

Strategy Analysis of Sikka Woven Fabric Business Development

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ABSTRACT

The traditional woven fabric industry is an essential part of cultural heritage and economic development in many regions, including Sikka Regency, Indonesia. Sikka woven fabric (kain tenun Sikka) is renowned for its unique patterns, rich symbolism, and intricate craftsmanship, passed down through generations. This traditional textile industry not only serves as a representation of local identity but also plays a crucial role in supporting the livelihoods of artisans and small business owners. However, despite its cultural and economic significance, the Sikka woven fabric industry faces various challenges that hinder its growth and sustainability. The development strategy for the Sikka woven fabric craft business was designed by fgathering field data through observations, interviews, and FGD with relevant stakeholders. This study applies SWOT analysis to examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats influencing the development of the Sikka woven fabric business. By identifying strategic pathways, this research aims to provide recommendations to enhance competitiveness, expand market reach, and ensure the sustainability of this traditional craft in a modern economic landscape.

Keywords: Sikka Woven Fabric Industry, Strategic, SWOT Analysis

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1. Introduction

The traditional woven fabric industry is an essential part of cultural heritage and economic development in many regions, including Sikka Regency, Indonesia. Sikka woven fabric (kain tenun Sikka) is renowned for its unique patterns, rich symbolism, and intricate craftsmanship, passed down through generations. Sikka woven fabric is a high-quality traditional textile with deep spiritual significance. In the Sikka Krowe community, woven fabrics (sarongs) are classified into two categories: utang, designated for women, and lipa, for men. This intricate weaving tradition is predominantly carried out by women or skilled artisans who inherit their expertise through generations.

Traditionally, Sikka woven fabric is crafted using natural cotton threads, undergoing a lengthy and meticulous production process. Each stage of the process involves the use of various traditional tools, each serving a specific function. These tools, created by local artisans, embody exceptional artistic quality and reflect the high level of cultural and civilizational heritage passed down by their ancestors [1].



Figure 1. Woven Process

This traditional textile industry not only serves as a representation of local identity but also plays a crucial role in supporting the livelihoods of artisans and small business owners. However, despite its cultural and economic significance, the Sikka woven fabric industry faces various challenges that hinder its growth and sustainability [2].

In recent years, globalization and industrialization have transformed consumer preferences, leading to increased competition from mass-produced textiles. Additionally, challenges such as limited access to broader markets, difficulties in raw material procurement, and the declining number of skilled artisans have further threatened the survival of the Sikka

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woven fabric business. To address these challenges, it is essential to develop a strategic approach that enables the industry to adapt, grow, and remain relevant in an evolving business landscape.

A strategic analysis using the SWOT framework—assessing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—provides valuable insights for sustainable business development. This approach enables business owners, artisans, and policymakers to identify competitive advantages, address internal limitations, leverage market opportunities, and mitigate external risks. By employing SWOT analysis, this research aims to evaluate the current state of the Sikka woven fabric industry and propose effective business strategies to enhance its market positioning and long-term sustainability.

The findings of this study will contribute to the broader discourse on preserving cultural industries while ensuring their economic viability. Additionally, the research seeks to offer practical recommendations for artisans, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in designing business strategies that balance tradition with innovation. In doing so, this study aspires to support the resilience of the Sikka woven fabric industry, allowing it to thrive in both domestic and international markets.

1.1. Sikka Woven Fabric: Cultural and Economic Significance

Sikka woven fabric is a traditional cultural heritage of Sikka Regency, crafted by women for generations using traditional tying and weaving techniques. This ancestral legacy has been preserved and developed over time due to its deep philosophical, aesthetic, social, cultural, and economic significance. The weaving process is intricate and time-consuming, beginning with preparing tools, obtaining cotton fibers, spinning them into thread, tying patterns onto the thread, natural dyeing, warping, and weaving. This process has been passed down through generations as a primary occupation for women, alongside household and agricultural responsibilities, without formal education or specialized training [3].

Given its historical and economic value, the Sikka Regency Government actively supports its development and preservation. It has become a cultural icon of Sikka Regency, with 52 motifs officially recognized as Intellectual Property Rights (HKI). As a time-honored tradition in Sikka, East Nusa Tenggara, weaving is deeply rooted in women's craftsmanship and remains a defining feature of the region. The Sikka woven fabric is not only used for daily wear but also serves as bride price (*belis*) and ceremonial attire. Traditional woven items include women's sarongs (*Utang*), men's sarongs (*Lipa*), and headbands (*Lensu*). Common Motifs in Sikka Weaving:

- Animal Motifs – Representing both male and female figures, including horses, deer, crocodiles, lizards, snakes, dragons, fish, octopuses, crabs, shrimp, chickens, magpies, eagles, and cockatoos.
- Plant Motifs – Depicting unidentified trees and vegetables.
- Symbolic Motifs – Such as the four-legged chicken, symbolizing a fusion of traditional Chinese dragon motifs in pottery.
- Newer Influences – Featuring motifs like peacocks, civets, and bats, which were introduced later. [3]

The examples of Sikka Woven Fabric described on Figure 2.



Figure 2. The Example of Sikka Woven Fabric
(<https://www.sikkakab.go.id/>)

1.2. SWOT Analysis in Business Development

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used in business development to evaluate an organization's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It provides a structured framework for businesses to understand internal and external factors that can influence their success [4]. This analysis helps decision-makers formulate strategies that leverage strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats.

SWOT analysis is commonly used in business development to:

- Identify core competencies and competitive advantages.
- Recognize potential weaknesses that may hinder growth.
- Explore market opportunities for expansion and innovation.
- Mitigate risks and challenges posed by external threats. By applying SWOT analysis, businesses can formulate strategies that enhance competitiveness, sustainability, and market positioning [5].

2. Research Methods

The development strategy for the Sikka woven fabric craft business was designed by first gathering field data through observations, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with relevant stakeholders. Consequently, the study employed a descriptive qualitative method, aiming to provide a comprehensive depiction and explanation of the current conditions [6]. Qualitative research methods are research methods used to describe and

analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and people, both individually and in groups [7]. Once the field data was collected, a SWOT analysis was conducted to assess the internal and external factors influencing the growth of woven fabric craft businesses in Sikka Regency.

3. Discussion

Based on observations and survey, the analysis of the development of Sikka woven fabric business can be mapped into the SWOT table as follows:

Strengths

- High-quality craftsmanship and unique traditional designs.
- Strong cultural significance and heritage value.
- Availability of skilled artisans with generational expertise.
- Growing recognition in the cultural tourism and fashion industries.

Weaknesses

- Limited market reach and reliance on traditional distribution channels.
- High production costs and time-consuming processes.
- Dependence on manual labour with minimal technological innovation.
- Lack of business management training among artisans.

Opportunities

- Expanding market demand for ethical and sustainable fashion.
- E-commerce and digital marketing potential for wider market penetration.
- Government and NGO support for preserving traditional crafts.
- Collaboration with designers and international markets for product innovation.

Threats

- Competition from mass-produced textiles and synthetic fabric substitutes.
- Declining number of artisans due to younger generations' disinterest.
- Economic fluctuations affecting consumer purchasing power.
- Difficulty in sourcing natural raw materials due to environmental changes.

Based on the SWOT analysis, the following strategies are proposed:

Strength-Opportunity (S-O) Strategy

- Utilize the strong craftsmanship and heritage value to promote products in international markets through government and NGO support.
- Leverage cultural tourism to attract buyers and create experiential marketing opportunities.
- Expand collaborations with ethical and sustainable fashion brands to increase market reach.
- Strengthen digital marketing efforts, showcasing the uniqueness and authenticity of Sikka woven fabric.

Weakness-Opportunity (W-O) Strategy

- Implement training programs to equip artisans with modern business and financial management skills.
- Develop cooperative business models to pool resources, reducing production costs and improving efficiency.
- Introduce semi-automated weaving techniques to maintain traditional artistry while improving productivity.
- Seek external funding and grants to modernize equipment and expand production capacity.

Strength-Threat (S-T) Strategy

- Differentiate Sikka woven fabric from mass-produced textiles through branding and certification of authenticity.
- Advocate for policy support and trade protections to safeguard traditional textile industries.
- Diversify product offerings, integrating woven fabric into modern apparel and home decor to expand market segments.
- Establish local and international partnerships to increase product visibility and counter competition.

Weakness-Threat (W-T) Strategy

- Address artisan shortages by creating incentives for younger generations to engage in weaving through educational programs and apprenticeships.
- Develop sustainable raw material supply chains to reduce dependency on scarce resources.
- Strengthen local community engagement in preserving weaving traditions to ensure continuity.
- Establish risk mitigation strategies, such as financial support programs, to protect artisans against economic downturns.

4. Conclusions

The Sikka woven fabric industry holds immense potential for growth despite its current challenges. By leveraging its cultural heritage, embracing modern business strategies, and adopting sustainable practices, the industry can achieve long-term viability. The proposed S-O, W-O, S-T, and W-T strategies provide a comprehensive roadmap for artisans, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to ensure the preservation and economic sustainability of Sikka woven fabric in an evolving market landscape.

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