

Salasika

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Women Actors' Co-Creation in Developing an Ecoikat Mini Collection Based on East Sumba Ikat Textile

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ABSTRACT

Co-creation in heritage-based fashion product development has received increasing scholarly attention, yet the differing positions of women actors in transforming woven textiles remain underexplored. This study examines the co-creation process among women actors in transforming an East Sumba ikat textile into the Ecoikat mini collection. A qualitative case study was conducted at Parahita Craft, Salatiga. Data were collected from December 2025 to July 2026 through participant observation, interviews with five purposively selected informants, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis and interpreted through Bourdieu's theory of practice. The findings show that different forms of capital were unevenly distributed among the actors, while second-stage evaluation strengthened coordination and the circulation of cultural knowledge. Consumer appreciation, however, did not automatically translate into purchase, indicating that co-creation did not occur on an equal footing because women actors occupied different positions and possessed different forms of capital. These findings suggest that successful heritage-based fashion product development depends on the transmission of cultural knowledge and effective coordination among actors. The study highlights the need for more structured collaboration and transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Keywords: *co-creation; cultural capital; East Sumba ikat; EcoIkat; women actors*

INTRODUCTION

East Sumba ikat weaving is a cultural heritage that embodies the intergenerational knowledge of the East Sumba community. A single textile may combine several motifs that together convey a unified cultural meaning. The textile examined in this study features three motifs: Horse (Njara), Attendants (Pahapanggang), and Chicken (Manu). The Horse motif symbolizes authority, leadership, grandeur, and prosperity; the Attendants motif represents respect for ancestors; and the Chicken motif signifies leadership in East Sumba community life (Anggriady et al., 2023; Tim Penyusun Permohonan Indikasi Geografis Tenun Ikat, 2025). Because motif meanings are contextual and may vary across communities and weaving clusters, this study follows the

interpretations provided in the cited documentary sources and applies them consistently throughout the Results and Discussion sections.

The production of East Sumba ikat textiles involves skills acquired through repeated learning and intergenerational transmission. Each textile is therefore not only a cultural product but also a record of social experience and knowledge continuously reproduced through weaving practices (Hunga et al., 2021). Protecting and developing this cultural knowledge is consistent with Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 5 of 2017 on the Advancement of Culture (Republik Indonesia, 2017), which recognizes cultural heritage, including ikat weaving, as an integral part of national identity.

Despite its cultural significance, East Sumba ikat weaving faces challenges from a changing fashion market. Many consumers, particularly younger generations, consider design, accessibility, functionality, and price when choosing fashion products (Maulidiah & Nuzil, 2025). At the same time, growing concern over the environmental impact of the fast fashion industry (Berg et al., 2020) creates opportunities to develop more sustainable fashion products through adaptive design while preserving the cultural meanings of woven motifs.

One response to these challenges is EcoIkat, a product development initiative that integrates the cultural knowledge of ikat weaving, design, and material waste reduction. The initiative originated from research by the Batik Tenun Creative Innovation Hub (BaTeCH), Satya Wacana Christian University, on the downstream development of East Sumba ikat weaving and sustainable fashion, and was later implemented in collaboration with Parahita Craft, Salatiga. According to internal documents, Parahita Craft is a social enterprise that has integrated women's empowerment, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability into its business model since its establishment (Parahita Craft, 2026b). Circular design practices include redesign and the reuse of fabric remnants, reflecting the strategies of slowing and closing resource loops within the circular economy framework (Bocken et al., 2016). These practices involve multiple actors with different forms of knowledge and roles throughout the product development process.

The authors' interest in the development of East Sumba ikat textiles emerged from observations at the INACRAFT 2026 exhibition (4-8 February 2026). Initial observations indicated that some visitors appreciated the product designs because they appealed to younger consumers while incorporating Sumba woven motifs rarely found in contemporary fashion. This appreciation focused primarily on the finished products, whereas visitors appeared to have limited awareness of the extensive process involving weavers in East Sumba, designers, tailors, the coordination team, and content creators. This gap between product appreciation and understanding of the co-creation process became the starting point for this study.

Relevant scholarship can be grouped into two strands. The first examines East Sumba ikat weaving in relation to creative-economy development and marketing strategies (Babang & Rinata, 2019; Nugraha et al., 2022), design revitalization to meet market needs (Ningsih, 2019), the role of designers in sustainable fashion (Nidia & Suhartini, 2020), and the influence of cultural

values, gender relations, and policy on its transformation (Hunga, 2022). The second conceptualizes co-creation as a collaborative process involving knowledge exchange, negotiation, evaluation, and joint value creation among multiple actors (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). In Indonesia, co-creation is further understood as a mechanism through which diverse actors integrate knowledge and resources to foster innovation (Widjojo et al., 2019). However, these strands have rarely been integrated to explain how differences in women's positions and forms of capital shape co-creation in heritage-based fashion, including the transmission, negotiation, and materialization of cultural knowledge.

Building on this gap, this study examines the co-creation process among women actors in transforming a single East Sumba ikat textile featuring the Horse (Njara), Attendants (Pahapanggang), and Chicken (Manu) motifs into the EcoIkat mini collection. The textile was selected because its motifs represent authority, leadership, grandeur, prosperity, and respect for ancestors, values that are central to East Sumba society. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, the analysis examines how habitus, capital, and field shape the co-creation process, with particular attention to differences in the positions of the women actors involved (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990, 1993).

The central research question is how differences in habitus, capital, and positions within the field shape the co-creation process in developing the EcoIkat mini collection. It is explored through two supporting questions: how cultural knowledge is transmitted and negotiated across the two stages of design development, and how differences in access, participation, recognition, decision-making, and benefits shape the positions of women actors. Accordingly, this study examines the relationships among habitus, capital, and field in the transformation of East Sumba ikat weaving into the EcoIkat mini collection, while explaining how women actors occupy different positions in relation to access to knowledge, decision-making, participation, recognition, and benefits.

In this study, co-creation is understood as a collaborative process involving knowledge exchange, negotiation, evaluation, and shared decision-making among actors, rather than merely a division of labor or the co-presence of actors within the same production chain (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice provides the main theoretical framework for explaining how habitus, capital, and field interact to shape this process (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990, 1993).

Gender analysis is used not as a standalone theoretical framework but as an analytical lens that complements Bourdieu's theory of practice in understanding co-creation among women actors (McNay, 1999). In this study, it is operationalized through questions addressing women's access, control, participation, and benefits throughout the co-creation process (Kabeer, 1999). Recognition is treated differently because it is more closely tied to Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital and is therefore discussed as the point at which the gender lens and the practice-theory framework intersect, rather than as an independent analytical dimension. This perspective is important because all actors directly involved in the co-creation ecosystem are women, yet shared

gender does not necessarily imply equal positions, authority, access, or benefits (Kabeer, 1999; McNay, 1999).

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study to examine the co-creation process through which a single East Sumba ikat textile featuring the Horse (Njara), Attendants (Pahapanggang), and Chicken (Manu) motifs was transformed into the EcoIkat mini collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). A case study was selected because it enables an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon within its real-life context using clearly defined case boundaries (Yin, 2018). The case was bounded to a single development cycle, from the textile's selection and delivery to the first-stage designer to the product launch at the INACRAFT 2026 exhibition. The unit of analysis was the co-creation process involving interactions among weavers, Parahita Craft management, designers, tailors, content creators, and consumers.

The study was conducted at Parahita Craft, Salatiga, Central Java. Data were collected from December 2025 to July 2026 during the researcher's internship through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. During the internship, the researcher participated in Parahita Craft's activities and observed the presentation and reception of the EcoIkat mini collection at the INACRAFT 2026 exhibition (4-8 February 2026).

Primary data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with informants purposively selected for their knowledge, experience, and involvement in EcoIkat (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The informants included IH, founder of Parahita Craft and researcher at BaTeCH, Satya Wacana Christian University; LL, textile coordinator and content creator; PA, who participated in the mini collection's development and evaluation; and two consumers, YS and JS, interviewed during the INACRAFT 2026 exhibition. Interviews with LL and PA were conducted on 5 March 2026, with IH on 7 April 2026, and a validation interview with PA on 8 May 2026, all in Salatiga. YS and JS were interviewed in Jakarta on 4 February 2026 during the exhibition. The study did not include direct interviews with the weavers or design and production actors; their perspectives were therefore drawn from other informants and available documents.

Secondary data were obtained from Parahita Craft's internal documents (2025), EcoIkat activity documentation, research documentation from the Batik Tenun Creative Innovation Hub (BaTeCH), Satya Wacana Christian University, and the official EcoIkat Instagram account (@Luritanea.id). Six posts were purposively selected for analysis, comprising five product photographs and one video documenting the natural dyeing process. The digital data included post content and engagement metrics, such as likes, comments, and other user interactions, to complement the analysis of the co-creation process rather than represent the account statistically. The Instagram data reflect the account's status at the time of collection on 6 July 2026.

The data were analyzed iteratively through data organization, comprehensive reading, coding, theme development, interpretation, and

presentation of findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Coding followed reflexive thematic analysis through data familiarisation, inductive code development, theme review, and preparation of the analytical report (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The themes were interpreted using Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990, 1993). A gender perspective further informed the analysis by examining women's positions, experiences, and power relations through five dimensions: access, control, participation, recognition, and benefits (McNay, 1999). Triangulation compared evidence from interviews, participant observation, documents, and research artifacts to assess the consistency and variation of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The study's trustworthiness was strengthened through source and method triangulation by comparing evidence from participant observation, interviews, and documents (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Researcher positionality was explicitly acknowledged as part of the study's reflexivity, recognizing the researcher's position, experiences, and potential influence on the research process (Berger, 2015). One author, Arianti Ina Restiani Hunga, was the founder and manager of Parahita Craft, a researcher at the Batik Tenun Creative Innovation Hub (BaTeCH), Satya Wacana Christian University, and an informant in this study. To minimize potential bias, Mustikad Zai independently conducted data collection, transcription, and initial interpretation, while Arianti Ina Restiani Hunga verified the factual accuracy of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Distribution of Actors and Capital within the EcoIkat Mini Collection Ecosystem

The EcoIkat mini collection was developed from a single East Sumba ikat textile featuring three motifs: Horse (Njara), Attendants (Pahapanggang), and Chicken (Manu), as described in the Introduction (Anggriady et al., 2023; Tim Penyusun Permohonan Indikasi Geografis Tenun Ikat, 2025). IH, founder of Parahita Craft and a researcher on weaving culture at BaTeCH, Satya Wacana Christian University, explained that these motifs are not merely decorative but embody the textile's cultural identity (interview with IH, 7 April 2026). PA similarly noted that preserving their meanings was a key consideration in seeking Geographical Indication protection to safeguard this knowledge for future generations (interview with PA, 5 March 2026). Together, these accounts indicate that the motifs' cultural meanings are recognized as significant within Parahita Craft rather than reflecting a single informant's perspective. From a Bourdieusian perspective, this cultural capital may be converted into symbolic capital through recognition by fashion actors and consumers (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993).

Knowledge of material selection, natural dyeing techniques, and the meanings and rules governing motif placement is transmitted across generations by women weavers in East Sumba through their involvement in weaving from an early age (Hunga et al., 2021; interview with IH, 7 April 2026). From a Bourdieusian perspective, this knowledge constitutes cultural

capital that shapes the weavers' habitus through weaving practices (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990). A gender analytical lens further highlights women's central role in transmitting this cultural capital and their authority over motif selection, color composition, and the cultural dimensions of weaving. However, this authority does not automatically translate into equal recognition or benefits within the fashion field and market (McNay, 1999).

The actors involved in developing the EcoIkat mini collection are analytically grouped into three interconnected layers: upstream, middle, and downstream. The upstream layer comprises women weavers as holders of cultural capital. The middle layer includes Parahita Craft, designers, and tailors, who translate cultural knowledge into fashion products. The downstream layer comprises content creators and consumers, who shape and receive product value narratives in the public sphere. In this study, co-creation is identified through knowledge exchange, shared decision-making, evaluation, redesign, and value narrative construction (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Knowledge exchange and shared decision making are examined during design development, whereas evaluation, redesign, and value narrative construction are examined during product refinement and marketing.

Women weavers occupy the upstream layer in the EcoIkat mini collection's development. The textile used for the collection originated from the Hammu Ndabba Weaving Cluster, one of ten East Sumba ikat weaving clusters partnering with Parahita Craft (2026b). The weavers possess cultural capital, including knowledge of cotton selection, spinning, motif tying, and natural dyeing (Hunga et al., 2021). This capital also encompasses authority over motif selection, color composition, and the cultural dimensions of weaving, based on practices transmitted across generations. Accordingly, the weavers serve as the primary source of cultural knowledge and materials for the EcoIkat mini collection.

Some stages of ikat weaving remain governed by customary regulations. For example, the indigo dyeing process, known as *nggiling*, may only be performed by women and is accompanied by cultural prohibitions (Hunga et al., 2021). Knowledge of these practices constitutes cultural capital transmitted across generations and gives women authority over specific aspects of the weaving process (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993). This highlights women's central role in sustaining the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge. However, such authority does not automatically translate into control over design decisions, recognition, or benefits in developing the EcoIkat mini collection (McNay, 1999).

Parahita Craft occupies the midstream layer, linking the weavers' cultural knowledge with design and production. This layer includes IH, founder of Parahita Craft and a researcher at BaTeCH, Satya Wacana Christian University; LL, textile management coordinator and content creator; and PA, who participated in product development (interviews with IH, 7 April 2026; LL and PA, 5 March 2026). Beyond contributing social capital through academic networks, IH connected actors involved in developing the EcoIkat mini collection. PA explained that Parahita Craft's collaboration with NV as

production coordinator, established through the Indonesian Fashion Camper (IFC) in 2021, subsequently led to EG's involvement in the project (interview with PA, 5 March 2026).

These relationships indicate that social capital within the EcoIkat ecosystem emerged through overlapping academic and craft industry networks rather than a single network. From a Bourdieusian perspective, these networks facilitated co-creation within the field of heritage-based fashion production (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993). The positions of women actors are examined through five analytical dimensions: access, control, participation, recognition, and benefits (McNay, 1999).

Parahita Craft operates as an organization within the field of heritage-based fashion production rather than constituting the field itself (Bourdieu, 1993). It coordinates actors with different roles and forms of authority throughout the co-creation process. Interview accounts indicate that IH guided the development of the EcoIkat mini collection while maintaining its cultural meanings during design transformation; LL managed textile flows and communication among actors; and PA participated in product discussions and evaluation (interviews with IH, 7 April 2026; LL and PA, 5 March 2026). This division of roles reflects the different forms of capital, positions, and authority held by women actors in the co-creation process (Bourdieu, 1993).

The textile was transformed into the EcoIkat mini collection through two stages of design development, as described in Subsection 2. The first involved EG as designer, NV as production coordinator, and SS as tailor, whereas the second involved RD and a student team from the Fashion Design Study Program at Bina Nusantara University through the 2025 SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program. The redesign drew on design expertise, sustainable fashion knowledge, zero-waste pattern cutting techniques, PA's evaluation, and program documentation (interviews with IH, 7 April 2026; PA, 5 March 2026; Parahita Craft, 2025). From a Bourdieusian perspective, these forms of expertise, together with RD's academic legitimacy, constitute cultural capital mobilized in heritage-based fashion production (Bourdieu, 1986).

Content creators documented the development of the EcoIkat mini collection and communicated the textile's cultural knowledge through digital media. LL, who served as both textile management coordinator and content creator, explained that this strategy included rebranding, website development, and expanding digital marketing through social media and e-commerce platforms, which were still under development during the study (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). The official Instagram account, @Luritanea.id, presented information on the products, production processes, and the involvement of women weavers. Digital media therefore provided an additional space for communicating cultural knowledge beyond the production setting.

Table 1. Analysis of Instagram Posts on @Luritanea.id

Theme	Upload Date	Likes	Comments	Shares	Views	Reposts
Natural Dyes and Collaboration	1 November 2024	13	1	1	556	1
INACRAFT Promotion and Cultural Storytelling	1 February 2026	9	0	4	-	1
The Heritage Thread	4 June 2026	13	0	1	-	1
Modern Heritage	16 June 2026	105	0	18	-	3
Elegance and Contemporary Design	20 June 2026	14	0	1	-	3
Earth Bound	6 July 2026	11	1	0	-	1

Note: A dash (-) indicates that view count data were unavailable because the post was a photo.; Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from Parahita Craft's official Instagram account, @Luritanea.id, accessed on 6 July 2026.

Data from the @Luritanea.id account were collected on 6 July 2026 from six purposively selected posts comparing product- and process-oriented content (Table 1). The dataset indicates that engagement was dominated by passive forms of interaction, particularly likes and shares, whereas comments, which reflect more dialogic engagement, remained limited. The natural-dyeing video also received more views than the product photographs (Parahita Craft, 2026a). Because video views and photo-post engagement metrics are not directly comparable, this difference is treated only as an initial indication for future digital content strategies and research rather than as evidence of the relative effectiveness of content types or broader user engagement patterns.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, digital communication through the @Luritanea.id account represents an effort to build recognition of the cultural value embodied in the textile, the weavers, and the production process (Bourdieu, 1986). The predominance of likes and shares, alongside relatively few comments, suggests a degree of visibility and audience appreciation. However, the available evidence is insufficient to conclude that strong symbolic capital had been established within the digital field.

The distribution of actors and capital at this stage indicates differences in access, control, participation, recognition, and benefits among the women involved. The weavers contributed cultural knowledge and woven textiles, while IH connected this knowledge to product development with attention to preserving its cultural meanings. EG, NV, SS, and RD contributed to design, production, and product refinement; LL managed textile flows and consumer communication; and PA participated in product development and evaluation (interviews with LL and PA, 5 March 2026). Available accounts and documentation suggest that the weavers' authority over motif selection, colour composition, and the nggiling process had not been fully translated

into recognition within the fashion field or equitable economic benefits. These findings indicate that women occupied different positions within the co-creation process, with access, control, recognition, and benefits remaining unevenly distributed (McNay, 1999).

2. Tensions in Habitus, Evaluation, and Redesign

The first stage of the EcoIkat mini collection's development involved EG as designer, NV as production coordinator, SS as tailor, and LL as Parahita Craft coordinator (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). The collection was originally developed for Fashion Art Toronto Fall/Winter 2025-2026 with a target of twelve looks, but only ten were completed because of funding constraints (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). The project was later redirected to the Indonesian market through collaboration with RD and a student team from the Fashion Design Study Program at Bina Nusantara University under the 2025 SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program (interview with LL, 5 March 2026).

The first-stage evaluation involved actors responsible for production and textile coordination. LL considered the design concept appropriate but identified weaknesses in production execution, particularly stitching quality and the choice of combination fabrics, which she regarded as unsuitable for the international market. As LL explained, "...desainnya itu sudah bagus... cuman dalam proses yang menjahit ini kurang maksimal... pemilihan bahan... sebagai kombinasi untuk tenun itu menurutku kurang bagus" ("...the design was already good... it was just that the sewing process was not executed optimally... and, in my opinion, the choice of fabric used to complement the woven textile was not suitable") (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). PA similarly noted that the production quality did not fully reflect the original design and that these issues informed subsequent discussions with RD and the Fashion Design Study Program team at Bina Nusantara University (interview with PA, 5 March 2026). Together, these accounts indicate that the first-stage evaluation focused primarily on production execution rather than the design concept.

PA attributed part of these production issues to the fabric-cutting process, which, in her view, did not sufficiently consider the cultural meanings embedded in the Sumba motifs. According to PA, motif placement and fabric cutting should preserve the original arrangement of motifs because each motif carries its own cultural meaning. As PA explained, "...motif Sumba itu kan punya makna ya masing-masing... dia potong... ga mempertimbangkan motif, jadi rusak motifnya" ("...each Sumba motif has its own meaning... the fabric was cut... without considering the motif, so the motif arrangement was disrupted") (interview with PA, 5 March 2026). PA further suggested that the fabric had been cut by NV's assistant before review, despite prior instructions regarding motif placement. As PA noted, "...kayaknya yang motong itu bukan [NV] tapi asistennya... [IH] kesana tau-tau udah dipotong begitu" ("...it seems that the fabric was not cut by [NV] but by the assistant... when [IH] arrived, it had already been cut that way") (interview with PA, 5 March 2026). These interview accounts suggest that the

first-stage evaluation addressed not only technical production issues but also the preservation of motif meanings during the design transformation process.

LL's account suggests that coordination among the actors during the first stage remained fragmented. LL identified IH as the actor with the strongest understanding of the cultural meanings embedded in the textile but considered her involvement in production insufficient, resulting in largely separate coordination among the actors. As LL explained, "...yang lebih tahu tentang tenun itu kan Ibu [IH] sebenarnya, tapi ketika pas pengerjaan itu mungkin kurang melibatkan jadi pengerjaannya itu masing-masing" ("...the person who actually knew the most about the woven textile was [IH], but during the production process she may not have been sufficiently involved, so everyone ended up working separately.") (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). LL also noted that communication about motif placement before fabric cutting was insufficient, leading to inconsistent understanding of how motifs should be handled during production (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). PA similarly suggested that these coordination challenges reflected still-evolving working relationships, with communication occurring mainly through bilateral interactions and only one meeting involving IH, EG, and NV together (validation interview with PA, 8 May 2026).

The evaluations by LL and PA indicate that the first-stage challenges involved not only technical production issues but also coordination among the actors. IH interpreted these challenges through Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital. According to IH, limited familiarity with the habitus and cultural capital associated with ikat weaving meant that production did not fully consider the cultural meanings of the motifs or the conventions governing their placement (interview with IH, 7 April 2026). IH further argued that design expertise could not be directly transferred to ikat weaving production because each field has its own habitus and forms of cultural capital. As IH explained, "...dia memang designer terkenal... tapi arenanya beda, modalnya beda... habitusnya kurang... karena beda field-nya" ("...she is indeed a well-known designer, but this is a different field with different forms of capital. The habitus is different because it is a different field.") (interview with IH, 7 April 2026).

PA's explanation of the limited experience with East Sumba motifs complements IH's interpretation, although each emphasized a different aspect. PA focused on production coordination, whereas IH explained the challenges through habitus and cultural capital. From Bourdieu's perspective (1986, 1990), these coordination challenges reflect the interaction of different forms of habitus and cultural capital within the field of ikat weaving production rather than individual shortcomings. This interpretation also supports Sanders and Stappers' (2008) view of co-creation as a process of knowledge exchange among actors. Accordingly, the first-stage evaluation is better understood as part of knowledge transmission within co-creation than as the failure of any individual actor.

Despite these challenges, the first stage demonstrated potential for further design development. LL identified the mini dress with a detachable belt as

the most promising design but recognized production execution as the primary challenge (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). This finding indicates that the main challenge was translating cultural knowledge into production practice through dialogue, knowledge exchange, and coordination among the actors. This interpretation is consistent with Bourdieu's (1986, 1990) concepts of habitus, capital, and field and with Sanders and Stappers' (2008) conception of co-creation, which emphasized dialogue and knowledge exchange as the basis of collaborative development.

The first-stage evaluation assessed the alignment between the designs and the cultural meanings of the motifs, as well as production quality. It involved IH, PA, and LL as internal actors at Parahita Craft and informed subsequent discussions with RD, a BaTeCH member at Satya Wacana Christian University and design academic, during the second stage. The designs and evaluation outcomes were documented in Parahita Craft's internal archives (2025) and later informed collaboration with RD and a student team from the Fashion Design Study Program at Bina Nusantara University, strengthening coordination and cultural knowledge management in the subsequent development stage.

IH described coordination through the metaphor of a choir: "...supaya harmoni ini terbangun suara satu, suara dua, suara tiga, suara empat, ...harus ada yang disebut dengan manajemen pengetahuan..." ("...for this harmony to emerge among the first voice, second voice, third voice, and fourth voice, there has to be what is called knowledge management.") (interview with IH, 7 April 2026). This metaphor illustrates IH's view of coordination in developing the EcoIkat mini collection and is consistent with LL's and PA's accounts of the second-stage changes, including documenting motif meanings and placement conventions, conducting pre-production briefings and design reviews, and approving designs before cutting the textile. From Bourdieu's perspective (1990), these changes represent adjustments in practice and the development of shared working practices within the production field rather than the formation of a new habitus over a short period.

Parahita Craft continued developing the EcoIkat mini collection with RD through the 2025 SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program. Unlike the first stage, the second-stage design process followed a more structured coordination pattern based on experience gained earlier. LL explained that each design proposal was communicated and approved before implementation (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). This account is consistent with PA's explanation that design alternatives were documented, shared with Parahita Craft through Google Drive, discussed online, and approved before production (validation interview with PA, 8 May 2026).

PA further explained that RD assumed a greater role in design development, while Parahita Craft remained involved through online presentations. As PA noted, "Diserahkan ke [RD]. [RD] cerita sih, waktu zoom, mau dibuat ini, ini, ini, terus kita oke gitu. Karena lebih paham [RD]" ("...it was handed over to [RD]. During the Zoom meeting, [RD] explained what would be developed, and we agreed because [RD] had a better

understanding of it.") (validation interview with PA, 8 May 2026). This account indicates a revised distribution of roles in the second stage, with RD leading design development through design expertise while Parahita Craft reviewed and approved the proposed designs.

RD's involvement, together with a student team from the Fashion Design Study Program at Bina Nusantara University through the 2025 SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program, introduced additional actors into the co-creation process. Their expertise in design, sustainable fashion, and zero-waste pattern cutting provided cultural capital that supported the EcoIkat mini collection. From Bourdieu's perspective (1986, 1993), this collaboration illustrates the interaction of cultural capital from different fields in heritage-based fashion production.

The second stage marked a shift in practice as Parahita Craft and RD redesigned the first-stage mini dress into a two-piece outfit consisting of a top and a skirt. LL explained that the remaining materials from the previous development stage were returned to Parahita Craft for reuse (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). From Bourdieu's perspective (1986), this redesign reactivated the cultural capital embedded in the woven textile through a different product form, while material reuse aligned with the circular economy strategies of slowing and closing resource loops (Bocken et al., 2016).

The findings indicate that the first stage was constrained by coordination, production supervision, and the translation of cultural knowledge into design. PA emphasized production coordination, whereas IH interpreted these challenges through habitus and cultural capital. According to LL and PA, the second stage adopted a more structured coordination process. Consistent with Bourdieu (1986, 1990) and Sanders and Stappers (2008), these findings suggest that co-creation involves both the interaction of different forms of capital and the exchange of knowledge through adaptive practices within a shared field.

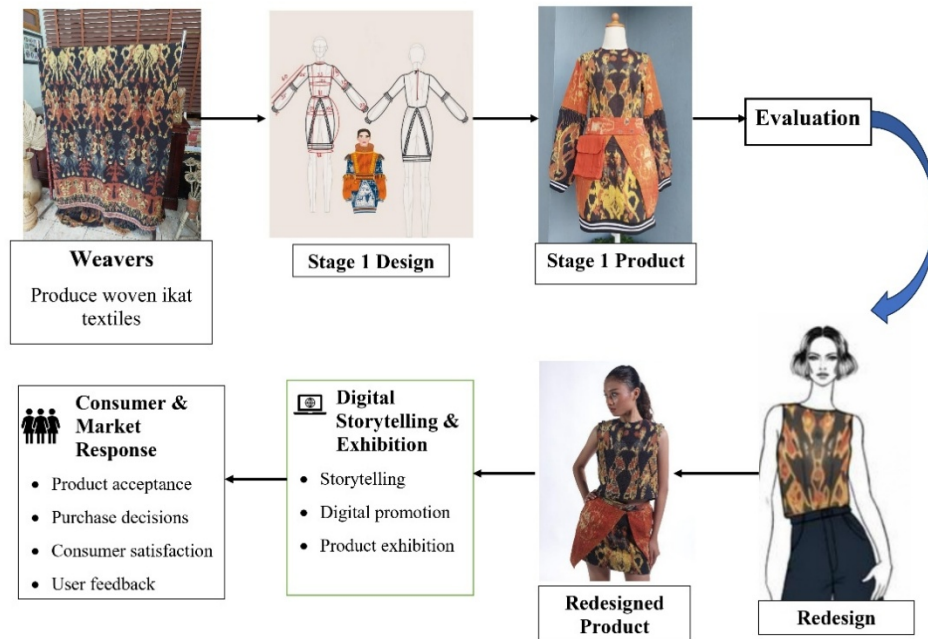
Comparison of the two stages reveals changes in women's access, control, participation, recognition, and benefits during the development of the EcoIkat mini collection. The second stage's more structured coordination improved the translation of cultural knowledge into design and production through collaborative practice. Although the redesigned products gained recognition during development, the distribution of recognition and benefits among the women actors could not be fully assessed. From McNay's (1999) perspective, these findings suggest that women's agency is shaped by their positions, access to resources, and opportunities for participation within the field of heritage-based fashion production.

3. Consumer Recognition and the Conversion of Capital from the Digital Field to the Exhibition Field

Following the second-stage redesign, the EcoIkat mini collection was introduced in the digital field through the official Instagram account @Luritanea.id and in the exhibition field at INACRAFT 2026 (4-8 February

2026). The co-creation process linking woven-textile transformation, design development, evaluation, redesign, and consumer reception is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Co-Creation Process and Transformation of the EcoIkat Mini Collection



Note: Permission to use the documentation presented in this figure was obtained from the relevant parties.; *Source:* Authors, based on documentation from Parahita Craft and the Batik-Tenun Creative Innovation Hub (BaTeCH), Satya Wacana Christian University (2025).

Figure 1 illustrates the main stages of the EcoIkat mini collection's co-creation process through Bourdieu's framework of capital. The woven textile and knowledge of motif meanings represent cultural capital underpinning product development. Collaboration among Parahita Craft, the Batik-Tenun Creative Innovation Hub (BaTeCH) at Satya Wacana Christian University, and Bina Nusantara University constituted social capital, while funding and production facilities from the 2025 SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program provided economic capital. Recognition gained through digital platforms and exhibitions constituted symbolic capital. From Bourdieu's perspective (1986, 1993), evaluation and redesign reflect the interaction of habitus, capital, and field, with symbolic capital emerging through recognition within the field.

Participant observation at INACRAFT 2026 (4-8 February 2026) identified three categories of visitors to the Parahita Craft booth: those who browsed or sought inspiration, those interested but not purchasing, and those who purchased the products. The first category was the largest, with visitors frequently commenting on the product designs and natural dyes, as reflected

in remarks such as "Desainnya unik dan lucu" ("The design is unique and appealing") and "Wah menggunakan pewarna alami" ("Wow, it uses natural dyes"). Some also viewed the products as sources of design inspiration or training, while feedback on sizing informed future product development.

Visitors in the second category expressed interest but did not purchase because of price considerations. Some postponed their decisions to compare other products, whereas others cancelled purchases despite price negotiations. In the third category, fashion products were typically purchased after negotiation, whereas lower-priced items, such as yarn, accessories, and batik textiles, were often bought without negotiation. These observations indicate that price remained a key determinant of purchasing decisions, despite visitors being introduced to the production process, the role of the weavers, and the use of natural dyes.

LL's experience as textile coordinator across multiple exhibitions suggests that young consumers' interest in Parahita Craft's slow-fashion products did not necessarily result in purchases because of price considerations (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). LL explained that visitors who understood the production process were generally reluctant to bargain, although this awareness did not always lead to a purchase: "...mereka tertarik tapi mereka juga enggan... karena tau prosesnya seperti apa" ("...they were interested, but they were reluctant to bargain... because they understood what the production process involved.") (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). LL further emphasized that educating consumers about sustainability was a primary objective regardless of sales: "...yang paling penting itu bagaimana cara kita mengedukasi dengan produk yang dibuat, jadi lebih ke nilainya" ("...the most important thing is how we educate people through the products we create; it's the values that matter most.") (interview with LL, 5 March 2026). These findings suggest that appreciation of the cultural narrative and production process did not necessarily translate into purchases.

The development and consumer reception of the EcoIkat mini collection occurred across three interconnected fields: cultural production and weaving, fashion design and production, and digital circulation and the market (Bourdieu, 1993). The first encompassed women weavers' technical expertise, material knowledge, and understanding of motif meanings. The second brought together multiple actors to translate this knowledge into garments through different forms of capital, while the third enabled product narratives to circulate and gain recognition. From Bourdieu's perspective (1986, 1993), the conversion of cultural capital into symbolic and economic capital was shaped by interactions among actors occupying different positions within these fields.

Consumer responses at INACRAFT 2026 reflected appreciation for both the contemporary design and the cultural value of East Sumba woven textiles. YS, who browsed the collection without purchasing, considered it appealing to Generation Z because it combined contemporary fashion with East Sumba motifs rarely seen in modern clothing: "...pakai tenun Sumba yang kayak jarang ditemui di pakaian-pakaian sekarang" ("...it uses East Sumba woven textiles, which are rarely used in contemporary clothing.")

(interview with YS, 4 February 2026). YS also referred to the production narrative on the product label, explaining that the lengthy production process justified the price: "...untuk prosesnya yang panjang menurut aku untuk harga segitu udah worth it" ("...considering the lengthy production process, I think the price is worth it.") (interview with YS, 4 February 2026).

Unlike YS, JS purchased the EcoIkat mini collection. Initially attracted by its motifs and colour combinations, JS also valued its use of natural dyes, handmade production, and the involvement of women: "...ini kan semua pakai pewarna alami, jadi menurut aku itu keren banget... ini homemade... terus ini memberdayakan perempuan-perempuan juga..." ("...everything uses natural dyes, so I think that's really great... it's handmade... and it also empowers women...") (interview with JS, 4 February 2026). These cultural and sustainability values influenced JS's purchasing decision.

The contrasting responses of YS and JS show that consumers engaged differently with the EcoIkat mini collection's cultural narrative. YS emphasized the production information provided on the product label, whereas JS associated the product with sustainability, craftsmanship, and women's involvement in production. For JS, this narrative contributed to the product's symbolic value. However, such recognition does not necessarily reflect changes in the position or conditions of women weavers. As Kabeer (1999) argues, women's empowerment requires improvements in access to resources, decision-making capacity, and the benefits they receive. The product's empowerment narrative should therefore be distinguished from the actual empowerment experienced by women actors within the production ecosystem.

Consumer responses reflected appreciation for the EcoIkat mini collection's visual appeal, cultural narrative, and product values, which encouraged purchases for some visitors. From Bourdieu's perspective (1986), this recognition represents symbolic capital, whereby cultural knowledge and production practices acquire value within the consumer field. However, symbolic recognition did not consistently translate into purchases. This finding should also be understood in the context of INACRAFT 2026, which LL, based on experience from previous exhibitions, considered to have attracted fewer visitors than those typically held in October.

Recognition within the consumer field was closely linked to the distribution of capital throughout the EcoIkat mini collection's development. However, the interaction of different forms of capital did not produce equal recognition or benefits for all actors. As discussed in Subsection 2, actors occupied different positions with unequal access and authority. These findings suggest that co-creation involves not only integrating diverse forms of capital but also negotiating relationships and constructing recognition across different fields (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993; Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

A gender perspective reveals differences in access, participation, recognition, and benefits among the women actors involved in the consumer circulation stage (Kabeer, 1999; McNay, 1999). Access to exhibitions and product communication was primarily managed by IH and LL, while the women weavers contributed indirectly through the cultural knowledge and

materials embodied in the woven textiles. Knowledge of East Sumba ikat weaving, including motif meanings, production techniques, and materials, was communicated through the products and their accompanying narratives.

Consumers' responses, including JS's appreciation of the collection's cultural values and women's involvement in production, indicate the emergence of symbolic recognition for the EcoIkat mini collection. However, this recognition was attached to the product and its narrative rather than reflecting changes in the position, access, control, or benefits of the women actors involved. As argued by Kabeer (1999) and McNay (1999), representations of women in product narratives should be distinguished from actual changes in women's access to resources, decision-making capacity, and benefits within the production field.

The findings indicate that appreciation of the EcoIkat mini collection's cultural value did not always lead to purchases, while the benefits of co-creation were unevenly distributed among the actors. These findings extend previous studies of East Sumba ikat weaving (Babang & Rinata, 2019; Nugraha et al., 2022) by showing that heritage-based product development depends not only on design innovation and marketing but also on the continuity of cultural knowledge transmission and the management of relationships among actors. This interpretation aligns with Sanders and Stappers' (2008) view of knowledge exchange as central to co-creation and with Hunga's (2022) argument that the transformation of ikat weaving is shaped by social relationships rather than market outcomes alone.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that co-creation in transforming East Sumba ikat weaving into the EcoIkat mini collection is a negotiated process shaped by the interaction of different forms of capital, actors' positions, and field dynamics. The weavers' cultural knowledge underpins product value, but its translation into the design and consumer fields is influenced by unequal access, control, participation, recognition, and benefits among the women involved. Although improved coordination during the second stage strengthened knowledge exchange, it did not eliminate these inequalities, indicating that heritage-based co-creation should be understood as negotiated rather than inherently egalitarian.

Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of practice, this study demonstrates that transforming cultural heritage into fashion products depends not only on cultural capital but also on how it is translated, recognized, and converted across different fields. Symbolic recognition of the EcoIkat mini collection through digital platforms and exhibitions reflects cultural acceptance but does not automatically generate economic value. These findings extend heritage-based co-creation scholarship by showing that collaboration among women actors is shaped by unequal positions and unequal opportunities to mobilize and convert different forms of capital.

This study is limited by the restricted range of informants and the absence of direct interviews with weavers and several design and production actors.

Future research should incorporate these perspectives to deepen understanding of co-creation in heritage-based fashion ecosystems. Practically, the findings highlight the need to strengthen communication between weavers and designers, document weavers' cultural knowledge, and develop more transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms to support more inclusive and sustainable heritage-based fashion.

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Author Contributions

Mustikad Zai conducted data collection through an internship at Parahita Craft and continued data collection throughout the study. She was responsible for data management, analysis, interpretation, and drafting and revising the manuscript. Dr. Ir. Arianti Ina Restiani Hunga, M.Si. conceived and designed the study, supervised data collection and analysis, guided the theoretical framework and its application, and critically reviewed the manuscript through to the final version. Dr. Antik Tri Susanti, M.Si. provided methodological supervision, reviewed the research proposal and data analysis, and critically reviewed the manuscript. All authors read, approved, and accepted responsibility for the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest and Reflexivity Statement

One of the authors, Dr. Ir. Arianti Ina Restiani Hunga, M.Si., was the principal investigator of the Downstreaming EcoIkat: Commercializing Ikat Weaving for Intellectual-Property- and Circular-Economy-Based Micro and Small Enterprises in East Sumba project under the SINERGI Kemdiktisaintek Program, which provided the context for this study. This role is disclosed in the interest of transparency and forms part of the study's reflexive approach. The credibility of the findings was strengthened through triangulation across

multiple data sources and collection methods, together with critical discussion and review among the authors.

Informant Consent and Identity Protection

All informants provided informed consent to participate in this study. To protect confidentiality and privacy, their identities were anonymized using initials or coded identifiers, except for individuals who explicitly consented to be identified according to their roles in the research.

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ABOUT

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