motif

Fehan Ikat Weaving (Lowland Region) also features several traditional motifs or representations, such as the crocodile motif, latikten (earthworm), and surik ulun (a traditional sword). These three motifs are ancestral designs passed down through generations and continue to be preserved and developed today. In addition to these traditional motifs, contemporary Fehan weaving has incorporated modern elements such as airplane motifs, Garuda (mythical bird) motifs, floral patterns, and others. Fehan motifs are notably distinct from Foho motifs (highland region), particularly in several aspects of the weaving process. For instance, the coloring techniques used by Fehan women often involve naton (store-bought synthetic dyes), which result in brighter and more vibrant hues compared to natural dyes traditionally used in Foho. The weaving technique itself generally follows conventional methods, but the motifs produced are relatively simpler and less time-consuming to create than those found in Foho weaving.

Weaving Materials and Equipment

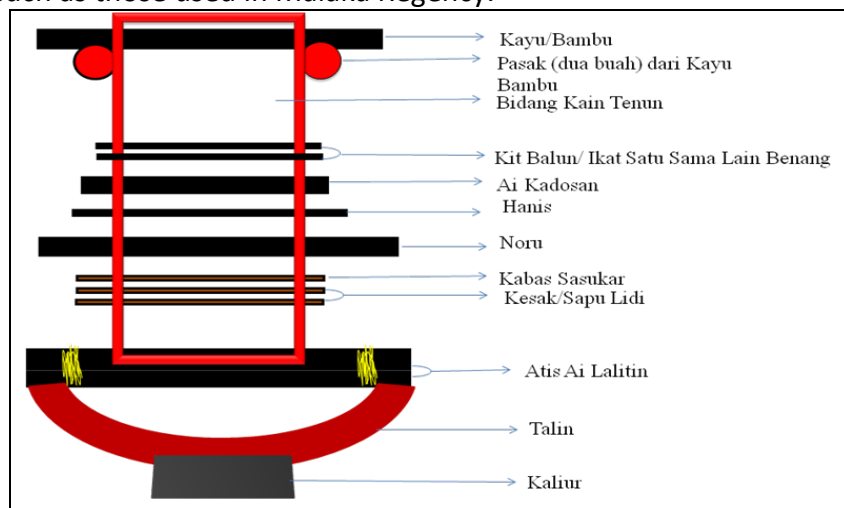
The activity of weaving or soru tais should be understood as a series of processes that begins with the preparation of materials, particularly the yarn, and culminates in the consolidation of warp and weft threads into a single piece of fabric using a set of weaving tools.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 3. A Mama Weaving

The weaving tools used today are heirlooms passed down by ancestors who migrated to Timor Island, including to Belu and Malaka Regencies. If these ancestors indeed originated from Southern China or Yunnan, as theorized by several scholars, then the records presented by Buckley (2017:287–292) may serve as a valuable starting point for tracing the journey of weaving tools before their arrival in the Indonesian archipelago. Archaeological and historical evidence cited by Buckley indicates the discovery of the oldest known weaving devices at Hemudu, located on the southern coast of China, which are estimated to date back 7,000 to 6,000 years. Additionally, weaving tools have also been found in the Yuhang area, associated with the Liangzhu culture, and are believed to be approximately 5,000 to 4,000 years old. These tools already employed a backstrap mechanism, using a strap or cloth to brace the weaver's back—an essential component in maintaining the tension of the warp threads. Furthermore, weaving instruments were also discovered in Shizhaishan, Yunnan Province, dating to the Dian culture, which flourished roughly between 400 BCE and 100 CE. From these origins, the weaving tradition—particularly the tools—was brought to and disseminated across the archipelago, including to the Tetun region of Timor Island, where they acquired local names such as those used in Malaka Regency.



(Source: Selsus Terselly Djese et al., 2019)

Figure 4. Loom (Weaving Tool)

The materials used in this process include yarn as the main material, along with various types of dyes. The yarn used is factory-produced, purchased by the community from local

stores, and the same applies to the dyes. Natural materials, such as cotton yarn and natural dyes derived from certain plants, have become increasingly rare. Several factors, such as the difficulty in obtaining cotton and natural dyes, as well as the lengthy weaving process when using natural materials, have contributed to the shift in the community of Malaka and its surroundings, where they have gradually switched to using factory-made materials, making the use of natural weaving materials less common.

The Weaving Process

The weaving process must be understood as a series of activities that begin with the preparation of materials, particularly the threads, and ultimately lead to the consolidation of the warp and weft threads into a piece of fabric. This woven fabric typically consists of three types: the men's fabric, called *tais mane*, which is usually in the form of a long blanket; and the women's fabric, called *tais feto*, which is typically in the form of a sarong.

Based on the technique used to create motifs, these woven fabrics are also categorized into three types: woven fabric with the *fafoit* or *songket* motif technique, woven fabric with the *futus* or *ikat* weaving technique, and woven fabric with the *sui* or *sulam* (embroidery) technique. In general, these motif techniques distinguish the weaving process by their specific approach to motif creation. The weaving process itself begins with the winding of the threads, stretching the threads on the loom, the tying or creation of motifs, dyeing (which includes soaking and drying), stretching the threads on the weaving field, and the actual weaving.

The process of making *ikat* woven fabric involves several interconnected stages. It begins with *ngelos*, where yarn is wound onto a spindle and then transferred to a thread control device. During this stage, the yarn is treated with warm rice, replacing starch, to make the weaving process easier. The next step is *menghani*, where the design, length, and width of the fabric are determined by wrapping the yarn around a device according to the predetermined dimensions. Following this, the *nyujuk* or *nyusek suri* stage involves arranging the warp threads and their weights, inserting each thread into the gaps of the weaving comb with a shuttle, according to the established pattern. The final step is *gulung*, where the yarn, having passed through the previous stages, is wound up and ready for the weaving process.

In addition, the creation of *ikat* fabric follows several key stages. The first stage is spinning the yarn, where white yarn is spun as the base material for the fabric. Next, during the motif creation stage, the spun yarn is tied with raffia to form the desired pattern. Transparent plastic pattern boards are used to assist in this process. After the motifs are formed, the yarn is then dyed during the coloring stage, where the yarn is dipped into dye according to the desired colors. This dyeing process can be repeated multiple times depending on the number of colors in the pattern. Precision is essential at this stage, as any misalignment of a single thread could disrupt the entire pattern. The final stage is weaving, where the dyed and arranged yarn is woven using a traditional loom, not a machine, to create the fabric according to the predetermined design. All these stages require high skill and attention to detail, resulting in *ikat* fabric that is both artistically and aesthetically valuable.

Description of the Malaka Weaving Pattern

This section presents a description of the woven fabric motifs created by women weavers, commonly referred to as *mama-mama penenun*, in Malaka Regency and its surrounding areas. The geographical scope of motif distribution discussed here is not strictly limited to administrative boundaries, as the spread of cultural elements often transcends or falls short of such formal demarcations. Within this diverse cultural landscape, the variety of motifs recorded among the *mama-mama* of Malaka and neighboring regions includes representations such as the Garuda bird, cross/crucifix, spiral bird nests, *lafaek* (crocodile),

floral patterns, stars, and others. These motifs are produced using three primary weaving techniques: the fafoit or songket technique, the futus or ikat technique, and the sui or embroidery technique. This section focuses on presenting and analyzing the forms of these motifs in an effort to uncover the meanings embedded within them, both in terms of their historical significance (historical dimension) and their relevance in contemporary contexts (present-day dimension).

The Diverse Symbolic Meanings of Weaving Motifs

Plain Weaving Motif with Striped Patterns



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

The plain red weaving motif is believed to symbolize a close connection with nature, representing a vivid emotional bond with the natural world. It also serves as a symbol of blood and sacrifice offered to the God of heaven and earth, invoking timely rainfall.

The Garuda Bird Motif in Traditional Weaving



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Futus / Garuda Motif (in Tetun language) refers to a woven fabric pattern depicting the Garuda bird. The Garuda symbolizes valor, might, and the power of wings that can cleave the sky—representing the ability to soar high, glide gracefully, and dance in the air. It embodies agility in striking and strength in battle. Traditionally, the image of the Garuda is often associated with men who are skillful dancers, formidable warriors, and strong combatants.

The Star Motif in Traditional Weaving



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

The star motif reflects the relationship between the people of Malaka and the sky, which is regarded as something lofty, unreachable, and beyond human grasp (*liman la to'o, liman la kaer*). Its light is seen as a reflection of the Almighty. Stars are also used as decorative elements to enhance the aesthetic value and market appeal of *tais marobo*

The Crocodile Weaving Pattern



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

The selection and restriction of motifs in relation to certain animals are associated with totemism, for example, the crocodile motif or Futus Lafaek. The crocodile or lafaek motif is closely linked to the weaving traditions of the tribes in the Malaka Regency. The Malaka region is home to numerous crocodiles, both in the sea and freshwater. According to the beliefs of the Malaka people, there are two types of crocodiles: the black crocodile and the white crocodile. The white crocodile is considered an ancestor and a relative living in the water. Crocodiles are believed to serve as signs of impending natural disasters, such as floods. If many crocodiles come ashore, it is believed that a natural disaster, such as a flood, will occur in the near future. Floods are frequent during the rainy season because most of Malaka is flat land (Fehan) and is the estuary of the Benenai River. The Benenai River often overflows during the rainy season, leading to flooding.

Each piece of woven fabric with a motif carries symbols and holds deep meanings. These meanings are rooted in philosophy, found in the colors, images, or signs on the fabric. Every sign or symbol conveys multiple layers of meaning or messages. These meanings or messages embody philosophies that can serve as guiding principles for life. The woven motifs produced are not merely decorative but represent the everyday life and values of the people of Malaka Regency.

The Role of the Government in the Preservation of Ikat Weaving in Malaka Regency

Among the various examples of ikat weaving mentioned above, the Malaka Regency government has taken an active role in preserving several of these traditional motifs by organizing training programs. These programs aim to engage mothers and young children, fostering greater interest in weaving and ensuring the continuation of ancient motifs passed down from ancestors to their descendants. The government's primary responsibility is to preserve these motifs, ensuring their survival and development through conservation efforts.

The government's role in the preservation of ikat weaving can be understood through three key indicators: **Firstly**, Government as a Coordinator, The government plays a role in coordinating training in weaving, where it also participates in or organizes various activities to showcase the woven motifs at different exhibitions. The aim is to ensure that these motifs

are recognized and appreciated by a wider audience, while also promoting the woven designs from Malaka Regency.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 5. The Government Attending the Ikat Weaving Exhibition

By participating in various exhibitions or activities related to ikat weaving, the government can more effectively introduce the unique culture of Malaka Regency to both local and external communities. This helps visitors or tourists to become more familiar with and appreciate the ikat weaving products from Malaka Regency. To produce quality work, coordination between the local government and relevant stakeholders is essential.

Regarding the government's role in the preservation of ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product of Malaka Regency, the coordinating process involves the Tourism Department and extension agents who are authorized to provide training in creating motifs according to the needs and desires of the weavers. This includes offering training and the role of the government in preserving ikat weaving by teaching the creation of motifs to weaving communities. The involved agency in this process is the Tourism Department to ensure that the efforts of the community run according to the expectations of all parties.

Based on the interview results, the researcher concludes that the Tourism Department grants authority to the weaving communities, especially the women weavers, to receive training and guidance in motif creation. This has helped the weavers gradually improve their business efforts due to the training or mentoring provided by the government. Furthermore, the government's role in the preservation of ikat weaving to enhance productivity involves the coordination of the Tourism Department (Dinas Pariwisata) granting authority to the Regional National Crafts Council (Dekranasda) of Malaka Regency to offer training to weaving communities, ensuring that their businesses run smoothly and grow over time.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 6. Training on Natural Dyeing Techniques for Woven Fabric Threads

Next, the role of the government is to involve the community in socialization about Ikat weaving. The people of Malaka Regency showed enthusiasm in participating in the socialization organized by the NTT Ministry of Law and Human Rights regional office. This socialization was directly related to Ikat weaving, specifically assisting in completing the documentation deficiencies for MPIG (Geographical Indication Protection Community). It also helped identify existing potential Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) that could be encouraged for recognition, particularly for traditional Ikat weaving. One such tradition is the Ikat weaving, which is a heritage passed down from ancestors and continues to be preserved

today. It is considered a collective/community/region-owned asset, not something that can be claimed as individual/private ownership. The diversity of Ikat weaving in Malaka Regency means that each area has its own uniqueness, colors, or characteristics, with distinct values and stories behind every motif. Therefore, the socialization was organized to ensure that these valuable works are preserved, with the main point being to legally register them to prevent others from plagiarizing or claiming ownership.

From the researcher's observations of the socialization, it is evident that it is crucial to involve the community so they can understand that the woven products produced are not just goods to be sold, but creations that are protected by copyright. It is important for the community to be aware that these products are the result of someone's work, and they should remain vigilant about already finished woven products, registering them with the IPR (Copyright) authorities to prevent others from copying and stealing these woven creations, as they are now protected.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 6. The Community Participates in a Socialization on Ikat Weaving

The government's socialization efforts can also help local communities introduce the complete attire associated with woven fabrics, starting with the jewelry that must be worn when donning traditional woven cloth or ikat fabric. Additionally, there are differences between the attire and accessories for men and women. For men, the traditional clothing is typically called "kain tenun" or "Tais Mane" (men's woven cloth), with a distinctive base color of red, often combined with black, green, and golden yellow. The weaving process itself requires a considerable amount of time. If practiced daily, the woven fabric can be completed in about three weeks to a month. The meaning behind the motif signifies that men are responsible for connecting their family with the Creator. As for the traditional accessories, men typically wear a blanket, sash, headband or "destar," a leather belt, a sword, silver bracelets, and a betel nut holder, often adorned with a hanging chain made of gold or silver.

In the traditional attire of women and its accessories, the fabric is commonly referred to as kain tenun or Tais Feto (women's woven cloth). The woven patterns of tenun feto feature small, circular motifs symbolizing that a woman is always under the authority and protection of a man. The weaving techniques used by the women of Malaka include the ikat lotis/sotis and buna styles. Additionally, the accessories accompanying women's woven cloth include a shoulder cloth (sarung selendang), gold or silver earrings (giwang), silver bracelets (gelang tangan), beads made of mica or bronze, hairpin decorations (tusuk konde) made of gold or silver, bronze giring-giring, gold or silver coins, and a betel container, which is always carried.

Therefore, based on the interview conducted by the researcher with Mrs. Ceicilia B. Buti, a local tourist/consumer, on July 7, 2022, the following question was posed: "In your opinion, how are ideas presented in expressing thoughts about the meaning and significance of the motifs found in the woven ikat fabric of Malaka Regency?"

Her response was: *"The ideas produced by the weaver women are highly creative and full of imagination, such as combining dark and light woven colors, which carry deep and meaningful significance. As a result, tourists/consumers can understand the intent and meaning behind the woven motifs."*

Mrs. Florinda Araujo, also a local tourist/consumer, added on July 16, 2022: *"The ideas behind the creation of these woven motifs should indeed come from experienced weavers, because sometimes tourists or consumers recommend specific motifs that they are looking for or need. Furthermore, with the development of modern times, many people are now producing woven fabric into clothing, so they desire beautiful and attractive woven motifs."*

Mrs. Noviana Luruk, a weaver herself, on July 17, 2022, also commented: *"The ideas for woven motifs nowadays come in various types, ranging from dark motifs to bright red ones. Additionally, in this modern era, it is important for woven motifs to be modern, but they must not stray from the culture left behind by our ancestors."*

Moreover, various woven products created by the weaver women have transformed into a diverse range of handicrafts, such as bags, shoes, necklaces, clothing, and more. These woven products contribute to the local economy, providing an additional source of income for the community.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 6. The woven products are produced into several items.

In addition, based on an interview with Mrs. Noviana Luruk, a weaver from Malaka, conducted on July 17, 2022, with the following question: "In your opinion, has the government ever played a role in involving the woven works you produce in participating in various activities or events organized by the government in Malaka Regency? Or have you ever participated in events to promote your woven works to tourists or consumers who appreciate weaving, both within and outside the region?"

Her response was: *"Such events, festivals, and similar activities are indeed often held in Malaka Regency, but I personally have not approached the government or sought information about these activities. Therefore, the woven products I make have not been involved in promoting my weaving. Instead, I usually sell them in the market or to family and friends who are already familiar with me."*

Furthermore, Mr. Rofinus Bau, the Head of the Malaka Regency Tourism Office, added on July 4, 2022: *"The government always involves the local community in participating in various events or festivals held in Malaka Regency. However, there are still many people who weave at home and are reluctant to participate in such activities. One of the challenges may be their age, as the mothers in the village are often unaware of these activities."*

According to Mrs. Cecilia B. Buti, a tourist/consumer, in an interview on July 7, 2022, she also added: *"As the Vice Chairperson of the Malaka Regency Dekranasda (National Craft Council), I work in collaboration with the government on activities directly related to weaving in Malaka Regency, together with the weaving mothers. I often organize weaving workshops, where at the end of each month or after the woven products are completed, we visit to check and assess the work of the weavers. We then assist in promoting the woven products to tourists or consumers interested in buying them. Not only that, but we also often provide various weaving tools to the weavers so they can continue to feel motivated. Additionally, we conduct natural dyeing activities on the threads to be woven using natural materials, which helps to revive and preserve the culture that has existed for generations, ensuring it continues to thrive."*

Based on the researcher's observation, the role of the government in the preservation of ikat weaving can be considered quite good, as the government consistently involves the local community's woven products in various activities such as events, fashion shows, exhibitions, and more.

Secondly, the government acts as a facilitator. In this role, local governments can accelerate development by improving the socio-cultural environment surrounding the practice of ikat weaving (including community behaviors and cultural attitudes) and by implementing more effective regional spatial planning policies. The government's role in preserving ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product in Malaka Regency has proven to be successful and effective when assessed through the facilitator indicator. This is evidenced by the collaboration between the Department of Tourism and the Regional National Crafts Council (Dekranasda) of Malaka Regency, which provides support in the form of facilities and materials for the production of ikat fabrics. This initiative aims to assist local weavers in producing high-quality woven textiles that are competitive in both local and international markets.

According to the researcher's perspective, the Dewan Kerajinan Nasional Daerah (Dekranasda) of Malaka Regency serves as a center for providing training services to local weavers in developing and innovating textile motifs. In addition to its role in offering training and guidance, Dekranasda also functions as a promotional platform for showcasing the ikat weaving products created by the local women weavers (mama-mama penenun). This is supported by a quality control system to assess product eligibility before being marketed. Based on the interview findings, the researcher understands that the Malaka Regency government established Dekranasda not only as a space for motif creation but also as a strategic effort to enhance the quality of woven products. This initiative aims to motivate the women weavers to continue their craft and to consistently produce high-quality and innovative ikat textiles.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 6. The Role of Dekranasda in Supporting Traditional Weavers

In this context, the researcher conducted an interview with Mr. Fransiscus Seran, the Traditional Leader (Tua Adat), on July 13, 2022. He stated: *"The people of Malaka currently lack adequate facilities to store or display their woven textile products. So far, the government has not provided a designated shop to promote the woven products of Malaka Regency. However, the government is collaborating with the Regional National Crafts Council (Dekranasda) of Malaka Regency to assist in supporting and promoting these local weaving products."*

This was further supported by Mrs. Bernadeta Luruk, a local tourist and consumer, during an interview conducted on July 16, 2022. She expressed: *"Ikat weaving is considered something of great value because it provides benefits, serves a purpose, and holds significance for the local community. It represents an important cultural heritage passed down from ancestors that the community strives to preserve. Moreover, weaving has become a source of income for the women weavers."*

The researcher also interviewed Mama Noviana Luruk, a weaver, on July 17, 2022. She stated: *"We are grateful for the support of Dekranasda Malaka Regency. Through their assistance, we weavers have the opportunity to promote and sell our woven products to tourists and consumers. The vice chairwoman of Dekranasda has kindly offered her own residence as a place for us to sell our products, as the local government has yet to provide any formal facilities or designated spaces for weaving products."*

Based on the researcher's observations, it appears that the Malaka Regency government still faces challenges in providing infrastructure or commercial spaces, such as shops, for weavers to store and sell their products. However, efforts are being made to collaborate with Dekranasda to offer alternative spaces where weavers can display and sell their woven goods.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 7. Storage Facility for Woven Textile Products of Malaka Regency

Thirdly is the Government as a Stimulator, the Government of Malaka Regency plays a crucial role as a stimulator in the preservation and development of the traditional ikat weaving industry. This role is evident through various concrete measures, such as the creation of promotional brochures and the organization of exhibitions aimed at introducing the work of local weavers. Brochures serve as a medium for disseminating information and promoting the unique cultural value of ikat woven products to broader audiences at local, national, and international levels. Meanwhile, exhibitions provide a platform for weavers to showcase their products directly, expand their market reach, and attract the interest of both consumers and potential investors.

The author observes that these efforts are not carried out in isolation but involve the collaboration of relevant institutions, such as the Department of Tourism and the National Craft Council (Dekranasda), which actively support promotional and marketing activities. Furthermore, the government encourages business growth by providing commercial spaces, exhibition facilities, and developing industrial zones that support the advancement of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), including ikat weaving businesses. These initiatives are also intended to attract new investors and sustain the interest of existing ones through effective promotional strategies.

Through its role as a stimulator, the author recognizes that weavers not only receive support in marketing their products but are also motivated to enhance the quality and productivity of their woven goods. Strong collaboration between the government and the weaving community is essential in creating new business opportunities, expanding market networks, and preserving local cultural heritage so that it continues to grow and gain recognition beyond the region.

Therefore, based on the interviews conducted by the researcher with the Head of the Malaka District Department, the question was asked: *"In your opinion, does the government play a role in establishing regulations for the community in efforts to preserve the cultural tourism products of Malaka District, such as in competitions, fashion shows, and other events?"* The response was: *"Of course, as a government, we must require the community to participate. In efforts to develop and preserve ikat weaving, we want Malaka's weaving culture to continue thriving and advancing. For example, by involving the community in various cultural art competitions, stage performances, fashion shows, and others, so we can together introduce our woven products to everyone, showing that we are no less than other regions."*

Additionally, an interview with Mrs. Demetrianita Seuk included the question: *"In your opinion, how should the community respond to the regulation set by the government regarding the customary practice of wearing ikat woven fabric every Tuesday to Friday in offices, and wearing it during major events such as welcoming important guests, Malaka's anniversary, Independence Day, August 17, and so on?"* Her response was: *"Certainly, regulations like this are much better because they allow us, the local community, to preserve the ikat weaving tradition of Malaka. It also helps promote ikat weaving to tourists visiting Malaka, and creates a culture of 'woven days.' Furthermore, this regulation allows the weaving mothers to receive orders for woven fabric and improve their economic livelihoods."*

Another question posed to Mrs. Demetrianita was: *"In your opinion, do the roles of the government and the local community have a significant impact on changing the mindset of the community to participate in learning about the weaving culture in Malaka?"* Her response was: *"It all comes back to each individual's personal desire. If someone has the intention and talent for weaving, they will naturally learn to weave."*

Mrs. Selviana Nahak, a local tourist/consumer, also added: *"If the regulation to wear woven fabric every Tuesday and Friday is enforced, I think it is very good because it allows the local community to get used to wearing ikat. It shouldn't just be worn during traditional ceremonies or when important guests are welcomed. It's better to establish a 'woven day' culture so the community can better recognize and understand the ikat weaving from their own homeland. Even now, many young people still aren't very interested or knowledgeable about the ikat weaving in Malaka."*

Mrs. Polandina Hoar, a weaving mother, also added: *"After the last few years, when the regulation of wearing ikat during office working hours was established, we, the weaving mothers, started receiving various orders for woven fabric, with a variety of different motifs from elderly people, young people, and even men. This has helped us earn an income that contributes to our family's economy."*

Furthermore, Mama Bernadeta Uduk, a local tourist/consumer, mentioned: *"The ikat weaving is also designated every year with a weaving day regulation, which means that we are unconsciously introducing and promoting the distinctive ikat weaving from Malaka. Why do I say this? Because people working in offices often travel, either within the region or outside. When they wear ikat fabric during their official travel, many people see it. And not only that, if they take photos and upload them on social media with the woven motif they're wearing, many others will see and learn about the ikat weaving from Malaka."*

From conducting these interviews, the researcher learned that the role of the government is crucial in supporting the development and preservation of ikat weaving in Malaka. Ikat weaving still requires special attention from both the government and the local community, ensuring that the weaving tradition in Malaka continues to produce high-quality woven fabrics.



(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Figure 8. The government has established a regulation requiring the wearing of woven fabrics on certain days.

Overall, regarding the role of the government in the preservation of ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product in Malaka Regency, based on the three indicators above, the Malaka Regency Government is the most prioritized authority in matters related to the development of the region. One of its key roles is in the preservation of ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product. The government consistently encourages and motivates the local community in efforts to preserve ikat weaving, ensuring that it continues to develop, progress, and remain one of the cultural symbols that represent the identity of the region.

The Government Conducts Dyeing Training in Weaving

The government, in collaboration with the Dekranasda of Malaka Regency, has organized an activity focused on fabric dyeing in weaving. This training marks the first day of this initiative for the people of Malaka, especially for the women who possess skills in weaving traditional Malaka fabrics. This event is extremely beneficial and serves to expand the knowledge of the local community, particularly those who are unfamiliar with the process of dyeing woven fabrics using natural materials. As a result, the community is encouraged to engage more actively in weaving.

Natural dyeing requires a meticulous process that needs to be carefully studied and practiced. Furthermore, it is expected that the women representatives from each district in Malaka, after completing this training, will be able to share their knowledge with the communities in other districts.

In this way, both the government and the community can work together to preserve the ikat weaving tradition in Malaka Regency through various small-scale activities, such as fabric dyeing and organizing small training sessions on proper weaving techniques, among other initiatives.

Table 1. Natural Dye Materials in Weaving

No	The name of the material	Description
1	The noni plant, angšana tree bark, teak tree bark, mangosteen fruit, and annatto.	To produce the color red
2	Pandan leaves (<i>Dracaena angustifolia</i>), mango leaves (<i>Mangifera indica</i>), and mimosa grass leaves (<i>Mimosa pudica</i>).	To produce the color green

3	Turmeric, lantana flowers, sunflower, sugar palm tree, and jackfruit.	To produce the color yellow
4	Cashew fruit and banana	To produce the color black
5	Butterfly pea flower and indigo leaves	To produce the color blue
6	Morinda bark and areca fruit.	To produce the color brown

(Source by Researcher, 2022)

To produce color from available materials, the method is quite simple. Plants or tree bark intended to be used as dye are first finely ground, then mixed with water and filtered to extract the essence. Once the essence is obtained, the thread to be dyed is immersed in the color for a minimum of 24 hours on one side. Afterward, the thread is flipped to the other side, and the soaking process is repeated for another 24 hours.

Naton/Kimia Dyeing Thread (Store Thread)

The thread used for weaving with synthetic dyes differs significantly from thread dyed with natural dyes, as the colors tend to be much brighter and lack the natural scent of the materials found in traditional handwoven ikat fabrics made from natural sources. Additionally, the process of making woven fabrics with synthetic dyes is much faster and can be woven immediately. As a result, many people in Malaka still prefer to use synthetic-dyed threads or purchase ready-made weaving threads from stores.

Table 2. Dyeing Materials for Naton/Chemical (Store Thread) in Weaving

No	The name of the material	Description
1	The dye from the store is Naton/chemical-based.	Black, red, blue, yellow, purple, green, orange, and others
2	Store thread	The yarn that has been dyed

(Source by Researcher, 2022)

Among the two dyes mentioned above, natural colors tend to retain the authenticity of their natural hues compared to synthetic (chemical) dyes. However, there are also natural dyes that exhibit bright and vivid colors, depending on the available natural materials. These materials can be sourced from the surrounding community. Furthermore, the outcome is also influenced by the process of mixing the dyes, which can result in the desired vibrant colors for the woven fabric.

DISCUSSION

Preservation is an effort through processes and methods aimed at preserving, protecting, and potentially developing tangible or intangible entities to prevent their extinction and ensure their continued existence.

The researcher utilizes the variable of conservation in this study, with three (3) indicators to examine the role of the government in the conservation of ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product of Malaka Regency.

Based on this theory, the indicators employed by the researcher in this study are:

The Government as a Coordinator

A coordinator is understood as the process of integrating goals and activities across distinct units (such as departments or functional areas) within an organization in order to achieve its overall objectives (Kozlowski & Bell, 2013).

Based on the author's observations during research on the role of the government in preserving tenun ikat as a cultural tourism product in Malaka Regency, it was found that the government plays an active coordinating role through various initiatives related to tenun ikat. These include organizing exhibitions, cultural events or art performances, and fashion shows that incorporate tenun ikat, with the aim of increasing public awareness of the region's distinctive local products.

Furthermore, the government consistently encourages, motivates, and supports local communities to preserve and develop tenun ikat, ensuring its continued growth and enhancement as a high-quality cultural product. This is achieved through training programs and outreach activities that aim to educate the public about the importance and value of tenun ikat in Malaka's cultural identity.

The Government as an Enabler

A facilitator is a person who assists and directs a training process, mostly aimed at enhancing participants' comprehension of the offered content or materials (Cranley et al., 2017).

In the author's research in Malaka Regency, it was noted that the local government exhibits considerable enthusiasm in imparting knowledge, understanding, and practical support to the weaving community—especially women artisans—by ensuring access to weaving materials, including threads, cotton, dyes, and other essential supplies. The government interacts closely with the Malaka branch of Dewan Kerajinan Nasional Daerah (Dekranasda) to provide focused support and motivation to these weavers, with the objective of inspiring them to continuously create high-quality woven items.

Currently, the Malaka Regency Government has not established a designated location for weavers to keep or exhibit their completed products. To address this deficiency, Mrs. Cecilia B. Buti, the Deputy Chairperson of Dekranasda, has graciously provided her property as a provisional venue for the storage and promotion of woven products crafted by local craftsmen.

The Government as a Catalysator

The government's involvement as a catalyst is evident in its initiatives to establish and nurture enterprises through targeted activities designed to attract new investors, while simultaneously supporting and expanding existing businesses in the region. This encompasses the creation of brochures to promote industrial zones, the establishment of business infrastructures for local goods, and the advocacy of traditional textiles by urging local communities to don handwoven fabrics on government-designated days.

The author's findings during their residence in Malaka Regency indicate that the local administration has made considerable efforts to promote handwoven textile items to a broader audience. A key strategy is the development of promotional pamphlets that highlight local weaving products, aimed at captivating the attention of both international tourists and Indonesian nationals. These pamphlets emphasize the distinctiveness and market viability of locally manufactured textiles, facilitating their promotion to wider markets.

The government use numerous digital platforms, including Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, with printed media, to augment the visibility of tenun ikat groups and their products. This digital marketing approach seeks to enhance tourist visitation and broaden public understanding of the region's cultural heritage.

The author finds that the government is essential in protecting and promoting tenun ikat in Malaka Regency through these three indicators. Considering that tenun ikat is an essential component of local cultural identity, its authenticity must be protected and safeguarded. The government, in collaboration with the local community, is anticipated to dedicate targeted efforts to guarantee the sustained development of this traditional skill and the manufacture of superior woven items.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicate that the government has made significant efforts to preserve ikat weaving as a cultural tourism product in Malaka Regency, however these efforts are not yet fully optimized. These endeavors are manifested through diverse initiatives, including the organization of training programs on fabric dyeing techniques, the execution of public awareness campaigns, and the promotion of ikat weaving products at various events, such as cultural festivals, fashion shows, and other public activities. These measures illustrate the government's dedication to preserving ikat weaving and enhancing Malaka's status as a culturally affluent regency.

The research emphasizes that ikat weaving in Malaka originates from two specific places, Foho and Fehan, each characterized by its own weaving designs. Notwithstanding their outward disparities, these patterns have a unified philosophical significance—symbolizing peace and the ancestral ideals inherited through generations. These principles are anticipated to be maintained and imparted to future generations, guaranteeing the cultural heritage of ikat weaving in Malaka persists over time.

Moreover, the author underscores that ikat weaving occupies a profoundly important position within the community. It is considered both a significant cultural treasure and a symbol of social togetherness and local identity. For the inhabitants of Malaka, ikat weaving represents pride, unity, and respect for traditional customs. Consequently, it functions not only as a cultural tourism commodity but also as a lasting manifestation of legacy that warrants preservation and promotion.

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