An Aesthetic “Touch” for the Development of Rattan Bag Handicraft Products in Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review

Dwi Cahyadi1,2, Siti Haida Ismail1, Roslina Mohammad1, Mohd Yusof MD Daud1, Muh. Irwan2

1Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia
2Politeknik Negeri Samarinda, Indonesia

Submitted: 2023-03-24. Revised: 2023-09-21. Accepted: 2023-12-01

Abstract

One of the crucial factors in Indonesia’s National Industrial Development Master Plan 2015 - 2035 is enhancing human resources skills and creativity in producing wood/rattan handicrafts. Aesthetic factors are the main requirements for these products due to their cultural and artistic value. In determining the direction of the innovations, it is necessary to understand the product’s development, especially in this regard. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the aesthetic factors used in developing rattan bag handicraft products using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, guided by Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA). The SLR was conducted based on the journal and proceedings obtained through the Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Springer databases. The contribution of this study was to find aesthetic factors considered for the development of bag product innovation. The results showed that six aesthetic factors were applied in developing rattan bag products: materials, motifs, ethnic/culture, shapes, patterns, and colors.

Keywords: aesthetic; handicraft; rattan; bag; Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Handicraft products are related to cultural values, art, and beauty. The materials and production techniques used in the process are usually passed from generation to generation (Hu, Xie, Yuan, Lv, & Xiong, 2021). These products can be used for daily functional needs such as clothing, cutlery, and a place to store garden produce (Chen, Ren, & Zhang, 2021). Historically, rattan is a well-known material for handicraft products, with inherent flexibility, lightness, and durability (Gu & Zhang, 2020).

Rattan is an important economic commodity in endemic countries such as Indonesia as raw material or used in furniture and handicraft products (Pratono, 2019). This provides an opportunity to develop product innovations made of rattan bags, specifically in Indonesia, which has 70-80 percent of the world’s rattan output (Octavia & Nugroho, 2019).

Nowadays, handicraft products such as bags made from rattan have evolved into fashion products for a modern lifestyle. Historically, bags were used to sto-
re garden and forest produce, but now, their function has transformed to focus on tourist attractions and shopping places, as shown in Figure 1.

A significant transformation is evident from the portable size of the bag, but it is still in line with its original form as an aesthetic product that shows the art and culture of the craftsmen (Ichwansyah et al., 2015; Roy, Fahirzal, & Diba, 2017).

Rattan bags are popular with all ages and genders because of their attractive shape and aesthetic function. Moreover, there was an increased interest in handmade products among young people, from 17% under 35 years in 2006 to 32% of buyers in 2020 (Council, 2020). This allows the industry to target a young age market share by developing designs that suit the desired needs and products.

![Figure 1. Changes in the use of handicrafts in the past and present (Ichwansyah et al., 2015)](image)

The Master Plan for Indonesian National Industry Development for 2015-2035 states the need to increase the skills and creativity of human resources in producing wood/rattan handicrafts, focusing on improving rattan handicraft products’ quality and quantity (Industry, 2015).

The Indonesian Furniture and Handicraft Industry Association supports the master plan by conducting project development for the next five years, from 2020 to 2024. This is carried out through the provision of raw materials for rattan and the enhancement of the industry. Furthermore, the development in innovation and quality of handicraft products is necessary due to current trends, which serves as a key to market success (HIMKI, 2019).

To support Indonesia’s National Industrial Development Master Plan 2015-2035, it is necessary to innovate rattan handicraft products to increase competition. Rattan bags as handicraft products are subjected to innovation by carefully considering their functional, ergonomic, economic, and aesthetic factors (Research and Development Agency for North Sumatra Province, 2015).

The aesthetic factor is one of the main requirements for innovation because handicrafts are products with cultural and artistic values (Gandon, Coyle, Pous, Buloup, & Bootsma, 2021; Gaspar, Fontul, Henriques, & Silva, 2017; Hartono, 2020; Sozo & Ogliari, 2019). The importance of this factor is needed in today’s world to aid product design and development (Annamalai, Nagarajan, Kumar, & Saravankumar, 2020; Jolly, Krzywinski, Rao, & Gupta, 2019).

The aesthetic factor can attract the user’s emotions when buying the product through the design seen from the surface shape, color, and pattern (Tyan-Yu, Chueh-Yung, & Cian-Yu, 2017). According to the direction of the master plan, it is vital to know the extent of the role of these factors in the development of rattan bag craft products.

This study aimed to determine the aesthetic factors used in developing rattan bag handicraft products by reviewing previous results through a systematic literature review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses). The review of searches was based on journals and proceedings obtained through Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Springer Journal databases.

**METHOD**

A systematic review is used to find answers to questions by identifying, integrating, and evaluating the sources of
information obtained. This is conducted by following a set of protocols in reviewing journals to obtain quality results (Chakravarty, Mehta, & Vir, 2022; Mallett, Hagen-Zanker, Slater, & Duvendack, 2012; Triandini, Jayanatha, Indrawan, Putra, & Iswara, 2019) and by synthesizing the state of knowledge in the field and provide solutions to unanswered questions (Gonçalves, Castro, Araújo, & Heineck, 2018; Page et al., 2021).

In this study, PRISMA was adopted to improve the reporting of reviews and to produce more transparent results through a guideline of identification, screening, and feasibility in stages (Hulshof et al., 2021; Oluleye, Chan, & Olawumi, 2022). PRISMA is a reporting guide designed to address the poor reporting of systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The steps taken in using the PRISMA method are shown in Figure 2:

![Figure 2. Data collection process using PRISMA](image)

Define study questions

The initial stage in conducting a systematic review is formulating the study question. The predetermined keywords in this study are the terms “aesthetic,” “handicraft,” “rattan bag,” and “Indonesia.” The specific population pertains to handicraft rattan bag production within Indonesia. The intervention examined revolves around developing craft products related to rattan bags. Furthermore, no direct comparison is addressed within the scope of this review. The primary aim is to discern and identify the factors contributing to aesthetics.

Therefore, the study question is as follows: What factors contribute to the aesthetics of rattan bag product development in Indonesia spanning from 2018 to 2023?

The next step is to answer the study question using the PRISMA through the following four stages:

Identify articles from databases

The first step in conducting PRISMA is identifying articles using keywords searched in the Science Direct, Google Scholar, and Springer Journal databases. The keywords used are aesthetic, handicraft, rattan, bag, and Indonesia. By using these keywords, 575 journal articles and proceedings were obtained, with data ranging from 2018 to 2023.

Screening process

The second procedure in PRISMA is where the selected articles are screened. The articles that do not follow the objectives and this study’s questions or are unrelated to the aesthetic factor cannot proceed to the next stage. In this stage, only 37 articles were selected and used to proceed to the eligibility stage.

Eligibility

The eligibility stage includes in-depth monitoring after the screening process. This was achieved through a rigorous and comprehensive reading of the articles to ensure the inclusion of the study objectives. There were 11 articles resulting from this process through deep scrutiny.
Included

This process comprises a thorough and detailed assessment of the articles to determine their quality and ability to address the study questions. A total of 11 articles were appropriate out of the 37 obtained from journals and proceedings. Two additional articles were obtained through the snowballing process. These articles will become the basis for answering the study question, namely the aesthetic factor of handicraft products made of rattan bags in Indonesia.

Figure 3 shows the results of the 13 journals obtained from the aesthetic factors of developing rattan handicraft products. These articles prioritized six aesthetic factors in explaining the development of rattan bag products based on the order of presentation, namely materials, motifs, colors, ethnicity/culture, shapes, and patterns.

Based on literary review results using the PRISMA method, the aesthetic factors of rattan bags can be analyzed and concluded as shown in Figure 4.

The factors could be explained, namely:

Material

Rattan is a product of non-timber forest commodities, supporting the economy through direct sales or processing into handicrafts (Febrian & Loita, 2020).

It is a forest product with economic value due to its flexibility, lightweight, and durability. Regions endowed with their abundance use them for furniture and handicrafts, making the craftsmen more creative, as the materials have different applications. Furthermore, rattan with large roots is mainly used for furniture, while small ones are used for handicrafts such as mats, baskets, and bags (Roy et al., 2017).

One type of rattan bag that continues to enjoy popularity among customers is the Anjat. Anjat is a bag crafted entirely from rattan, sourced from Kalimantan, featuring a backpack design. Rattan can also be effectively combined with other materials, such as water hyacinth plants and Ketak plants (Lygodium cinctum (Burm.) Sw.) (Alamsyah, 2019; Ghani, Sudiarta, & Koriawan, 2021).

In Figure 5, Anjat is shown.
Figure 6 shows a bag product crafted in Indonesia, combining water hyacinth and rattan materials to create handmade handicraft bags. The craftsmen chose water hyacinth to complement rattan because it offers material options for making bags, adding an aesthetic touch to the product by combining these materials (Alamsyah, 2019).

![Figure 6. Rattan bags combined with water hyacinth plants (Alamsyah, 2019)](image)

The Ketak plant is another plant that can be combined with rattan to make bag products. With a fern-like structure like rattan, this plant has strong and elastic texture characteristics and can produce high-quality woven handicraft products. The combination of rattan and plant materials can gives buyers a special attraction for handicraft bags.

Essentially, incorporating additional materials in the crafting of bags, especially handicraft products, can significantly enhance the aesthetic value of the rattan handicraft bags (Ghani et al., 2021). In addition to plant-based materials like Ketak and hyacinth, other materials such as stone beads, leather, batik cloth, patterned weaving, jewelry stones, shells, or even wood supports can enhance the aesthetics or give extra strength to the rattan bags. These accessories help enhance the product’s aesthetics and reflect the distinctive characteristics of the region where the rattan bag is produced. For example, rattan bags that use stone beads as their accessories signify their origin in the Kalimantan region, similar to the shell, which shows the bag was crafted in a coastal area. Figure 8 illustrates a sling bag design intended for storing drink bottles or various items, utilizing non-plant-based accessories to elevate the bag’s visual aesthetics and attract buyers.

![Figure 7. Rattan bag with additional material accessories from stone beads](image)

**Motif**

The prominent motifs on Indonesian handicrafts, such as rattan bags, are based on their origin, ethnicity, and region. The motifs can symbolize the artistic and cultural identity of the maker. It features a rich array of motifs, including decorative flora, fauna, and mythological creatures inspired by the beliefs of the people who make them. Collectively, these motifs imbue the bags with a distinct and unique character, reflecting their origin’s cultural and ecological context. The motifs can also show the social class of the users. Historically, using particular motifs on handicraft products, including rattan bags, was often exclusive to specific social strata (Febrian & Loita, 2020; Mu’minah & Nugraha, 2020; Suhaimy & Abdullah, 2019).

Interestingly, the aesthetic factor of motifs on rattan bags is that other handicraft products, such as cloth products, can inspire the motifs. Figure 8 shows an example of motifs on a rattan bag taken from woven Boti cloth from East Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. To come out with these adaptations, an exploration was conducted by the craftsmen to incorporate the motif in rattan bag crafts, resulting in an attractive aesthetic touch to the rattan bag through the motifs of Boti cloth (Soedarwanto & Maulidia, 2018).
Ethnic / Culture

Every region in Indonesia has its own handicraft products, which shows the cultural characteristics of their ethnic origin. Within the diverse array of handicrafts, rattan bags are among the various categories, and they come in several types distinguished by their shapes and functions. An exemplary instance can be observed in the baby slang bag, which originates in the Dayak tribe residing in Kalimantan, Indonesia, as illustrated in Figure 9. The bag’s design, accessories, colors, and motifs clearly exhibit the unique characteristics associated with this particular tribe. The bags commonly exhibit vivid hues and incorporate embellishments made from animal teeth sourced from Kalimantan.

The aesthetic value of a handicrafts is inherently intertwined with the ethnicity and culture visually displayed in the craft (Fan & Wu, 2020). These products derive their aesthetic value from the fusion of natural materials with shapes, patterns, and colors rooted in the culture of ethnic groups. Handcrafted bags like these enhance the cultural identity of these groups and appeal to potential buyers (Abdullah, Md Zain, & Maaruf, 2020; Chu, 2019).

Shape

As a handicraft, rattan bags have a distinct advantage in their material selection, as rattan offers a unique combination of flexibility and durability, making them ideal for shaping and transporting various goods (Mu’minah & Nugraha, 2020). Furthermore, its versatility allows the rattan to be shaped into squares and circles, giving it uniqueness (SAS, 2022).

Shape is one element that defines the aesthetics of a rattan bag, and it can be categorized into two main aspects: geometric configuration and size. For example, the cylindrical shape of the bag is used for smaller items, while circle and square shapes have a larger size for storing goods. The circular rattan bags, in particular, enjoy high demand from local and international customers (Yonatia, 2020). Shapes that effectively integrate artistic features with practical functioning tend to be highly attractive to consumers (Bankah, Ciptandi, & Viniani, 2021; Chu, 2019; Febrian & Loita, 2020).

Size is another aspect that defines the aesthetics of rattan bags. The rattan bag products in Indonesia can be categorized into three distinct sizes: small, medium, and large. The small size typically measures 15 cm and is available in circular or rectangular shapes. On the other hand, the large size usually comes with measurements of 70 cm and 50 cm circumference and features a cylindrical shape. These large-sized bags are generally Anjat bags that originated in Kalimantan.

Figure 8. Boti woven fabric motifs are used on woven rattan bags. (Soedarwanto & Maulidia, 2018).

Figure 9. The use of boti motifs on woven rattan bags (Ichwansyah et al., 2015)
The emergence of various trends in modern lives has led to a wide range of advancements in bag items designed to cater to specific consumer needs and preferences. Consider, for example, Anjat-type bags, which were initially constructed to accommodate the storage needs of hunting and gardening implements owing to their significant size. Nevertheless, in the contemporary day, there has been a reduction in the size of these bags, resulting in the emergence of several versions, such as sling bags that are made explicitly for fashion-related purposes. The retention of the cylindrical shape, brilliant colors, and distinctive designs emphasize and celebrate the enduring ethnic features.

Figure 10 shows a range of rattan bags that come in different shapes and sizes, catering preferences, and the requirements of its buyers.

![Figure 10. Several shapes of rattan bags in Indonesia (Ichwansyah et al., 2015; Yonatia, 2020)](image1)

However, the final decisions made by buyers are often subjective and might be impacted by their personal fashion preferences and practical needs.

**Pattern**

In the context of rattan bag craftsmanship, the term “pattern” refers to the visual appearance of the rattan weave on the bag’s surface, which is achieved through the woven arrangement of colors and lines on the product. In Indonesia, rattan bags are available in two separate patterns. The first pattern is a solid color design highlighting the woven rattan material without additional embellishments. The second style involves a complex weaving technique that incorporates colored rattan fibers to produce a distinctive and original design on the bag. Rattan bags without patterns emphasize the natural material and its color. In contrast, those with patterns feature woven colored rattan fibers, crafting a unique and visually appealing pattern on the bag.

Patterns on a rattan bag can be designed in the form of flora, fauna, and mythological creatures from the beliefs of the craftsmen. In Indonesia, these patterns serve as a representation of the craftsman’s tribal origins, can distinguish social status, and, in some cases, are believed to possess protective qualities against unwanted evils (Mu’minah & Nugraha, 2020; Suhaimy & Abdullah, 2019).

The design patterns on handicraft products by weaving rattan have their flexibility, which can affect the bag product’s strength. Rattan woven patterns commonly found in Indonesia are shown in Figure 12 (Masta, 2020; Soedarwanto & Maulidia, 2018).

A rattan that forms a particular pattern, besides being able to increase the sturdiness of the product, also adds to the aesthetic value of the product through a product appearance that attracts buyers.

![Figure 11. Rattan woven pattern (Masta, 2020)](image2)

**Color**

The combination of colors used on rattan bags can serve as a geographical marker, showing the product’s identity, social status, age group, and origin (Chu, 2019; Suhaimy & Abdullah, 2019).

The product’s color is influenced by the environment where the product is made. For example, mountainous areas tend to have a slightly darker color, while the color is lighter in coastal regions.
Different color combinations of rattan bags are available in Indonesia, which indirectly influence the aesthetic elements of the product. The colors utilized can be broadly categorized into two categories: those sources from natural materials and those used non-natural substances. Colors from natural materials are obtained from natural ingredients or through natural processes such as soaking, heating, and mixing natural ingredients in rattan fiber (Masta, 2020; Yonatia, 2020).

Meanwhile, colors from non-natural processes, such as chemical dyes, can directly apply to rattan fibers. The coloring process can be carried out on bags before and after the rattan is produced into rattan bags. It’s interesting to note that color has the ability to influence and affect the mood of the person who views it (Febrian & Loita, 2020). Therefore, this highlights the utmost significance of integrating color selections as a vital element in the design of rattan bags.

The literature review results obtained six main factors in developing rattan bag products in Indonesia. There are several aesthetic factors that are interrelated and support the existing factors. The aesthetic factor of the motif can be influenced by the colors of the rattan bag product. Colors that come from natural or unnatural origins can provide a variety of motifs. Patterns on rattan bags in Indonesia can provide a variety of patterns that are supported by the type of material used and the motifs that appear on the rattan bag. Meanwhile, ethnic/cultural aesthetic factors can be seen in other aesthetic factors, namely color, shape, material, and patterns on rattan bag products.

The combination of these things can provide a visual that shows the ethnicity/culture of the region and tribe from which the rattan bag product originates in Indonesia. Thus, in supporting Indonesia’s National Industrial Development Master Plan, these six factors can be used as a basis for the rattan bag handicraft industry in Indonesia to innovate product development based on the aesthetic factors of its products.

CONCLUSIONS

The potential for developing rattan bag products is evident in their ability to meet economic and aesthetic demands. Aesthetic considerations have a significant role in fostering innovation within the industry of handcrafted products. The significance of handicrafts arises from the acknowledgment of their intrinsic cultural and artistic value. In order to ensure the congruence between the growth of rattan bag goods and Indonesia’s industrial master plan, it is necessary to get an in-depth understanding of the degree to which aesthetic factors influence the development of rattan bag handicrafts.

Therefore, the aesthetic criteria of rattan bag handicrafts in Indonesia play a crucial role in meeting consumer demands and ensuring their contentment, ultimately influencing the economic worth of these items. This study aims to analyze the aesthetic elements that contribute to the development of handicraft products for rattan bags in Indonesia. This will be achieved by an in-depth study of existing literature using a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, following the guidelines outlined by the PRISMA methodology.

Following the PRISMA methodology, 13 scholarly articles published from 2018 to 2023 have been identified as pertinent to the study objectives. The present collection of articles intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of aesthetic factors inherent in rattan handicraft items in Indonesia, as previously investigated by scholars engaged in the advancement of rattan bag production. The studies empha-
size six primary aesthetic components: materials, motifs, ethnic and cultural characteristics, forms, patterns, and colors. The rattan bag handicraft invention should consider six key criteria that serve as a fundamental framework, with special emphasis on their aesthetic features.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful to the students for the Ph.D. program at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Malaysia for all the support towards making this study successful.

REFERENCES


Alamsyah. (2019). Rattan as a Craft Material of Community on the North Coast of Java (Rattan Craft Study in Teluk Wetan Jepara). E3S Web of Conferences, 125. doi:10.1051/e3sconf/201912509018


Gu, Y., & Zhang, J. (2020). Tensile Properties of Natural and Synthetic Rattan Strips Used as Furniture Wo-
Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education 24 (1) (2024): 77-87

Forests, 11(12), 1299. doi:10.3390/f11121299


Roy, B., Fahrizal, & Diba, F. (2017). *Studi Pemanfaatan Rotan Oleh Masyara-


