

The Role of Indonesian Women in Internalizing the Values of Traditional Fabrics

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Abstract

Indonesian women play an important role as culture performer of fashion design, one of which is to preserve Indonesia's traditional fabrics. Since women are natural educators, they get pregnant, give birth, nurture, and educate their children; they can transform knowledge and culture through their daily activities as their expression of love to their children and family. This is reflected from the way they communicate their love through traditional fabrics as a part of lifestyle. The existence of studies on Indonesia's traditional fabrics proves the the roles of women as as wife, a mother, and a part of the society are importantly big. The use of the traditional fabrics function and mean, based on ethnographical studies, a lot in several activities of Indonesian women's life cycle. Those fabrics have several characters either in design such as size, pattern, color, and aesthetic values, or in their manufacturing technology so that they are interesting as well as important to study. The results of the study show that the existence of Indonesia' traditional fabrics in either external and internal environment of Indonesian women is believed to be a medium of value internalization through the processes of knowing, doing, and being as an expression of meaning establishing and nation character building.

Keywords: Internalizing values, Indonesia's traditional fabrics, nation characters, roles of women.

1. Introduction

This study is an important part of the study on Indonesian first ladies' national costume since the era of Fatmawati to the era of Kristiani Herrawati (1945-2014). The fact that fabrics are an important part of Indonesian women's life makes this study important. The main issue of this study focuses on the role of women as an culture performerin such fields as textile, textile crafts, and fashion.

Traditional fabrics are a means of internalizing values. They become modern design with classical taste (physical and internal meanings) can actually promote the national culture of Indonesia. In addition to functioning as daily needs, traditional fabrics also enhance the economy and promote culture each fabric represents. The existence and development of traditional fabrics in the modern era prove that they keep contributing in textile crafts by "answering" the current fashion trend(s). Traditional fabrics have a huge opportunity to survive in the modern era of fashion by the help from both academic crafters and traditional fabric crafters to create new products using traditional fabrics.

In the meantime, the role of women as the first educators in the family can be the essence of culture be wearing traditional fabrics in their daily life (making it a lifestyle) as value internalization from generation to generation. The design(s) of Indonesia's traditional fabrics takes place as a communication medium between the past (cultural heritage) and the future (the development of fashion trends). It is also to dig up noble values of the hisroty, the techniques of making the designs that promote creativity, innovation, and tradition which are good aspects in building national identity (Delgado, 2015). Fabrics, particularly the traditional ones in this context, are the closest things to human body since they directly touch the humans' skin so that they give both physical and psychological effects to whoever wearing them. Therefore, garment, in addition to becoming a medium in internalizing values, is also believed to be the first habitat for humans' body since it is the first space humans' body lives in (Saltzman, in de F. Sanches (2015).

2. Discussion

a. The Role of Women as a Culture Performer

The role of women in culture is closely related to textile since women are the first creatures to have knowledge on how to create tools in life due to their duty to protect their uterus (getting pregnant and giving birth) (Soekarno, 1963). In this context, women are natural designers, which in the modern era are to understand designs as a decision making process which result in meaningful experiences for anybody wearing their design to connect to their daily life (Tekan and Cooper, in de F. Sanches, 2015). In Indonesia, women have been involved as member of organizations and the society and actively participate in them while wearing *hijab* and veil as media to show gender difference and preserve their branding (Aryanti, 2015).

Each society has their own culture which cannot be separated to each other. Culture can actually create good characters for people in it. Meanwhile, the worth of humans lies in their characters (the way they think and

behave, including how they look/ wearing their clothes). The function of national personality/ character itself is as a feature that each individual has norms, values, and philosophies of life within their mind and soul that have: 1) establishment; 2) self-confidence; 3) strength; 4) persistence; and 5) emotional stability (Rostoyati, 1994).

Women as culture performers have direct influence in continuing or changing components of ideas in the national culture ideology. Their role in the society and the nation is very crucial because they are believed to be the symbol of life mortality, life balancer, and major educator (Ki Hajar Dewantoro in KOWANI, 1958). The process of education means that women have their own roles in education the youth comprising 1) developing family culture and environment; 2) taking parts in either informal or formal education (men and women have equal chance and position in this); and 3) taking parts in mass education (education related to issues within the society) (Edi Sedyawati, 2007).

The role of women as educators develop from instructive to consultative in accordance with the needs of children who keep developing as they grow so that the main factor of their success as educators is having knowledge and wisdom (Edi Sedyawati, 2007). Nowadays, women tend to have double roles. In their family, they have to be a good mother for their children and a good wife for their husband. In the society, on the other hand, they have to play whatever role they choose to decide (for instance if they are a school teacher, they need to be a professional one). This double role or double casting is often related to the development of the era where there are equal rights between men and women so that women are not only in charge for domestic role in their family but also have similar opportunities to actualize themselves in public. This means that women are equal partners for men and vice versa (Edi Sedyawati, 2007).

Considering that women are of importance, there is a special day to commemorate them. In 1959, president Soekarno announced that December 22 was the national mother's day. This announcement was then legalized to be a presidential decree number 316 year 1959 on December 22. This date was chosen to also commemorate the first women congress conducted at Mandalabhakti Perempuan Utama building, Adisucipto street, Yogyakarta. The movement was considered one of the most important efforts of Indonesia women's struggle (Edi Sedyawati, 2007).

There are plenty of ways to develop Indonesian women's skills. One of them is by empowering their souls to protect themselves. Besides, character education is also effective to create good characters so that they can filter themselves from bad influences surrounding them. For women, education is not something difficult to go through since they already have potentials of decency and purity (Ki Hajar Dewantoro in KOWANI, 1958). In Indonesia, there is no pressure making women unequal to men in public. On the other hand, western countries introduced the concept of "Victorian" in which women are soft and weak so that they always need protection especially in public (Edi Sedyawati, 2007).

b. Internalizing Values

Internalizing values in education is a process where values are internalized into each individual joining the educational processes so that those values can be reflected in their personality and daily life (Muhria, 2017). There are three important pillar in internalizing values 1) family is the first and core institution; 2) school as a formal educational institution; and 3) worship places as a place to strengthen moral values. Meanwhile, the processes of acquiring knowledge are externalization, objectification, and internalization. Conceptually, knowledge externalization is a process of personal knowledge exchange where knowledge among individuals communicates. Objectification is the process where knowledge turns into objective reality to be admitted by organizations or communities. Internalization is the process where objectified knowledge is personally used by individuals to socialize certain values. Knowledge internalization is done through discovering and rediscovering the acquired knowledge (Berger and Luckmann, 1966).

Theories to discuss internalization are those of psychoanalysis and psychology. Psychoanalysis sees internalization as a process of value transformation possessed by a certain group; for instance, from parents to their children and grand children. Psychology, in the meantime, defines internalization as a way of developing soul dimensions. Psychology encourages non-physical awareness towards a certain values by internalizing external functions. Internalization aims at 1) knowing, in which individuals are do understand concepts through explanation, examples, and repeated implementation; 2) doing, in which individuals are able to do what they know; and 3) being, in which the implementation from their knowledge has become habit. There are two methods of internalization 1) reflection method. In this process, individuals constantly repeat what happens in their life; and 2) silence method. In this method, values are internalized through silent moments. In the meantime, to get motivated in doing value internalization, there needs to be three approaches comprising content, process, and knowledge. Theories with content approach puts more stress on what makes individuals do something with a certain ways and a certain values.

c. Indonesia's Traditional Fabrics

Since the beginning of the basic needs of human to clothing, food, and home, fashion, as part of the clothing needs, has developed. This development has impacts to the way humans behave and think as well (Hom, 1981). In Indonesia, each traditional fabric reflects a variety of values and culture of each region the fabric comes from.

Even though the evolution of Indonesia's traditional fabric is relatively slow, it is shown that the traditional fabrics have been existing and accepted collectively by Indonesians. This is such a good thing to preserve traditional values indicated by their adaptability to the modern era and the needs of distinctive cultural and social needs (Delgado, 2015). The mode of dresses or clothes made out of the traditional fabrics is a dynamic and interactive way which reflects certain meaning triggering positive behaviors in life (de F. Sanches, 2015). For the sake of human existence, symbolic representation from artifacts (traditional fabrics) is often prioritized instead of practicality. For an adaptable physical way, expressions and representation of Indonesia's traditional fabrics are becoming meaning construction and a part of material culture (de F. Sanches, 2015).

Indonesia has several traditional fabrics based on its ethnical culture. Those various fabrics are grouped based on their fiber cloth and techniques of making. In addition, the fabrics also have different functions and meaning according to the culture and belief of the society and region when the fabric comes from. According to Anas (1995:2), Indonesia's traditional fabrics, based on the techniques of making, are divided into

1. Woven fabrics. This type of fabric is a combination of elongated and widened woven threads. Types of fabrics included into this kind are *Palekar*, *Lurik*, and *Songket*.
2. Unwoven fabrics. This type of fabric is made through single element processes: knotting and binding (Birrel, 1974). This type is structural. Some of the examples are lace, net, and wicker.
3. Wrought fabrics. This is a type of fabric made out of specific materials such as thin tree skin.
4. Decorative applicative fabrics. This type is actually an additional process of decorating fabrics using several techniques as coloring. Thus, this fabric is applicative.

Generally, the visual characters of Indonesia's traditional fabrics (Achjadi, 2003; Doemena, 1990; and Yayasan Harapan Kita/ BP3 TMII, 1995), are as follows.

1. Long cloth (Figure 1.)
 - a. Rectangular
 - b. Each tip of the cloth does not touch each other
 - c. The decorative aspects of the long cloth consist of:
 - 1) Body: main pattern
 - 2) Papan: complement pattern
 - 3) Tumpal: triangle pattern
 - 4) Tip decoration: decorative tip
 - 5) Head of the *Tapih*: decoration on the tip of the *Tapih*.
 - d. How to wear
 - 1) Female: rolled around the waist from left to right with little folding in the front
 - 2) Male: rolled around the waist from right to left with bigger folding in the front
 - 3) Should touch the ankles
 - e. Formal
 - f. Size: Width: 100-110 cm and length: 250 cm
2. *Sarung* (Figure 2.)
 - a. Tubular (when it is flat, it is like cube)
 - b. Long with each tip sewn
 - c. It is also Malay costume
 - d. Parts of *Sarung*
 - e. How to wear it: rolled around the waist
 - f. Size: width = 100 – 110 cm and length = 180-220 cm
3. *Dodot* (Figure 3.)
 - a. Consisting of two long fabrics combined into one piece.
 - b. A symbol of special recognition for noble people, both men and women.
 - c. *Dodot* for men is combined with trousers having a certain pattern.
 - d. Size
 - 1) The size is twice as many time longer than the normal long fabrics.
 - 2) Female: length = 400 cm and width = 200 cm.
 - 3) Male: length = 500 cm and width = 200 cm.
 - 4) Kings: length = 750 cm and width = 250 cm
4. *Selendang* (Figure 4.)
 - a. Complement for ladies' dress, especially the long fabrics.
 - b. The pattern resembles its match (the long fabrics).
 - c. Not having any patterns on the tip of the fabric.
 - d. To wear it, it is put on over one shoulder.
 - e. Width is 45 cm and length is 150 cm.

5. *Kemben* (Figure 5.)

- a. *Batik* fabrics that function to cover the area around the chests of Javanese ladies.
- b. Based on the pattern, *Kemben* consists of:
 - 1) *Sindangan. Kemben* with *Wajik* pattern in the center of it.
 - 2) *Blumbangan. Kemben* with rectangular patter in the center of it.
 - 3) *Buyr. Kemben* with pattern in the whole part of it.
- c. To wear it, there is a *Jarik* that functions as a belt.

6. *Kain Iket* (Figure 6.)

- a. It is a square *Batik* functions as a head piece.
- b. The variety of patterns is *tengahan*, *blumbungan*, *byur*, and *kembangan*.
- c. In some places, it has different names.
- d. It is only worn by men.
- e. The sizes are 90 x 90 cm, 100 x 100 xm, and 105 x 105 cm.

In Indonesia, traditional fabrics, in addition to being clothes for women, either for daily appearance or for certain ceremonial events, are also worn for

- 1) Carrying things
- 2) Carrying babies
- 3) Swings for babies
- 4) Covering heads from the sun
- 5) Millineris such as *Kemben* or *Selendang*
- 6) Covering corpse
- 7) Educative tools for children

Indonesia's traditional fabrics cannot be separated from their cyclelife within the society. Indonesian women commonly wear them on:

1. Pre-labor phase. In this phase, long fabrics are used as a symbol of big and endless hope, safety, and prosperity. There are several ceremonies prior to the labor using traditional fabrics such as four-month pregnancy ceremony and seven-month pregnancy ceremony.
2. Labor phase. Promoting the same symbol, long fabrics in this phase are usually used to carry babies for the first time, cover placenta, carry babies for the haircutting ceremony, and so on.
3. Development phase. In this phase, fabrics are usually used as a bottom for boys who have been circumcised.
4. Marriage phase. In this phase, long fabrics are usually used for engagement ceremony, bathing ceremony, and the wedding ceremony. Long fabrics in this phase are usually symbolized as:
 - a. Love from men to women (symbol of wealth gifts).
 - b. Reminder from men to women to look good.
 - c. Reminder that women are the family protector (taking care of the children, carrying things, and in charge of the house).
 - d. Reward from the men to the mother of their wife to be since the mother has successfully educated their daughters to be a good wife.
5. Death phase. Long fabrics in this phase are used to cover the body of the deceased ones as a symbol of immortal peace.
6. In several occasions, long facrics are also a symbol of noble gifts for noble people such as parents, teachers, employers, etc.
7. Long fabrics also give aesthetic values to whoever wearing them. For instance, the pleated variation in some of ladies' bottom and men's head piece (*iket*) showing their wellgrooming skill and also dignity. In addition, the typical wrapping and folding techniques in several traditional costumes also show that highly-trained affective and psychomotor skills.
8. Wearing traditional fabrics can also give certain pleasure and satisfaction. It is believed that fashion always brings joy, intrinsic affective pleasure, social satisfaction, and sensory experiences as a 'vehicle' for anybody wearing them. According to Lionel Tiger, there are four types of pleasure human beings can have:
 - 1) physiological pleasure. This type is usually acquired through senses;
 - 2) social pleasure. This type is related to interpersonal relation, identity, and social status;
 - 3) psychological pleasure. This is usually about emotional andcognitive reactions;
 - 4) Ideological pleasure. This type of pleasure is commonly acquired from the dynamics of values within the society, including taste and belief (Jordan, in de F. Sanches, 2015).

3. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the making, visual characters, how to wear, functions, and also meanings of Indonesia's traditional fabrics, it can be concluded that the value internalization is shown through the message about the nature of women in a process called *knowing*. The nature of women as somebody who gives birth, nurtures their

babies, and takes care of their children creates the next generation (*doing*) so that those values are internalized from generation to generation through the traditional fabrics. Women's knowledge of the long fabrics as part of the fashion, complement for their daily needs, and a symbol of education for the next generation leads to the characters of the next generation that is in accordance with the identity of the national (*being*).

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Suciati was born in Bandung, 28 January, 1975. She earned her bachelor degree majoring in fashion designing education at UPI in 2001, master's degree from the Faculty of Arts and Design at ITB in 2007 and is currently a doctor candidate from the same faculty in ITB. Since 2002, she has been working as a teaching staff at the Study Program of Fashion Designing Educaion, Departement of Family Welfare Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. During her career, she has been conducting several research studies and community services on fashion designing either funded by the government or independently.

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Agus Sachari was born in Bandung, 22 October, 1956. His education background covers bachelor of design from the Faculty of Arts and Design, Institut Teknologii Bandung in 1983, masters of design at ITB in 1994, and

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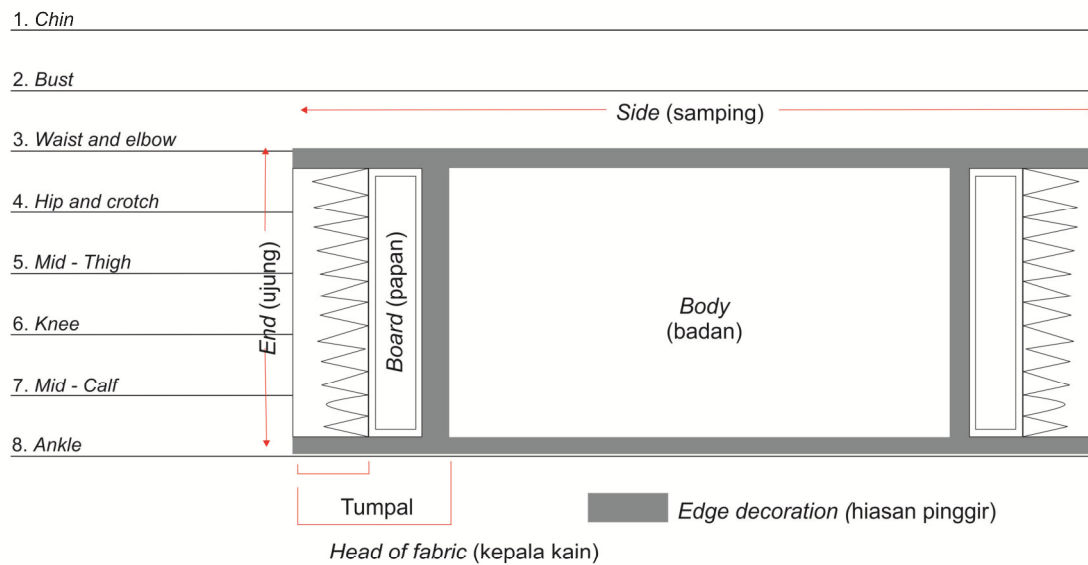


Figure 1. Kain panjang/tapih/jarik/sinjang kebat (Suciati, 2015)

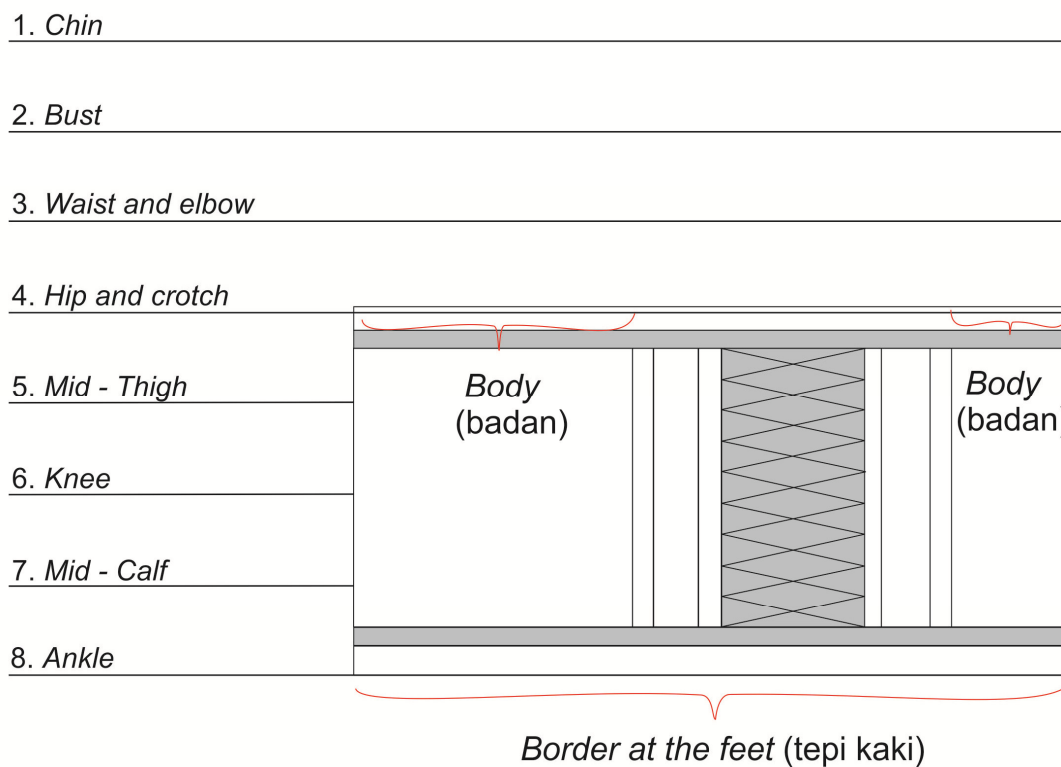


Figure 2. Kain sarung (Suciati, 2015)

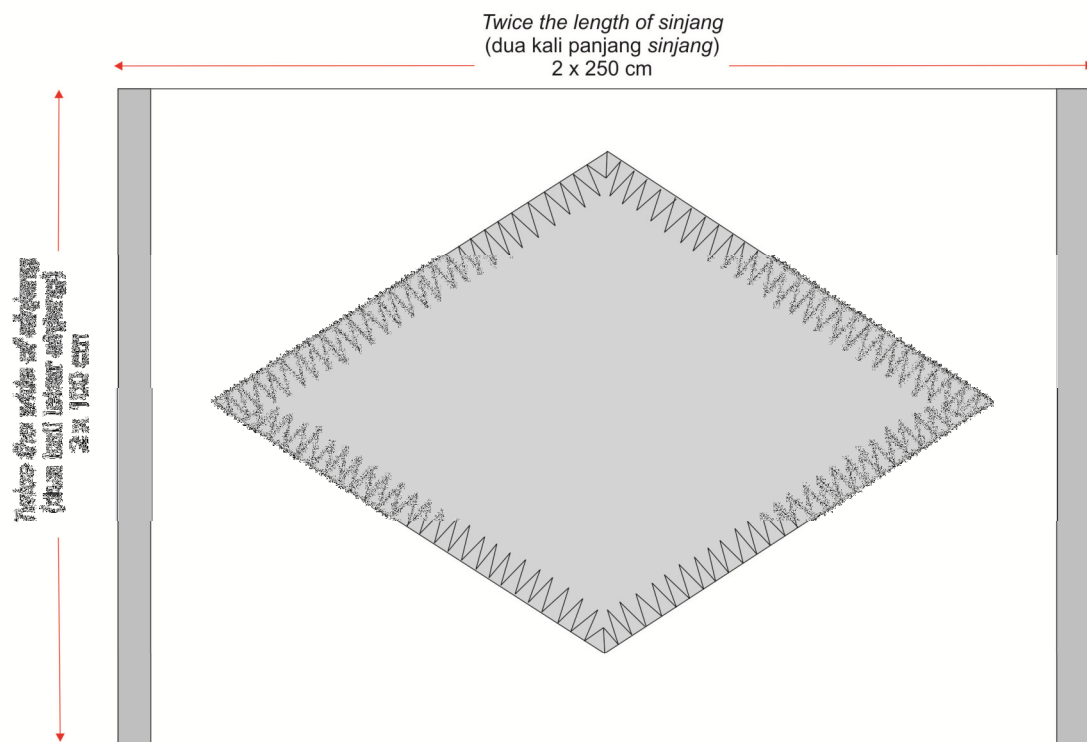


Figure 3.kain dodot (Suciati, 2015)

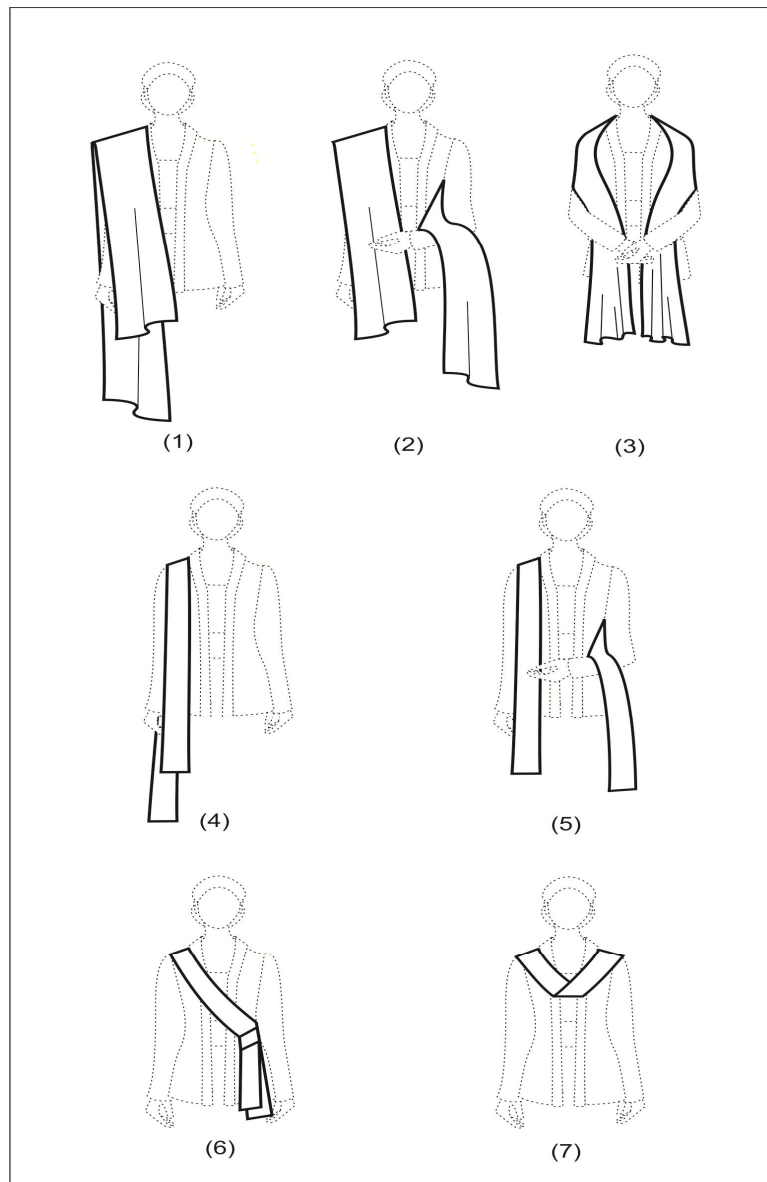


Figure 4. This figure shows the variety of how to wear *Selendang* without folding it 1) getting put on over one shoulder; 2) getting put on over a shoulder in one side and putting through the arm on the other side; 3) getting put on both shoulders and both arms; and with folding it 4) getting put on over the shoulders; 5) getting put on a shoulder on one side and held by the arm on the other side; 6) getting put on a shoulder on one side and tied on the other side (between the waist and the elbow; and 7) folded on the chests and getting put on over the shoulders to the back (Suciati, 2017).

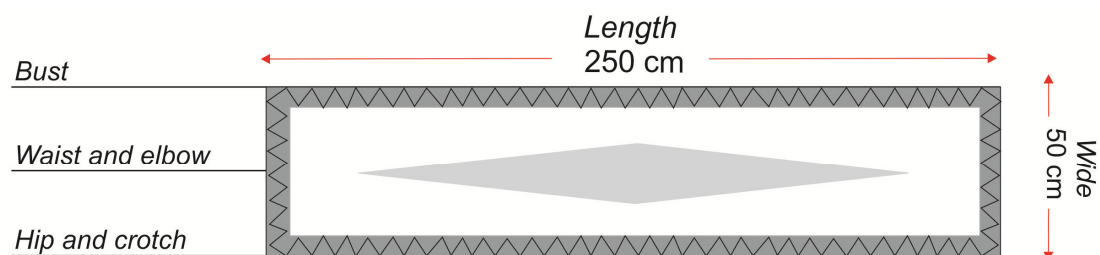


Figure 5. kain kemben . (Suciati, 2017)

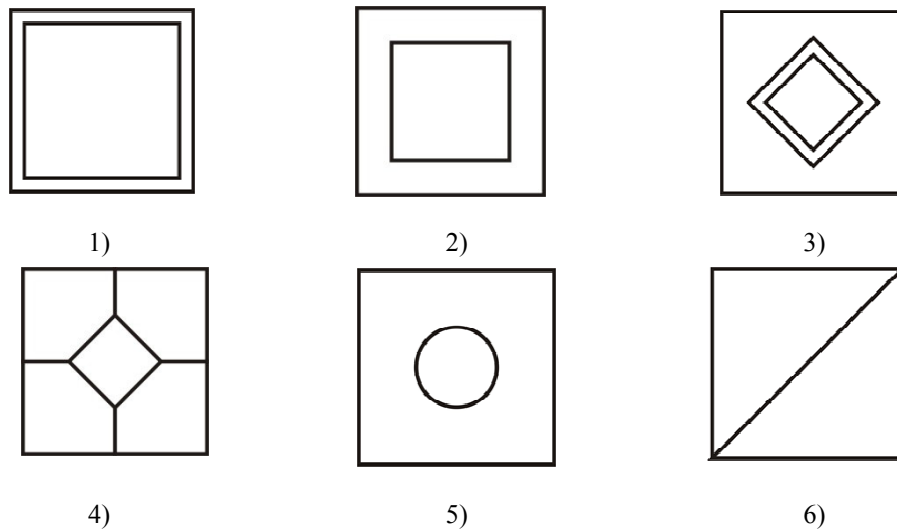


Figure 6. The patterns of *Iket*: 1) *Byur*; 2) *Tengahan*; 3) *Blumbungan*; 4) Symmetrical; 5) *Iket* with a circle in the center; 6) Morning and afternoon *Iket* (Suciati, 2006).

Pola-pola penempatan corak pada kain *Iket*; 1) *Iket Byur* 2) *Iket Tengahan* 3) *Iket Blumbungan* membujur 4) *Iket* membagi Bidang 5) *Iket* dengan pusat lingkaran 6) *Iket pagi sore* (Suciati, 2006)