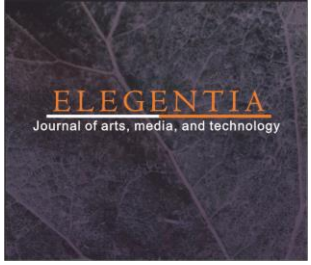
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The development of kerawang Gayo application in fashion trend

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Abstract: Kerawang Gayo as an intangible cultural heritage from the Gayo highlands in Central Aceh has undergone a significant transformation in its application, especially in contemporary fashion trends. This phenomenon reflects the shift in local cultural values in the face of the current of globalization and commercialization of traditional aesthetics. In the grand map of cultural and identity theory, this development is important to study because it concerns the preservation of local identity as well as its adaptation in the modern creative industry. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of the application of kerawang Gayo in the fashion world and explore its social, cultural, and economic consequences. Using a qualitative approach and a descriptive case study design, data was collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and visual documentation. The results of the study show that the application of kerawang Gayo in fashion is able to expand market reach and strengthen cultural identity, although on the other hand it faces the challenge of commercialization and simplification of symbolic meaning. The research recommends strengthening cultural narratives and collaboration between local designers and artisans as a strategic effort to preserve and innovate kerawang Gayo in the fashion industry.

Keywords: Development, Kerawang Gayo, Fashion Trends, Creative Industries, Local Identity

***Abstrak**:* Kerawang Gayo sebagai warisan budaya tak benda dari dataran tinggi Gayo di Aceh Tengah mengalami transformasi signifikan dalam pengaplikasiannya, khususnya dalam tren fashion kontemporer. Fenomena ini mencerminkan pergeseran nilai budaya lokal dalam menghadapi arus globalisasi dan komersialisasi estetika tradisional. Dalam peta besar teori budaya dan identitas, perkembangan ini penting dikaji karena menyangkut pelestarian identitas lokal sekaligus adaptasinya dalam industri kreatif modern. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dinamika pengaplikasian Kerawang Gayo dalam dunia fashion serta mengeksplorasi konsekuensi sosial, budaya, dan ekonominya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan desain studi kasus deskriptif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi visual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengaplikasian Kerawang Gayo dalam fashion mampu memperluas jangkauan pasar serta memperkuat identitas budaya, meskipun di sisi lain menghadapi tantangan komersialisasi dan penyederhanaan makna simbolik. Penelitian merekomendasikan penguatan narasi budaya dan kolaborasi antara desainer dan pengrajin lokal sebagai upaya strategis pelestarian dan inovasi Kerawang Gayo dalam industri fashion.

***Kata kunci**:* Perkembangan, Kerawang Gayo, Trend Fashion, Industri Kreatif, Identitas Lokal.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon of the development of the application of Gayo Filigree in fashion trends shows a significant transformation from traditional motifs to aesthetic elements that are in demand by the modern market. Kerawang Gayo , which was originally only used in the traditional clothing of the Gayo people, is now a symbol of cultural identity that lives and develops through various fashion products such as hijab, clothes, and accessories (Iswanto et al., 2020). This development is important to study considering how cultural heritage can adapt to the dynamics of the creative economy and become a source of livelihood for local communities (Nisfah et al., 2024). In addition, the application of motifs shows the potential for cultural preservation through innovations that are able to bridge tradition and modernity, having a positive impact on cultural pride and economic sustainability (Jati, 2023). With the increasing market interest in products that contain local cultural values, this study is relevant to understand cultural preservation strategies as well as the development of the fashion industry based on local wisdom.

Previous studies on the application of traditional motifs in fashion, including kerawang Gayo, limited to aesthetic and cultural aspects have not examined in depth the relationship between design innovation and the economic impact on the artisan community (Ferawati, 2013). In addition, many studies focus more on the normative preservation of cultural heritage, but lack the emphasis on modern market dynamics and technological adaptation in the marketing of cultural-based products (Help, 2022). Another gap found is the lack of analysis of the role of the young generation as drivers of innovation as well as guardians of cultural values in the development of traditional motives in the era of globalization (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). These shortcomings point to the need for research that comprehensively integrates cultural, economic, and technological aspects, and pays special attention to conservation strategies that are responsive to market challenges and contemporary social change. Thus, this study can fill the gap and offer a new perspective in the development of kerawang Gayo as a vibrant and competitive cultural heritage.

The purpose of this paper is to complement the shortcomings of previous studies that have not looked at the problem of the long-term influence of the application of kerawang Gayo in fashion trends on the preservation of culture and economic welfare of the Gayo community. Previous studies have not discussed much about the socio-economic impact and transformation of cultural identity that occurs due to the integration of these traditional motifs into the modern fashion industry. In line with that, this paper answers three main questions: first, how is the development of the application of kerawang Gayo in current fashion trends; second, what is the role of kerawang Gayo as the cultural identity of the Gayo people; and third, how to contribute to kerawang Gayo as a source of livelihood for the local community. Answering these three questions will provide a deep and comprehensive understanding of the interrelated cultural, economic, and social dynamics in the development of kerawang Gayo, as well as offer sustainable preservation strategies in the face of changing times.

The argument tested in this study is that the development of the application of kerawang Gayo in fashion trends positively contributes to the preservation of the cultural identity of the Gayo people while improving the economic welfare of local artisans and creative industry players. This hypothesis assumes a cause-and-effect relationship between design innovation and product diversification based on the kerawang Gayo motif and the increased attractiveness of the modern market, which in turn drives increased income and cultural sustainability. In addition, this study examines how the transformation of kerawang Gayo from a traditional symbol to a contemporary fashion element can strengthen a sense of cultural pride and expand the space for creative expression of the younger generation. Thus, this study seeks to prove that cultural and economic integration through the application of traditional motifs has strategic potential as a tool for cultural preservation as well as a driver of the local economy.

2. Literature review

2.1. Development

Development in the context of art and culture is defined as a process of change that takes place dynamically and continuously, encompassing aspects of innovation, adaptation, and transformation from traditional to contemporary forms (Scott, 2019). Funds (2023), development is a change as well as an improvement in the quality of creative responses. In the realm of fashion, development involves the evolution of design, production techniques, and aesthetic values while maintaining the roots of the original culture (Sachari, 2007). This concept of development is an important framework to understand how traditional motifs such as kerawang Gayo undergo a revitalization process that combines tradition and modernity, while maintaining relevance in the context of the global market. Therefore, development is not limited to visual changes, but also the social and economic meaning inherent in cultural objects.

Evidence of the development of traditional motifs in fashion can be seen in the application of batik in Indonesia which has successfully transformed from traditional clothing to international fashion trends (Syahriani et al., 2023). Study by Harsoyo & Puspitasari (2023) Showing how design innovation and collaboration with modern designers enhance batik's appeal without losing its historical value. In addition, the development of ikat weaving in East Nusa Tenggara is also an example of how traditional motifs can be adapted into contemporary fashion products that are in demand by the global market (B. Setiawan & RR. N. Suwarningdyah, 2014). In the context of kerawang Gayo, a similar phenomenon began to occur with the application of motifs on hijab, accessories, and modern clothing, which shows the combination of cultural preservation and design innovation. These cases show how the concept of development functions as a bridge between tradition and modernity in the world of fashion.

2.2. Application og Kerawang Gayo

Branding design is a strategic process that involves the creation of visual and The application of traditional motifs in contemporary products is a process of cultural adaptation that integrates aesthetic and symbolic values into new forms that are more relevant to the needs of modern times (Anggakarti & Benjamin, 2021). According to Arliani et al., (2016) the application of traditional motifs such as kerawang Gayo not only functions as a visual decoration, but also as a medium for preserving cultural identity as well as creative innovation that supports the local economy. This concept refers to the theory of "cultural hybridity" which describes how traditional cultural elements are combined with modern elements to create new products that have broad appeal (Sholahudin & Siahaan, 2020). In the context of kerawang Gayo, the application of motifs in fashion and accessories is proof of how cultural heritage can transform without losing its historical meaning, thereby maintaining cultural continuity while providing economic added value.

2.3. Tren Fashion

Fashion trends are changes in patterns and styles of dress that occur over a period of time and reflect the social, cultural, and economic preferences of the people (Diwanti & Budiyati, 2023). According to Wicaksono et al., (2021), fashion trends are not just about aesthetics, but also a social phenomenon that communicates the identity and status of individuals in society. The theory of "diffusion of innovation" by Stuart O'Neill (2025), explains how fashion trends spread from the group of innovators to the majority of society through the adoption process influenced by social and cultural factors. In this context, fashion trends play a role as a reflection of cultural dynamics and changes in social values that continue to develop, as well as an instrument for the creative industry in meeting the changing needs of the market.

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3. Method

The unit of analysis in this study is the development of the application of kerawang Gayo in fashion trends, which is seen from cultural, social, and aesthetic aspects in the context of the Gayo community and the local fashion industry. The focus of the analysis includes the interaction between traditional motifs and adaptation in modern fashion products, in order to understand the dynamics of change and public acceptance of these phenomena. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design. This approach was chosen to delve deeply into the process, meaning, and context of the development of kerawang Gayo in fashion trends. Case studies allow for detailed exploration of phenomena within specific time and space constraints, thus providing a comprehensive and contextual understanding.

The main sources of information come from local fashion industry players, designers, and the kerawang Gayo artisan community. In addition, supporting documents such as related publications, market reports, and visual archives are also used as materials to strengthen the validity of the data and provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with key informants, direct observation on the production and marketing process of kerawang Gayo based fashion products, and documentation studies related to fashion trends and traditional motifs. The data triangulation technique is used to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the information obtained.

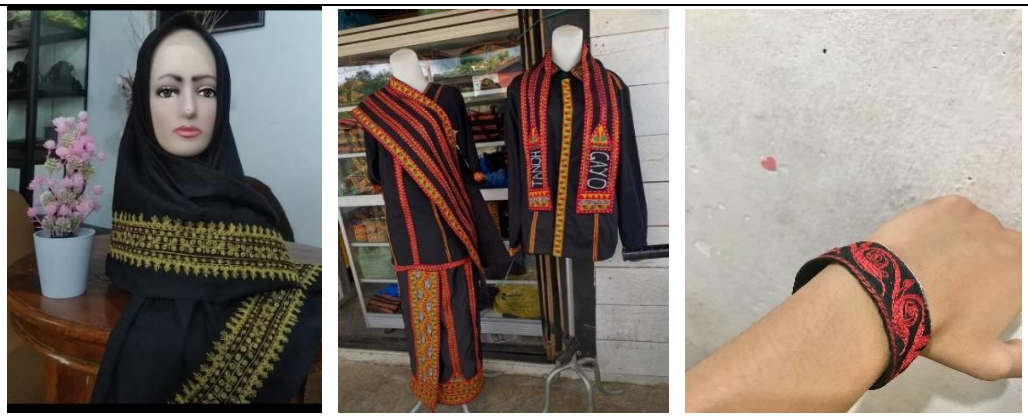
Data analysis was carried out thematically with coding and categorization steps to identify patterns and relationships between variables. The interpretation of the results is focused on understanding the socio-cultural context and economic dynamics in the application of kerawang Gayo, so that the findings produced are able to answer the research objectives systematically and in-depth.

4. Result

4.1. Development of kerawang Gayo Freestyle Application

Kerawang Gayo, a traditional fabric motif from Aceh, has become an important part of the culture and identity of the Gayo people. In recent years, kerawang Gayo has experienced a huge development in its application in fashion trends. Local fashion designers have developed a lot of applications of kerawang Gayo in fashion design and have attracted more and more consumer interest with the uniqueness and beauty of the kerawang Gayo motif, and are starting to improve its application in various types of clothing and accessories. The application of kerawang Gayo in fashion trends not only introduces Gayo culture to the wider community, but also provides opportunities for the Gayo people to improve their economic welfare. Thus, kerawang Gayo become a symbol of cultural pride and the identity of the Gayo people, as well as become an important part of the fashion industry in the future.

Table 1. Visualization of Kerawang Gayo Application in Fashion Trends



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d e f

Sourcer: Research Data, 2025

The data in the picture (a) the development of the use of the kerawang Gayo motif in its application to hijab media and has become a trend that many people like. image (b) the development of the application of the kerawang Gayo motif in clothing products, This traditional motif is now widely used in modern and stylish clothing designs, such as tunics, dresses, tops, and jackets. The designer combines kerawang Gayo with today's clothing models. Picture (c) The application of Gayo Freework on fabric wristbands shows an interesting innovation in the world of fashion accessories. Figure (d) Application of kerawang Gayo in traditional clothing in terms of models and colors. In the past, Gayo traditional clothing was synonymous with certain designs and colors such as black, red, and gold. Figure (e) Application of kerawang Gayo motif in household products. Figure (f) the development of the application of kerawang Gayo in wedding decoration shows a new way of preserving Gayo culture through wedding elements.

4.2. The Development of Kerawang Gayo as the Identity of the Community

The development of the application of kerawang Gayo in various fashion products shows a significant transformation from tradition to modernity. Initially, kerawang Gayo was known as a decoration on traditional clothing that reflected the cultural identity of the Gayo people. However, along with changing trends and market needs, kerawang Gayo is now applied to various fashion products, such as bags, hijabs, clothes, and other accessories. Innovations in design and manufacturing techniques have allowed artisans to create products that not only retain aesthetic and cultural values, but also meet the tastes of modern consumers. Thus, kerawang Gayo has not only become a symbol of cultural heritage, but also plays an important role in the fashion industry, attracting the interest of the younger generation and expanding its market reach. This development is expected to increase awareness of the importance of preserving local culture while providing economic opportunities for artisans.

Table 2. Kerawang Gayo as the Identity

No	News	Narrative and sources	Coding
1	Gayo People's Identity in National Promotion	Kerawang Gayo is an important cultural heritage for the Gayo people, but it takes serious efforts to preserve it. With proper education and training, as well as cooperation between artisans and academics, Kefiling Gayo can continue to develop and become part of the wider national cultural promotion. https://lintasgayo.co/2016/01/05/kerawang-identitas-masyarakat-gayo-dalam-promosi-nasional	Gayo openwork needs support and more in its preservation
2	The Charm of Gayo Freemanship, a	Kerawang Gayo is a symbol of the cultural identity of the Gayo people which is rich in meaning. With a diversity of motifs and colors,	In order to remain relevant in today's

	Traditional Cloth Typical of Central Aceh That Is Full of Meaning	this fabric not only serves as a traditional clothing, but also as a medium to convey the values of life. Efforts to preserve and advance kerawang Gayo are essential so that this culture remains alive and relevant in the modern era https://www.bahankain.com/2023/03/20/pesona-kerawang-gayo-kain-tradisional-khas-aceh-tengah-yang-sarat-akan-makna	modern era, gayo filigree requires even greater efforts
3	The Effect of kerawang Gayo Product Quality on People's Buying Interest	The effect of the quality of kerawang Gayo products on people's buying interest. This research shows that product quality, which includes aspects of design, materials, and durability, has a significant impact on consumers' decision to buy kerawang Gayo. People are increasingly inclined to choose high-quality products, which not only meet functional needs but also provide aesthetic value. These findings provide important insights for artisans and industry players to improve the quality of their products to make them more appealing to consumers. To increase appeal and sales, artisans need to focus on improving quality, both in terms of design and materials. Thus, kerawang Gayo can be more competitive in the market and remain the main choice for consumers. https://journal.isi-padangpanjang.ac.id/index.php/Ecraft/article/viewFile/3787/1450	To increase people's buying interest, the quality of kerawang Gayo must be improved again in terms of functionality and aesthetics.
4	Kerawang Gayo Embroidery: Local Culture, Character Value and as a National Identity	Kerawang Gayo embroidery is a symbol of cultural identity that is rich in meaning and character values. With the recognition as an Intangible Cultural Heritage, it is important to preserve and promote kerawang Gayo so that it remains relevant and part of the identity of the Indonesian nation in the modern era. This effort will help future generations to introduce and appreciate their cultural heritage https://www.academia.edu/87587941/Sulam_Kerawang_Gayo_Budaya_Lokal_Bernilai_Karakter_dan_Sebagai_Identitas_Bangsa	Efforts to increase the government in developing gayo porporpores by recognizing porporn gayo as cultural heritage.
5	Kerawang Gayo: An Ethnographic Study in Bebesen Village, Central Aceh Regency	Kerawang Gayo is a traditional art form that has high cultural value. This research explores the social, economic, and cultural aspects related to the manufacture and use of kerawang Gayo. Through interviews and observations, the author found that kerawang Gayo not only functions as an art product, but also as a symbol of the identity of the Gayo community. In addition, this article also discusses the challenges faced in the	Kerawang Gayo not only functions as an art product but also as a symbol of identity.

		preservation of kerawang Gayo in the modern era. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360591381_KERAWANG_GAYO_STUDI_ETNOGRAFI_DI_KAMPUNG_BEBESEN_KABUPATEN_ACEH_TENGAH	

Source: Varios online media, 2025

The data in Table 2 shows that kerawang Gayo is an important cultural heritage for the Gayo people which functions as a traditional clothing as well as a symbol of cultural identity. To preserve it, education, training, and collaboration between artisans and academics are needed to keep it growing and known nationally. Product quality, including design, materials, and durability, greatly influences the buying interest of consumers who now prefer high-quality products. Therefore, improving quality is the key so that kerawang Gayo can compete in the modern market. Recognition as Intangible Cultural Heritage emphasizes the importance of preserving this culture. Ethnographic research shows that kerawang Gayo is not only a work of art, but also reflects the social, economic, and cultural aspects of the Gayo people, as well as the challenges of its preservation in the modern era. With the right strategy, kerawang Gayo is expected to remain alive and in demand by future generations.

4.3. Kerawang Gayo as a Source of Livelihood

Kerawang Gayo is an important source of livelihood for artisans and sellers, as well as a means of cultural preservation. For artisans, the process of making it is a form of artistic expression and a proud cultural identity. Despite facing challenges such as high raw materials and market competition, they remain committed to maintaining tradition. Meanwhile, sellers see the great potential of kerawang Gayo amid increasing interest in local products. They play a role in promoting this product as a fashion with cultural value, as well as educating consumers to better understand its meaning. Collaboration between artisans and sellers is essential to expand the market and maintain the economic sustainability of the community. With this synergy, kerawang Gayo has the opportunity to continue to develop, not only as a cultural product, but also as a sustainable source of livelihood for the people of Gayo.

Table 3. Kerawang Gayo as a livelihood

No	Report	Statement	Coding
1	Yuli Dayya , 22 years old	The decreasing interest in kerawang Gayo is due to a very high market price even though it is calculated to be commensurate with the service of making it, with a high price it makes gayo filigree even quieter for enthusiasts	A decrease in kerawang Gayo enthusiasts
2	Latiffah Nurul Andini,19 years old	started working since the age of 17 with the aim of preserving regional crafts, according to him kerawang Gayo will continue to grow, with many enthusiasts expected to continue to grow. Latiffah is committed to maintaining this cultural art despite facing challenges such as low price offers from consumers.	optimistic about the development of kerawang Gayo, both in terms of creativity and the number of enthusiasts
3	Nadiatul Rahmi, 21 years old	started making kerawang Gayo 2 years ago because following his brother he believes Gayo filigree continues to grow, with a suitable price and the demand is expected	Nadiatul Rahmi is optimistic that kerawang Gayo will continue to

		to continue to grow due to the increasing variety. Nadiatul continues to contribute because of her love for this craft and hopes that the interest will increase.	grow and survive, thanks to the increasing variety of motifs and growing enthusiasts.
4	Nabila, 22 years old	believes that kerawang Gayo continues to evolve and is now used in a variety of clothing and accessories, not just traditional clothing. Nabila sees the interest in kerawang Gayo increasing and is optimistic that this trend will continue. He is committed to maintaining the Gayo Freeway as a symbol of the Gayo community and hopes that more and more people will be interested. Despite facing the challenge of selling prices that are not always suitable, Nabila feels happy because being a craftsman is her hobby.	The selling price of gayo filigree is not in accordance with the effort and time spent in making it
5	Erni, 41 years old	started kerawang Gayo at the age of 25 because of a hobby, Erni believes that Gayo filigree will continue to grow, with many enthusiasts and an increase in the medium of application, which is expected to continue to grow. Buk Erni is committed to preserving kerawang Gayo because of art, hobbies, and income, and he believes that kerawang Gayo will continue to survive in the hands of artisans like him.	is optimistic that kerawang Gayo will continue to develop and survive due to the large number of enthusiasts, as well as its contribution in preserving this craft through hobbies, art, and income.
6	Isdarliani, 38 years old	Started making kerawang Gayo 5 years ago because it needed work, buk isdar made many new media for openwork application such as tissue boxes and even openwork shoes as an application medium. According to Buk Isdar, Kerawang Gayo continues to grow, with prices commensurate with the services provided. The interest is expected to continue to grow. Buk Isdar is committed to preserving kerawang Gayo because of its increasing price and hopes that the demand will continue to grow.	Buk Isdar is optimistic that kerawang Gayo will continue to develop and survive, because of the large number of enthusiasts and its contribution in preserving this craft.

Source: Interview Data, 2025

Data table 3 above shows that kerawang Gayo is sure to continue to develop in the hands of craftsmen who have high dedication, creativity, and deep love for ancestral heritage. The skills they possess are not something that is acquired instantly, but the result of a long process of inheriting knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation. Craftsmen not only maintain traditional techniques that are rich in symbolic meaning, but also actively

create innovations in more modern designs and media applications. They began to combine traditional elements with contemporary touches to reach a wider market, both locally and nationally. This innovation includes the use of more varied colors, shape adjustments, and the use of kerawang Gayo in various fashion products and accessories. With the spirit of cultural preservation that continues to be maintained, artisans become important actors in bridging tradition and the development of the times, making kerawang Gayo remain relevant in the modern era.

From the data in Table 3, it is also known that kerawang Gayo craftsmen have a high ability to adapt motifs and colors to meet increasingly diverse market tastes. This adaptation is carried out without eliminating the philosophical values contained in each motif, making kerawang Gayo remain authentic but still aesthetically appealing. The adaptation process also shows that artisans have sensitivity to trends and consumer needs, which is the key to surviving in the midst of the dynamics of the fashion industry. In addition, the strong desire to preserve cultural heritage makes them continue to learn, participate in training, and collaborate with academics and other industry players. This collaboration opens up opportunities for improving production quality, digital marketing, and international market penetration. The role of the government and communities in providing support in the form of access to raw materials, capital, and promotion is also very vital. With this synergy, Kerawang Gayo has a great opportunity to become a global cultural icon, as well as a driver of the creative economy in the Gayo region.

5. Discussion

This study examines the development of kerawang Gayo as a traditional motif that has undergone significant transformation in the world of modern fashion, cultural identity, and source of livelihood of the Gayo people. The results of the study show that this motif is not only applied to traditional clothing, but also penetrates into fashion products such as hijab, modern clothes, accessories, to wedding decorations and household appliances. Innovations in design and application media have made kerawang Gayo increasingly in demand, especially by the younger generation. In addition to strengthening cultural identity, Kerawang Gayo also opens up wide economic opportunities through collaboration between artisans, designers, and sellers. The findings of the study confirm the importance of preserving this motif through education, training, and adaptive marketing strategies to remain relevant in the era of globalization. Thus, kerawang Gayo not only survives as a cultural heritage, but also develops as a highly competitive creative economy product.

The findings of this study show that the development of the application of kerawang Gayo in fashion is closely related to the needs of modern society for products that are not only aesthetic but also full of cultural meaning. This transformation occurs because of the awareness of the importance of preserving local culture through adaptive and innovative approaches, as expressed by Qiu et al., (2024) that the strengthening of cultural identity can be achieved through the integration of local values in creative products. In addition, the active involvement of artisans in responding to market tastes makes Kerawang Gayo a symbol of a lively and dynamic identity. This is in line with the view Bhandari (2022) about "cultural hybridity", where cultural heritage is not static, but transforms according to the context of the times. Economic strengthening through kerawang Gayo also emphasizes that culture can be a source of creative economy, as supported by the concept of "cultural economy" from Boğa & Topcu (2020) who see culture as a commodity of high economic value in the global market.

The results of this study show that the application of kerawang Gayo not only reflects aesthetic developments, but also marks a shift in cultural meaning in the social and historical context of the Gayo community. In the past, Kerawang Gayo had a symbolic function that was closely related to traditional values and ceremonies, but now the motif has been reactualized as part of the expression of identity in the public space and creative industry. This transformation reflects a negotiation between tradition and modernity, where the Gayo people seek to preserve their ancestral heritage while addressing the challenges of the global market.

In the ideological context, Kerawang Gayo is a representation of the effort to decolonize aesthetics, which is to elevate local values into the commercial realm as a form of resistance to the domination of outside cultures (Davies & Rizk, 2018). This phenomenon shows that local culture not only survives, but is able to develop contextually through creative adaptations rooted in collective memory and community identity (Duxbury et al., 2015).

Reflections on the results of this study reveal the dual implications for Gayo culture and society. On the one hand, the development of kerawang Gayo in the fashion industry provides a positive function as a means of cultural preservation, local economic empowerment, and strengthening ethnic identity in the midst of globalization. This is in line with the concept of a culture-based creative economy called Assoratgoon & Kantabutra (2023) as an effort to integrate cultural values into economic activities in a sustainable manner. But on the other hand, dysfunction can arise when over-commercialization causes a shift in the symbolic meaning of kerawang Gayo, making it mere visual ornament without contextual understanding. If it is not balanced with cultural education and indigenous community involvement, there is a risk of cultural decontextualization (Holt, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to have a preservation strategy that not only focuses on visual and economic aspects, but also maintains the historical, spiritual, and social values contained in kerawang Gayo.

This research reinforces previous findings related to the preservation of local culture through the development of traditional motifs in the fashion industry, as revealed by Sailesh & Reddy (2023) that the revitalization of ethnic motives can be a strategy for preservation as well as economic empowerment of indigenous peoples. The similarities can be seen in the important role of artisans as agents of cultural preservation and in the encouragement of local heritage-based economies. However, the main difference lies in the innovative approach of the Gayo people in developing Freework not only in clothing, but also accessories and household products, which have not been widely revealed in previous studies such as by Kusumadewi & Jerusalem (2023) which only highlights the symbolic aspect of traditional clothing. In addition, this study adds the dimension of contemporary cultural identity, as stated by Rapanta & Thunder (2021) that cultural identity is now dynamic and constructive. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the integration between the aesthetic, symbolic, and economic functions of Gayo Filigree in the modern era.

Based on the results of this study, the strategic steps that can be taken in the future are to formulate policies for the preservation and development of kerrawang Gayo through synergy between local governments, academics, designers, and the artisan community. The government can initiate continuous training programs for young craftsmen, as well as encourage certification and intellectual property rights (IPR) for Kerawang Gayo distinctive motifs as a form of cultural protection. On the other hand, academics and art education institutions need to develop a curriculum based on local culture that emphasizes the importance of preservation and tradition-based innovation. Meanwhile, fashion industry players can be involved in creative incubation programs based on the circular economy so that Kerawang Gayo products are able to compete globally without losing their local meaning. With this collaborative step, kerawang Gayo is not only sustainable as a cultural symbol, but also develops as a sustainable creative economic force for the Gayo people.

6. Conclusion

The most important finding of this study is that the sustainability of cultural heritage such as kerawang Gayo is highly dependent on the ability of the community to integrate traditional values with the needs and tastes of modern times. The main lesson that can be taken is that cultural preservation does not always have to rely on static conservation, but can instead be done through contextual and adaptive innovation. The creative process carried out by local craftsmen and designers proves that cultural values can be kept alive if they are given space to develop dynamically. This research experience demonstrates the importance of a

cross-sectoral collaborative approach—between culture, economics, and education—as a foundation for maintaining the relevance and sustainability of local culture. Thus, culture is not only a symbol of the past, but also a strategic resource to build an empowered and self-centered future society.

The strength of this research lies in its contribution in enriching the study of cultural arts with the latest field data on the dynamics of the application of kerawang Gayo in the modern fashion industry. This study presents a new variable in the form of the relationship between the preservation of traditional culture and contemporary design innovation and its impact on the local creative economy. In addition, an interdisciplinary approach that combines ethnographic studies, cultural economics, and fashion design provides a more holistic comprehensive perspective than previous research. The research also raises new questions about how cultural identity can be maintained as well as developed in the context of globalization and modern markets. Thus, this study not only expands the understanding of Gayo Freestyle as a cultural heritage, but also confirms the importance of adaptive and collaborative strategies in the preservation of sustainable and competitive culture in the digital age.

The limitation of this study lies in its limited focus on the application of kerawang Gayo in the context of fashion and local products in certain regions, so it does not include a broader analysis of the influence of kerawang Gayo at the national and international levels. In addition, this research focuses more on aesthetic, economic, and cultural aspects, while the increasingly developing aspects of digital production and marketing technology receive less in-depth attention. The study also did not comprehensively explore the perspectives of consumers from outside the Gayo community, which is important to understand the attractiveness and marketing challenges of kerawang Gayo products globally. Therefore, further research is highly recommended to examine digital marketing strategies, cross-cultural collaboration, and long-term socio-economic impacts, so as to provide a more holistic picture and more targeted solutions for the preservation and development of kerawang Gayo.

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No conflict of interest to declare

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