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## **The Resilience of Malay Silver Craft Design: Sustaining Cultural Heritage and Promoting Sustainable Industrialization**

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**Abstract:** This research paper investigates the traditional Malay silver craft that has existed for two centuries, reflecting the community's culture and heritage. The Srivijaya Kingdom and British colonial rule historically influenced this Malay culture's silver craft, encapsulating beliefs, dreams, and resilience. Originating in Kelantan, Malaysia, the Malay silver craft industry flourished, but recent studies reveal its decline and potential extinction. This paper's primary objective is to comprehensively identify and propose strategies for integrating sustainable practices of silver craft, aligning with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on sustainable industrialization and cultural heritage preservation. The research seeks to preserve and revitalize the craft industry for community benefit, emphasizing its socio-economic impact, potential for job creation, income generation, tourism, and intangible heritage preservation. The paper conducts a literature review, visual research, and focus group discussions employing anthropology, art history, and community development. This research emphasizes the importance of sustaining cultural heritage, fostering community resilience, and empowerment. Influenced by their cultural beliefs, environment, looking at nature, and the natural world, the fine silver craft undergoes artistic expression, subsequently fostering social cohesion and interaction. Following the quadruple helix concept, the Malay silver craft industry revival engaged through collaboration among local artisans, government agencies, community organizations, and academicians. By utilizing thematic analysis based on focus group discussion, this research thoroughly analyses the sustainability of the Malay silver craft domain, interpreting key thematic codes that underpin its ecological and socio-cultural significance within the framework of local craft in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Traditional craft; Malay silver craft; cultural sustainability; community development; design practice

### **Introduction**

Sustainability has gained popularity, according to the World Commission on Environment and Development. Without compromising the capacity of future generations to satisfy demand, this progress satisfies the present requirements. Additionally, UNESCO ensures that most of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) acknowledge the importance of culture (Gudowska, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial to maintain the craft industries by linking social and cultural sustainability. This research concentrates on traditional Malay silver craft practices important to social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors. Silver craft in Kelantan is handmade production requiring material expertise and intelligence in craftsmanship. It includes formal

knowledge, tacit knowledge, physical and mental skill, contextual awareness, innovation, and personal creative autonomy. This craftsmanship is small-scale production with knowledge based on materials and skills (Syed Ahmad, 2022).

Through this knowledge, artisans bring a product to the market using specific tools and try to understand and overcome the difficulties outside their control while creating the silver craft product. Local craft industries that have roots in the past rural areas of Kg. Morak Kelantan is traditional, referring to considerations about the existence of artisans, workshops, machines, and tools. Besides that, the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage division founded the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation (MHDC) in 1973 to protect the local traditional craft industries. The role of MHDC is to encourage the use of modern manufacturing techniques by craftspeople and foster the marketing and export of handcrafted goods (Kraftangan, 2010). Furthermore, the master craftsman award and the title of the best craftsman with knowledge and expertise in a particular craft were nominated by the Malaysian government to recognise and preserve the cultural heritage craft among the local communities (Cheah, 2013).

However, in the past ten years, the silver craft industry has declined on its deterioration trajectory and faces the risk of being forgotten. The younger generation must be more interested in preserving this local art heritage value, and the artistry of traditional craftsmanship is all but gone. The introduction of several foreign cultures due to globalisation has caused the younger generation to become disinterested in their cultural heritage. This esteemed sector now confronts the impending peril of fading into obscurity and being consigned to extinction.

This research paper aims to thoroughly investigate the design practices embedded within Malaysia's traditional Malay silver craft industry, and the following objectives are to identify these practices and formulate strategies to integrate sustainable practices into contemporary craft approaches. The literature review revealed a noticeable gap in knowledge, which motivated this study to significantly contribute by illuminating the development of the Malay traditional silver craft. By aligning this evolution with the Sustainable Design Goals outlined in the UN Agenda 2030, the research bridges a substantial void, forming a harmonious integration between the intrinsic value of heritage, the artistry inherent in craftsmanship, and the pressing global imperatives of sustainability within the silver craft industry.

## Literature Review

### 1. Traditional Craft

The terminology "craft" gained widespread usage to denote handmade decorative arts, particularly associated with the Arts and Crafts movement. A craft encompasses any manually crafted item that demands a mastery of material understanding and an element of thoughtful creation. It encompasses formal and tacit knowledge, physical and cognitive expertise, contextual awareness, inventive thinking, and individual creative autonomy (Temeltas & Kaya, 2021). Adamson (2010) characterizes craftsmanship as small-scale production rooted in material and skill-based knowledge. An essential aspect of craftsmanship is the knowledge amassed over years of apprenticeship (Gamble, 2004, p. 190), enabling craftsmen not only to create products but also to address challenges encountered during the crafting process (Hoxie, 1920, p. 131). This comprehensive definition underscores craftsmen's holistic approach, wherein they control material, design, and production methods, aligning their knowledge and skills with strategic intellectual features as well as manual expertise. Traditionally located craft industries in rural areas are characterized by their ancestral lineage, passed down through generations (Matsumoto, 2006; Roy, 1999). These industries, often small-scale and family-based, adhere to non-corporate structures (Roy, 1999), rooted in traditional practices.

Scholars have identified the presence of a unique beauty paradigm that guided craftsmanship within local traditions. However, this paradigm ceased to constrain the imaginative capacities of craftsmen and artisans, who followed their intuitive inclinations instead. This creative latitude, coupled with extensive practical experience, enabled these artisans to fill their craft materials with an intricate understanding, allowing them to authentically capture the essence of natural forms and subsequently creatively transform these materials into distinct styles and forms (Kamarudin, 2020).

Crafts are classified into traditional, contemporary, and modern categories, determined by material experience, active skills and processes, products, artwork, and market attributes (Adamson, 2007). These classifications further translate into market segments such as high-end, artisanal, commercial, and mass-production crafts, catering to distinct market niches based on value, production scale, and consumer preferences. Craft production's economic and creative significance is evident in recent studies (Hogseth, 2013; Jakob & Thomas, 2017), emphasizing its strategic role and potential for fostering innovation and economic growth. Table 1 illustrates the market segmentation of craft categories.

Table 1. Market segmentation of craft categories

Categories	Description
(Low-End) Functional wares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Made in a workshop or small factory.</li> <li>● Small-scale handmade production for national or export markets.</li> </ul>
(Mid to High End) Traditional art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ethnic crafts with cultural values</li> <li>● High-quality items and is sold by small chains and independent retail stores</li> </ul>
(High End) Designer goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Redesigned local crafts item</li> <li>● Follow current global trend in the export market and is sold by speciality stores.</li> </ul>
(Low-End) Souvenirs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Local traditional crafts</li> <li>● Affordable and basic items are sold by gift shops in vacation areas.</li> </ul>

Source: Jakob & Thomas (2017)

### *Traditional Craft in Malaysia*

In the early decades of the twentieth century, the British Malayan government embarked on a mission to revive traditional Malay craftsmanship by organizing exhibitions, promoting craft activities, and offering training initiatives. The official Malaysian national handicraft organization points to the 1930s as a pivotal era when arts and crafts societies were initially established in Malaya, attributed to the collaborative efforts of colonial officers and their spouses. This period marked a significant milestone in fostering the growth of the local craft industry (Kraftangan, 2010). Luxury crafts held a prominent position within Malay court customs, with ceremonial requisites guided by customary regulations, as evidenced in the Adat Raja-Raja Melayu of 1779 (Sudjiman, 1982).

In contemporary Malaysia, this craft development has evolved under the umbrella of the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation (MHDC). Established in 1973, the organization operates as a foundation of the country's craft sector. Emphasized by the *Perbadanan Kemajuan Kraftangan Malaysia Act* of 1979, MHDC stands as the foremost craft agency in Malaysia, operating under the purview of the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage. Its strategic significance lies in facilitating craft industry growth, promoting modern production techniques among artisans, and facilitating marketing and export endeavours for handcrafted products.

The Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation Act 1979 (Act 222) defines "Handicraft Product" as artistic creations with cultural or traditional significance stemming from a process primarily reliant on manual skills. The preservation of traditional crafts is crucial to sustaining Malay cultural heritage within the region, fostering continuity within craft industries through localized and innovative inspirations. The beginning of the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation in 1979 aimed to provide substantial assistance to craft entrepreneurs across Malaysia, offering avenues for skill advancement and the application of contemporary techniques to complement traditional methodologies. The Corporation has consistently conducted diverse developmental initiatives to enhance local craft entrepreneurs' achievements and competitiveness. The scope of Malaysian handicrafts encompasses five distinct categories: earthenware, forest-based, metals, textiles, and various other materials (MHDC, 2014).

## 2. Malay Silver Craft

"According to recent studies by Oxford Languages (2021), silver craft is a product, merchandise, and craft produced from a specific combination of metals. There are many types of silver craft, and it is divided into two categories which are functional and non-functional. Generally, most are functional items such as dining, cooking, storage, ceremonial, cultural customs, precious royal objects, and many more. For non-functional items, primarily, it is used for decorative items and symbolic objects (Mohd. Kassim, 2008). Silver craft is one of the traditional metal crafts practised today in Malaysia. Materials, equipment, and various manufacturing techniques help encourage local artisans to produce craft items in various forms and uses. The talent and creativity of the silversmiths are evident through the techniques of making traditional craft items, such as wire twisting and *repousse chasing* techniques for silver craft items.

The simplicity of the craftsman in producing designs and the creativity of blending motifs highlights the identity of the Malay craft heritage. The result of his craftsmanship, which is reasonable in showing the skill and ability to blend the appearance of shapes, motifs, or patterns, portrays harmony and order in a civilization. Among the products of silver crafts are *tepak sireh*, jugs, *pahar*, incense burner containers, *cokmar*, cutlery, and jewellery as personal adornments such as *dokoh*, brooches, pendants, anklets, *caping*, and many more. The uniqueness and precision of silver craft are distinguishable through the fineness of handwork, such as carving and filigree technique which is so unique and intricate. The plant motifs on every corner of the space, the composition, materials, and shapes show high aesthetic processing, with the lustre of precious stones that are neatly tied to explain further that the carved motifs are really 'alive.' Every silver craft design has meaning and philosophy, and it seems metaphorical as being brought to life again with a combination of neatly arranged motifs. Artisans and sculptors skilled at appreciating and interpreting the beauty of the surrounding nature into refined styling until an accurate picture of nature is engraved to decorate the surface of silver metal items."

### *Silver Craft Industries in Kelantan*

Kelantan, located in the East Coast Region of Malaysia along with Terengganu and Pahang, has historically been a hub of traditional Malay crafts. The region's socio-economic and industrial development has centred around these crafts, particularly brass and silver, for over 200 years. The states of Kelantan and Terengganu engaged in early trading activities and the creation of metalware, showcasing the historical significance of these crafts. In the 1930s, British intervention played a pivotal role in revitalizing the Kelantan ornamental silver industry, with the formation of the Kelantan branch of the Malayan Arts and Crafts Society (MACS) driving advancement. The MACS supplied silver ingots and modern tools to local artisans, enabling the creation of diverse silverware items, albeit not always only sometimes traditional designs. The historical significance and potential of Kelantan's silver craft industry underscore its role in the region's cultural and economic landscape.

Kelantan's silver craftsmanship is renowned for its intricate artistry and thoughtfully designed patterns, often adorned with floral motifs that encapsulate the essence of Kelantan's identity. Within this craft lies the true legacy of Kelantan, as historical records fail to attest to other Malay states engaging in silver craft production. However, the 1970s witnessed an exodus of youth from Kelantan pursuing better economic opportunities due to the state's economic stagnation. Regrettably, this departure from the region has led to a need for more awareness about the significance of preserving their vibrant cultural heritage. Kelantan, like many other regions, has been swept up in the tide of industrialization and urbanization, further compounded by the global influences facilitated by the Internet. Consequently, shifts in consumer perspectives and values have occurred, catalyzed by the influx of imported consumer goods.

The current scenario in Kelantan reflects an ageing cohort of silver craft artisans, with some having passed away. This trend emphasizes the urgency for contemporary Malay artisans to rekindle and nurture their interest in silverware craftsmanship. The contemporary landscape underscores the criticality of safeguarding cultural heritage, as the younger generation exhibits diminishing interest and needs more opportunity to develop the intricate practical skills required for this craft. In this context, the imperative to conserve and sustain this dwindling heritage has never been more evident (N. et al., 2010). As per data sourced from the Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation (MHDC), there has been a consistent decline in the

engagement of companies and entrepreneurs within the metal crafts industry over the years. Notably, a small minority remains dedicated to practising the intricate art of silver craft, particularly within the East Coast region of Malaysia as in Table 2.

Table 2. The current silver craft entrepreneurs and companies exist in Kelantan

No.	Company and Owner	Material & Specialization (Silver Craft)	Address
1.	DY Silvercraft Mohamed @ Mohd Daud Bin Yusoff	Jewellery, decorative item, and gift	1122 A, Kampung Baung, Jalan PEngkalan Chepa, 16100 Kota Bharu, Kelantan
2.	KB Permai Hasnani Azira Binti Ab Manan	Jewellery	5406 C, Jalan Sultanah Zainab, 15050 Kota Bharu, Kelantan
3.	Smira Silvercraft Suhaimi Bin Mat Jusoh	Keris and wares	Lot No 2533, Kampung Mesira, Palek bang, 16040 Kota Bharu, Kelantan
4.	Mohd Ariffin Bin Wook	Jewellery and wares	Kampung Paloh, Palek bang, 16040 Tumpat, Kelantan
5.	RIZ Zilver & Gold Craft Hafiz Safwan Bin Suhaimi	Jewellery and wares	Lot 2553 Kampung Mesira, Palek bang, 16040 Tumpat, Kelantan
6.	KB Craft & Trading Mohammed Bin Harun	Jewellery	Lot 174, Kampung Kijang, Jalan Pantai Cahaya Bulan, 15350 Kota Bharu, Kelantan

Source: Craft on the go application by MHDC (2023)

### 3. Cultural Sustainability

The interrelation between sustainability and traditional crafts and craftsmanship is closely associated with environmental, cultural, and economic considerations (Isar, 2004). The essence of sustainability holds significant importance in our existence; as outlined by Stanley (2012), it comprises four fundamental pillars: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, social sustainability, and cultural sustainability. From a transformative perspective, sustainability is delineated as attaining a society's environmental, economic, social, and cultural requisites while safeguarding the prospects of future generations (Stanley, 2012).

Moreover, an essential aspect of sustainability involves prioritizing community values, thereby encompassing dialogues on cultural sustainability in manners that avoid detrimental impacts on our ecosystem, surroundings, and societal well-being. Ultimately, sustainability strategies should adopt a comprehensive and holistic approach. The convergence of policies and designs that address all four dimensions of sustainability is imperative for fostering global improvement. The relationship between sustainability and traditional crafts and craftsmanship is notably linked with concerns involving the environment, culture, and economics (Isar, 2004). Additionally, beyond sustainability's significance, traditional Malay silver craft constitutes a segment of the creative industries bearing substantial cultural worth, demanding efforts for rejuvenation and preservation to ensure its enduring value for forthcoming generations.

Cultural sustainability has garnered increasing attention, but there remains a need for a deeper exploration of how culture operates within the framework of sustainability and its interrelation with a value system that subsequently shapes perspectives on sustainability (Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019). While the prevailing notion of sustainability predominantly orients toward the future, the concept of cultural sustainability necessitates the incorporation of historical perspectives, prompting considerations about cultural recollection, cultural heritage, and institutions such as archives, libraries, and museums that serve as conservation vessels. These institutions are pivotal in transmitting knowledge and cultural insights to forthcoming generations (Mignosa & Kotipalli, 2019).

Based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) introduced by the United Nations in 2015, which are founded on the principle of "leaving no one behind," the updated Agenda underscores a comprehensive approach to attaining universal sustainable development (Gudowska, 2020). As a result, sustainability, or sustainable development, has become an all-encompassing and multifaceted concept. The

creative industry is recognized for its potential to significantly impact economic advancement. Within this context, Malaysia endeavors to realize this potential by advancing the Sustainable Design Goal, aiming for sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, alongside the achievement of full and productive employment, and the promotion of decent work opportunities for all communities (Gudowska, 2020).

Furthermore, it is imperative for sustainable development ideology to seamlessly align with the enhancement of economic value and viability within craft practices. Technological advancements have engendered shifts in individual and communal expressions and methodologies in contemporary times. The tactile and sensory elements inherent in arts and crafts and tangible and intangible heritage have encountered transformations. Unquestionably, traditional metal craft displays an extensive, uninterrupted lineage and harbours the potential for a robust resurgence in the future. Regrettably, numerous craft designs hold considerable value and exhibit exceptional uniqueness, particularly in certain aspects. These designs are the evolutionary bridge connecting present-day Malaysian artistry with centuries of enduring tradition (Syed et al., 2022).

The role of culture within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework is underscored by UNESCO's efforts. By aligning with the Four Pillars of Sustainability—Social, Economic, Cultural, and Environmental—UNESCO enhances the value and viability of craft practices. This study primarily centres on these pillars' economic, social, and cultural dimensions. Notably, the investigation establishes a correlation between these four pillars and specific SDGs. Target 9.2, for instance, aims to advance sustainable industrialization while increasing the industry's contribution to employment, and gross domestic product, preserving niche markets within the craft industry. Meanwhile, Target 11.4 emphasizes the reinforcement of endeavours to safeguard and protect the world's cultural and natural heritage. Through this alignment, UNESCO harmonises cultural sustainability and overarching developmental objectives.

## Methodology

This research takes a multidisciplinary approach by integrating the fields of anthropology, art history, and community development to comprehensively explore and identify the design practices associated with the traditional Malay silver craft industry in Malaysia. The methodology encompasses a literature review, field visual research, and focus group discussions. The literature review includes scholarly articles and publications that cover various aspects related to the Malay silver craft industry, including traditional design practices, sustainable industrialization, niche market development, revitalization efforts, stakeholder collaboration, community development, and socio-economic impact. The field visual research involves conducting on-site visits to artisan workshops, craft communities, and cultural centres to directly observe, document, and photograph silver craft designs, techniques, and working environments.

The focus group discussions engage a range of stakeholders, which involved artisans, craftsmen, government agencies, entrepreneurs, practitioners, and experts, to facilitate open dialogue on topics of traditional design practices, revitalization strategies, stakeholder collaboration, community development, and socio-economic impact conducted on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 in Holiday Villa Hotel, Kota Bharu Kelantan. The qualitative data obtained from these methods are analyzed using coding, categorization, and thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns, themes, and key findings. Through this methodology, the research aims to highlight the importance of sustaining the cultural heritage of the Malay silver craft, explore its potential in fostering community resilience and empowerment, and propose strategies for its revitalization and safeguarding. The theme of the focus group discussion highlights five main factors crucial for the development and sustainability of the local Malay silver craft industry, as outlined below:

Table 3. A multitude of stakeholders took part in the focus group discussion

No.	Participants
<i>Academician</i>	
1.	Dr. Mohd Fauzi Bin Kamarudin Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka
2.	Dr Hanif Bin Khairi

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	Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA
3.	Mr Alias Bin Yusoff Former Senior Lecturer dan Artist
4.	Mr Zamani Bin Daud Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA
5.	Mr Syed Mohd Faisal Senior Lecturer, Universiti Teknologi MARA
	<b><i>Local Entrepreneurs and Artisans</i></b>
6.	Tn. Hj. Mohd Ariffin Bin Wook Kampung Paloh, Palekbang, 16040 Tumpat, Kelantan
7.	Mr Adnan Bin Ismail Kampung Paloh, Palekbang, 16040 Tumpat, Kelantan
8.	Mr Maliki Bin Yusof Kampung Paloh, Palekbang, 16040 Tumpat, Kelantan
9.	Mr Mohammed Harun KB Craft & Trading, Lot 174, Kampung Kijang, Jalan Pantai Cahaya Bulan, 15350 Kota Bharu, Kelantan
10.	Ms. Hasnani Azira Ab Manan KB Permai, 5406 C, Jalan Sultanah Zainab, 15050 Kota Bharu, Kelantan <b><i>Company of Mariwasa Kraftangan Sdn. Bhd.</i></b>
11.	YDH Toh Bijaya Wati Putri Rafidah Binti Megat Noh Executive Officer
12.	Ms. Zuhriah Binti Bostang Chief Design
13.	Ms Reza Binti Ramly Sales and marketing

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Source: Syed Mohd Faisal (2022)

### 1. Industry and Market Overview

The Malay silver craft industry, particularly prominent in Kelantan, has its roots in the Malay Archipelago and has evolved through historical influences and cultural exchanges. It integrates elements from the Hindu-Buddhist Srivijaya Kingdom, cross-cultural interactions with traders, and Islamic art and culture. Today, the Malay silver craft serves as a cultural heritage, valuable for special occasions, festivals, and traditional ceremonies in Malaysia.

### 2. Design Aspects

Design plays a pivotal role in Malay silver craft, encompassing various aesthetic and artistic elements. These elements include intricate detailing, symbolism, organic inspiration from nature, geometric patterns, balance and symmetry, curvilinear forms, as well as the use of contrast and texture. Together, these elements create visually captivating silver pieces with deep cultural significance.

### 3. Fabrication Techniques

Skilled craftsmen employ a wide range of techniques in the fabrication of Malay silver craft. These techniques encompass filigree work, engraving, repoussé and chasing, granulation, stone setting, casting, soldering, and joining. The mastery of these techniques necessitates precision, attention to detail, and years of expertise to shape and embellish silver into intricate and exquisite objects.

### 4. Product Range

The Malay silver craft industry offers a diverse range of products, including jewellery, traditional accessories, home decor items, religious artefacts, commemorative and gift items, as well as replicas and souvenirs. These products not only showcase the artistry and cultural aesthetics of the Malays but also contribute to the craft's beauty and narrative aspect.

## 5. Applying the Quadruple Helix Model

The application of the Quadruple Helix Model can provide valuable insights and benefits to the silver craft industry in Malaysia through collaborative engagement with stakeholders. Enhanced collaboration among government, industry, academia, and civil society can facilitate knowledge exchange, foster innovation, develop supportive policies and initiatives, promote social and cultural engagement, and drive economic development. By embracing these principles, the growth, sustainability, and preservation of the Malay silver craft industry can be fostered, which collaboratively generates new knowledge, products, or services to address social needs and technological advancements.

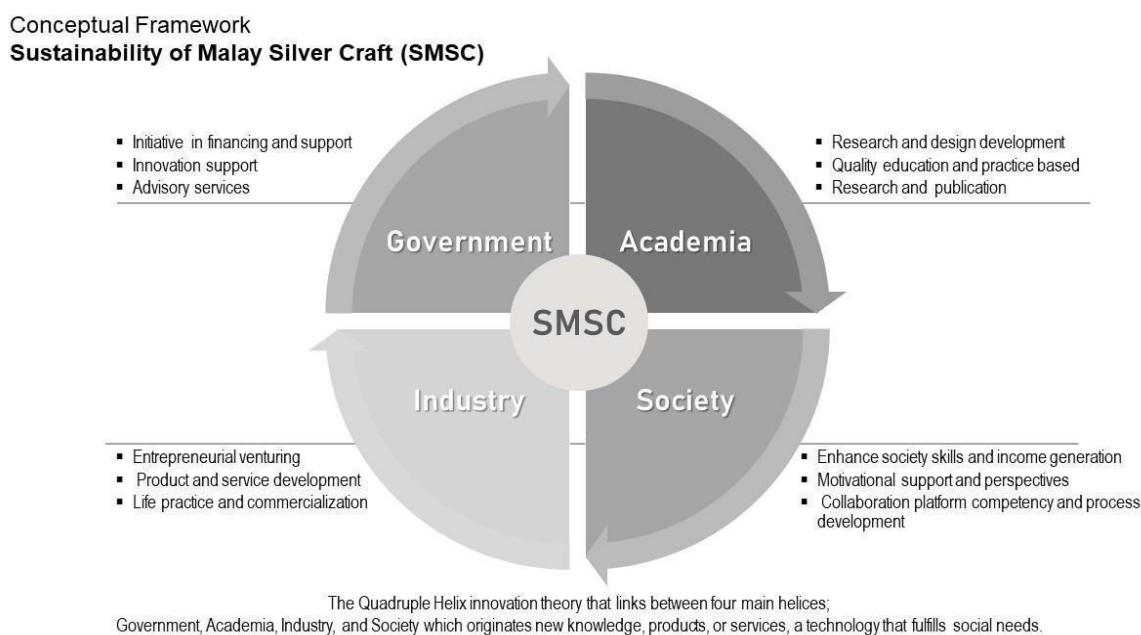


Figure 2. The Quadruple Helix innovation theory establishes a connection between four primary helices, namely government, academia, industry, and society

Source: A conceptual framework adapted from Lindberg's quadruple helix model (2014)

## Findings and Discussions

The silver craft industry in Malaysia reflects a blend of tradition and innovation, facing challenges like declining interest among the youth and inconsistent government support while also holding opportunities in design evolution and cultural tourism. Passion, skill development, and collaboration are foundational for success, with education playing a crucial role in bridging academic and industry needs. Drawing upon insights from expert statements shared through focused group discussions, as referred to Hj. Mohd Ariffin Bin Wook (Silver craft artisan, 74 years old) and Toh Bijaya Wati Putri Rafidah (CEO of Mariwasa Kraftangan Sdn. Bhd., 61 years old) say,

*“The problem is the industry faces decline due to the lack of commitment from entrepreneurs. The perspective needs to change, not just from the government but also from the entrepreneurs.”*

(Hj. Mohd Ariffin Bin Wook, Male, 74 years old)

*“The current generation is not interested and believes that this field has no future. Project and commission work is not always guaranteed, and it doesn't secure a stable future.”*

(Toh Bijaya Wati Putri Rafidah, CEO of Mariwasa Kraftangan Sdn. Bhd., 61 years old)

The statements here outline important issues Malaysia's silver artisan industry must address effectively. The industry's decline, which is mainly attributed to entrepreneurs' insufficient devotion, is the initial problem. This issue emphasises the need for a new approach to thinking that includes entrepreneurial stakeholders and those in governmental sectors. The necessity of joint dedication and



constructive engagement becomes apparent in the effort to revitalise the industry and achieve long-term sustainability. The next issue is a glaring lack of enthusiasm among today's youth, which is contributed to by a widespread perception that the industry has no chance of future growth. The perceived fluctuation of project-based and commissioned labour arrangements, which contribute to the uncertain outlook on prospects, is the source of this scepticism. Recalibrating attitudes and ensuring the future viability and vitality of the silver craft industry require a holistic approach that includes educational reform, creative commercial structures, and strategic communication tactics.

Moreover, the Malay traditional silver craft is an artisanal skill that holds significant historical and cultural importance within Malay culture. Passed down through generations, it involves intricate designs and meticulous attention to detail. These designs are influenced by cultural traditions, historical factors, and religious beliefs, often deriving inspiration from nature, and incorporating elements of spirituality and symbolism. The silver craft industry in Malaysia is a blend of tradition and innovation, with prospects for design advancement and cultural tourism, as well as challenges including declining young enthusiasm and inconsistent support from the government. Success depends on a foundation of passion, skill development, and collaboration, with education playing a critical role in connecting the demands of academia and business.

The industry needs comprehensive measures, such as proactive government assistance, improving strategies for marketing, and embracing digital platforms, to secure its continuity and to direct its development towards a sustainable future that protects its cultural legacy. As referred to in Table 4, the data gathered from focus group discussions were analysed using thematic analysis to generate key themes and codes.

Table 4. The analyzed data by grouping the statements under each key theme and providing insights based on the information

Code s	Key theme	Description
PTI	Passion and Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Passion and genuine interest are fundamental for success in the craft industry.</li> <li>● Passion drives individuals to acquire skills, persevere through challenges, and pursue mastery.</li> <li>● Interest may develop over time, especially as students study and engage in practical training.</li> </ul>
SDT	Skill Development and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Skill development requires a significant investment of time and effort.</li> <li>● A combination of formal education and hands-on training is necessary for mastery.</li> <li>● It takes several years to become proficient in crafting techniques and designs.</li> <li>● The role of apprenticeships and observation of skilled artisans in the learning process is emphasized.</li> </ul>
DE	Design Evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The market demands both traditional and contemporary designs.</li> <li>● Adaptation and incorporation of mixed media are essential for staying relevant.</li> <li>● Balancing traditional motifs with modern aesthetics is a challenge for designers.</li> </ul>
IC	Industry Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Declining interest among the younger generation poses a threat to the industry's future.</li> <li>● Uncertainty regarding order demand and economic stability is a significant challenge.</li> <li>● Government support, policy changes, and effective industry management are needed for sustainable growth.</li> </ul>

CI	Collaboration and Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful product development relies on collaboration among designers, artisans, and salespersons.</li> <li>• Innovation, including the use of modern techniques, helps meet evolving market demands.</li> <li>• Balancing traditional craftsmanship with innovation is a key consideration.</li> </ul>
CS	Cultural Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional motifs hold cultural and heritage value.</li> <li>• Crafts play a role in preserving national identity and attracting cultural tourism.</li> </ul>
ET	Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational institutions play a vital role in training future artisans and designers.</li> <li>• Practical training and industry-linked programs bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world skills.</li> </ul>
SBP	Sustainability and Business Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable business models, including pricing and branding, are necessary for industry viability.</li> <li>• Certification and quality standards establish authenticity and trust among customers.</li> </ul>
FP	Future Prospects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Succession planning and attracting new talent are essential for the industry's future.</li> <li>• Effective marketing, promotion, and participation in events contribute to sustained growth.</li> </ul>
GPS	Government and Policy Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government support, policy changes, and effective management are crucial for industry revitalization.</li> <li>• Inconsistent government engagement and lack of support hinder industry progress.</li> </ul>

Source: Thematic analysis by Syed mohd Faisal (2023)

Figure 2 displays an infographic outlining the ten key initiatives for Sustainability Malay Silver Craft (SMSC). These initiative codes are crucial for effectively developing and ensuring the revival and sustainability of various craft sectors in Malaysia.

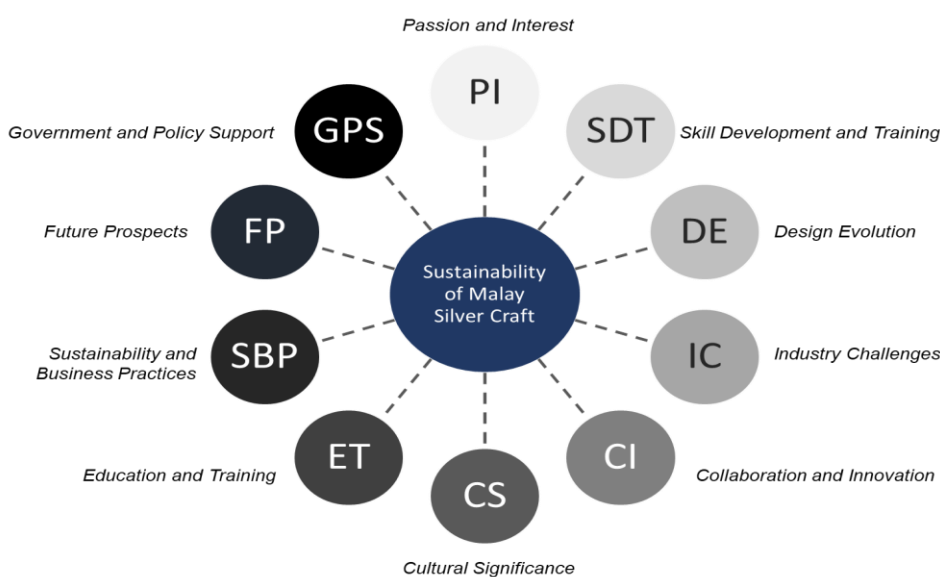


Figure 2. The ten keys of SMSC theme  
Source: Infographic by Syed Mohd Faisal (2023)

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this research paper highlights the cultural significance of the Malay silver craft and addresses the need for its preservation and revitalization. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the study explores the design practices associated with the craft and emphasizes the socio-economic impact on the local communities. The research aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and advocates for stakeholder collaboration through the Quadruple Helix Model to foster knowledge exchange, innovation, and economic development within the industry.

The preservation and sustainable development of the Malay silver craft industry need a comprehensive approach supported by a range of strategic recommendations. Collaboration is important involving various stakeholders, such as government agencies, academic institutions, industry representatives, artisans, and community groups. This synergy can foster the formulation of supportive policies and initiatives that create an enabling environment for the industry's growth. Equipping artisans and craftsmen with enhanced skills and ensuring the intergenerational transfer of knowledge remains pivotal, calling for investments in training programs. To align with evolving market dynamics, meticulous market research becomes imperative, guiding artisans to adapt their designs while retaining cultural authenticity.

Furthering the industry's reach requires robust marketing strategies that spotlight Malay silver craft's cultural significance on local and international fronts. Sustainability is a crucial theme, underscoring the need for eco-friendly materials and energy sources to mitigate environmental impact. Financial incentives can stimulate growth among artisans and small-scale enterprises, aligning with broader economic development objectives. Moreover, integrating the craft into educational programs can cultivate an appreciation for this heritage, fostering a sustainable market demand. To ensure the industry's longevity, a comprehensive documentation and archiving system is recommended, preserving designs and historical contexts.

By adhering to these recommendations, the Malay silver craft industry can experience a revitalization that enriches local communities and promotes sustainable practices and safeguards the cultural heritage that is integral to Malaysia's identity. This concerted effort can usher in the industry's new era of prosperity while sustaining its legacy for generations.

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