



Threads of Memory and Livelihood: The Historical Persistence of SeseK Weaving in Kembang Kerang Daya, East Lombok

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Abstract: This study examines the historical continuity of seseK woven cloth in Kembang Kerang Daya Village, Aikmel District, East Lombok, and the transformation of its economic, social, and cultural roles. It employs a qualitative descriptive approach and historical method comprising heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Data were collected in June 2024 through observation, documentation, and interviews with ten informants, including women weavers, community and cultural figures, and a village official. The findings show that weaving was historically more than a domestic skill: it marked women's social maturity, transmitted intergenerational values, and supported Sasak ceremonial life. Over time, seseK shifted from a customary obligation and status marker toward a household livelihood, a sphere of women's economic agency, a creative-economy product, and a potential cultural-tourism asset. Six recognized motifs—subahnale, sabuk peraban, sri menanti, lonong abang ragi genap, pucuk rebong, and bintang—encode religious, kinship, fertility, ritual-completeness, and social-status meanings. Its continuity is nevertheless threatened by weak intergenerational transmission, time-intensive production, competition from machine-made textiles, and limited market access. Sustainable safeguarding requires family- and school-based regeneration, stronger weaver organizations, motif documentation, meaning-sensitive product innovation, and cultural tourism that positions weavers as principal knowledge holders and beneficiaries.

Keywords: cultural heritage; local livelihood; SeseK woven cloth; weaving tradition; women weavers

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji keberlanjutan historis kain tenun SeseK di Desa Kembang Kerang Daya, Kecamatan Aikmel, Lombok Timur, serta pergeseran perannya dalam kehidupan ekonomi, sosial, dan budaya masyarakat. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan metode sejarah yang meliputi heuristik, kritik sumber, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, dokumentasi, serta wawancara terhadap sepuluh informan yang terdiri atas penenun perempuan, tokoh masyarakat dan budaya, serta aparatur desa pada Juni 2024. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menenun pada masa lalu bukan hanya keterampilan domestik, tetapi juga penanda kedewasaan perempuan, media pewarisan nilai, dan unsur penting dalam upacara adat Sasak. Dalam perkembangannya, fungsi seseK bergeser dari kewajiban adat dan simbol status menjadi sumber pendapatan rumah tangga, ruang agensi ekonomi perempuan, produk ekonomi kreatif, dan potensi wisata budaya. Enam motif yang masih dikenali—subahnale, sabuk peraban, sri menanti, lonong abang ragi genap, pucuk rebong, dan bintang—menyimpan pesan religius, kekerabatan, kesuburan, kelengkapan ritual, dan status sosial. Namun, keberlanjutannya menghadapi penurunan regenerasi penenun, lamanya proses produksi, persaingan tekstil mesin, serta pemasaran yang masih terbatas. Pelestarian seseK memerlukan regenerasi berbasis keluarga dan sekolah, penguatan kelompok penenun, dokumentasi motif, inovasi produk yang tetap

berakar pada makna lokal, dan pengembangan wisata budaya yang menempatkan penenun sebagai pelaku utama.

Kata Kunci: budaya lokal; kain tenun seseq; mata pencaharian; perempuan penenun; warisan budaya



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Introduction

Traditional textiles are simultaneously material objects, embodied skills, social archives, and economic resources. Their significance does not reside only in the finished cloth, but also in the knowledge required to select fibers, arrange warp and weft, compose motifs, coordinate color, and determine when and by whom a textile may be worn. UNESCO's framework for intangible cultural heritage emphasizes that safeguarding concerns practices, representations, knowledge, and skills that communities recognize as part of their heritage, not merely the conservation of isolated objects (UNESCO, 2003). In textile communities, this living dimension is especially visible because craft knowledge is reproduced through observation, repetition, correction, and participation in everyday family life. Research from Indonesia and other weaving regions likewise demonstrates that handwoven cloth sustains cultural identity while linking household work, gender relations, ritual practice, local entrepreneurship, and community memory (Dias et al., 2020; Inanna et al., 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021).

The island of Lombok has a diverse Sasak weaving tradition commonly associated with gedogan or backstrap-loom production. Sasak cloth is not simply a covering for the body; it has intergenerational, socio-cultural, legal, and livelihood dimensions (Martini et al., 2019). Motifs employ lines, angles, geometric forms, flora, and other elements that carry moral, historical, philosophical, and educational meanings (Fauzi et al., 2023). Within East Lombok, public and scholarly attention has frequently focused on better-known weaving centers such as Pringgasele. Research in that location shows that women weavers combine productive, reproductive, and community roles, while weaving supports family welfare and cultural tourism (Rohmi & Mahagangga, 2020). Kembang Kerang Daya, however, possesses its own repertoire of motifs, oral histories, production practices, and social uses that have received far less sustained analysis.

Kembang Kerang Daya is located in Aikmel District, East Lombok Regency. Local accounts describe weaving as a skill formerly found in many households and closely associated with women's life courses. Girls learned by watching mothers and grandmothers, and proficiency could function as a marker of maturity and readiness for marriage. The loom's sound, the organization of domestic time, and the transfer of knowledge within the household formed a cultural environment in which weaving was learned as practice rather than as formal instruction. Similar family-based transmission has been documented in Bugis silk weaving and other textile communities, where learning by doing combines technical competence with discipline, patience, responsibility, and entrepreneurial habits (Inanna et al., 2020; Hwang & Huang, 2019). The historical value of seseq thus lies in the social system that produced the cloth as much as in its visual form.

That system is now under pressure. Machine-made textiles are cheaper and faster to produce, while handweaving requires prolonged concentration and repetitive labor. Younger women increasingly pursue schooling, wage employment, and other occupations, and some regard weaving as an activity of older generations. Comparable challenges occur across traditional weaving regions: slow production, rising labor costs, weak succession, limited market information, and the tension between cultural integrity and commercial adaptation (Rosyadi et al., 2022; Memon et al., 2022; Samuel et al., 2022). These pressures do not automatically cause disappearance, but they change the conditions under which weaving remains meaningful and economically feasible.

At the same time, contemporary markets create new possibilities. Handwoven textiles can enter fashion, interior products, cultural tourism, creative education, and digital heritage platforms. Studies of artisanal production show that carefully managed innovation can expand income while reinforcing cultural visibility, provided that artisans retain control over knowledge, quality, and benefit distribution (Milgram, 2020; Pagán et al., 2020; Samuel et al., 2022). Women's participation is central because weaving may provide flexible home-based income, strengthen bargaining capacity, and increase public recognition of women's knowledge. Yet economic empowerment cannot be assumed simply because products are sold; women entrepreneurs also face capital constraints, market dependence, workload burdens, and institutional barriers (del Solar, 2019; Mashapure et al., 2022).

Previous research offers important but partial perspectives. Legal scholarship emphasizes the need for databases, local regulation, and holistic protection of Sasak weaving (Martini et al., 2019). Ethnomathematical research explains the geometry and cultural values contained in Sasak motifs (Fauzi et al., 2023). Tourism research documents women's productive and social roles in Pringgasele (Rohmi & Mahagangga, 2020), while sustainability research highlights quality, inherited technique, digital documentation, and craft-based territorial development (Pagán et al., 2020; Samuel et al., 2022; Yu, 2023). What remains insufficiently explained is how one village's weaving tradition has moved historically from a gendered customary obligation to an adaptive livelihood without entirely losing its ritual and symbolic functions.

This article therefore asks two related questions: how has seseq weaving persisted and changed historically in Kembang Kerang Daya, and how does it currently contribute to the community's economic, social, and cultural life? Its contribution is threefold. First, it reconstructs local continuity through oral testimony, village documentation, and material observation. Second, it connects motif meanings with everyday social functions rather than treating motifs only as decorative forms. Third, it proposes a living-heritage interpretation in which continuity depends on a negotiated balance among cultural transmission, women's livelihoods, product adaptation, institutional support, and community authority. The article argues that seseq survives not through static preservation, but through selective adaptation anchored in local meaning.

Research Methods

The study used a qualitative descriptive design combined with the historical method. This combination was selected because the research concerned both past change and present social meaning. Historical inquiry was used to reconstruct continuity and transformation, while qualitative description was used to understand the experiences, interpretations, and practices of current knowledge holders. The research followed four historical stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Abdurahman, 2019).

Fieldwork was conducted in Kembang Kerang Daya Village during June 2024. Primary data consisted of direct observation of weaving activities and tools, semi-structured interviews, and photographic documentation. The study involved ten informants: five women weavers aged 63-67; four community, cultural, and educational figures aged 58-79; and one village official aged 42. Informants were selected purposively because of their experience with weaving, village history, customary practice, or cultural programming. For publication, interview material is identified by role codes—women weaver (WW), community or cultural leader (CL), and village staff (VS)—to emphasize evidentiary position rather than personal identity.

Heuristics involved locating oral, documentary, and material sources relevant to the history and roles of seseK. Oral sources addressed intergenerational learning, the former relationship between weaving and women's adulthood, changes in production, motif meanings, customary uses, marketing, and village preservation efforts. Documentary sources included the village profile, the research observation record, interview transcripts, and photographs of looms and cloth. Material observation focused on the gedogan/candek loom, the weaving sequence, and surviving motif examples.

Source criticism was conducted internally and externally. External criticism considered the informants' roles, ages, proximity to the events described, and the provenance of village records and photographs. Internal criticism compared testimony across weavers, community figures, and the village official. Claims that could not be corroborated were treated as local oral memory rather than as independently verified chronology. This distinction is important for accounts of early weaving origins and memories associated with the Japanese occupation. Internal comparison also helped distinguish current practices from remembered past norms.

Interpretation proceeded through thematic coding of historical continuity, gendered transmission, economic contribution, social function, motif symbolism, cultural adaptation, and preservation challenges. Triangulation combined interviews, observation, and documentation, following established qualitative principles (Moleong, 2014; Sugiyono, 2019). Historiography then organized the evidence chronologically and analytically, moving from remembered origins and customary obligations to contemporary livelihood and heritage strategies.

The study has limitations. It did not measure household income, sales volume, production costs, or the number of active weavers through a village-wide survey. Statements about economic contribution therefore describe perceived and observed roles rather than quantified causal effects. The chronology before living memory also depends on oral history and secondary literature. Nevertheless, convergence among ten informants and material documentation provides a credible account of how the community understands and practices seseK today.

Research Results

Historical Continuity and the Changing Meaning of Weaving

Local narratives place the presence of seseK weaving in Lombok several centuries in the past and associate its development in Kembang Kerang Daya with inherited household knowledge. The research does not provide archival evidence for a precise founding date; consequently, the seventeenth-century chronology mentioned in local literature is best treated as an approximate cultural memory. What is strongly supported by the interviews is the depth of intergenerational transmission. Elderly informants consistently recalled that weaving was widespread among women, learned at home, and integrated into the rhythm of domestic and agricultural life.

In this remembered social order, skill at the loom marked more than productivity. A senior community informant explained that girls were expected to learn weaving before marriage and that proficiency signified maturity, patience, and readiness to manage a household (CL-1, interview, 19 June 2024). Mothers and grandmothers passed on both technical sequences and behavioral values. Weaving kept adolescent girls near the household, structured their time, and made their presence socially legible through the sound of the loom. The practice was therefore a gendered institution: it created cloth, but also disciplined attention, reproduced ideals of womanhood, and organized courtship and family expectations.

Oral testimony also preserves a memory of weaving during the Japanese occupation. A woman weaver recalled that the sound of the loom was considered disruptive and that women adapted by positioning parts of the apparatus to reduce noise while continuing to work discreetly (WW-2, interview, 20 June 2024). This account cannot be independently dated from the available records, yet it is historically significant as community memory. It frames weaving as persistence under constraint and associates women's craft labor with quiet resistance and household survival.

SeseK formerly carried visible distinctions of rank and occasion. Certain cloths were linked to noble households, ritual leaders, or specific life-cycle ceremonies. Over time, those boundaries weakened. Cloth once treated as luxurious or status-specific became more widely worn, displayed, exchanged, or sold. This democratization did not eliminate symbolic meaning, but it changed the basis of value. The cloth increasingly became valued for craftsmanship, beauty, heritage, and market potential rather than for exclusive entitlement.

The most important transformation is the movement from customary obligation toward optional livelihood. Women are no longer socially prohibited from marriage if they cannot weave, and the skill is no longer present in every household. The active weaver population is increasingly older, while younger people participate selectively. Yet this decline is not equivalent to disappearance. SeseK remains visible in ceremonies, cultural events, family collections, and small-scale production. Its continuity now depends less on compulsory custom and more on economic incentives, personal commitment, community events, and conscious heritage work.



Figure 1. Sesekek weaving on a traditional gedogan/candek loom in Kembang Kerang Daya
Source: Research Data, 2024

Material Development and the Social Language of Motifs

Informants described an earlier production environment in which fibers and dyes were obtained from available natural materials. Oral accounts mention cotton, fine plant fibers, and corn silk-like fibers, while older color practices used materials such as turmeric, tarum leaves, and tree bark. Contemporary weaving relies more heavily on commercially available yarns and synthetic or prepared dyes because they offer consistency, accessibility, and a broader color range. The shift illustrates practical adaptation rather than a complete break with tradition. The loom remains manually operated, and the distinction between warp and weft, pattern planning, tension control, and patient repetition continues to require embodied skill.

Motif development shows a similar combination of continuity and change. Classic compositions are retained, but weavers also adjust color combinations, scale, and pattern density to match contemporary tastes. A woman weaver summarized this strategy as changing motifs and colors so that the cloth remains attractive while continuing to produce classic patterns for customers who value them (WW-2, interview, 20 June 2024). Innovation is therefore selective: it broadens visual appeal without necessarily removing established names or meanings.

Six motifs were repeatedly identified in interviews and documentation. Their meanings are not uniform private interpretations; they function as a community vocabulary through which religious values, kinship, fertility, ritual order, partnership, and status are expressed. Table 1 summarizes the forms, meanings, and uses reported in the field materials.

Table 1. Principal sesekek motifs, symbolic meanings, and social uses

Motif	Visual/form characteristics	Core symbolic meanings	Reported social or ritual uses
Subahnale	Hexagonal geometry with floral elements and a decorated border	Sincerity, patience, protection, religious devotion, and surrender to God	Ceremonial cloth and a marker of skilled, demanding craftsmanship

Sabuk peraban	Long linear bands associated with a sash	Mutual assistance, kinship, family cooperation, welcome, and completeness of life	Waist sash; also reported as a cloth for carrying a child during circumcision-related ceremonies
Sri menanti	Simple, balanced composition associated with paired elements	Waiting, partnership, complementarity, and readiness for marriage	Clothing that historically communicated a young woman's readiness to form a household
Lonong abang ragi genap	Predominantly red sarong with ordered geometric/color elements	Ritual completeness, paired creation, moral order, and faith	Marriage-related customary use; also reported as a funerary wrapping cloth
Pucuk rebong	Bamboo-shoot form, usually interpreted through growth imagery	Fertility, agricultural timing, renewal, strength, and good fortune	General ceremonial and everyday use; valued for a comparatively accessible pattern
Bintangan	Star-like and luxurious composition, often with bright or gold-toned accents	Prosperity, prestige, respect, joy, and social distinction	Nyongkol and marriage events; historically associated with noble status

Source: Research Data, 2024

The meanings in Table 1 reveal that sesek operates as a social text. Subahnaile joins complex geometry with religious discipline; sabuk peraban makes cooperation and kinship visible; sri menanti expresses relational expectation; lonong abang ragi genap links cloth to ritual sufficiency and life-cycle order; pucuk rebong translates environmental observation into fertility symbolism; and bintangan recalls rank while now functioning more broadly as ceremonial elegance. The motifs thus connect aesthetic form with moral instruction and collective memory.

Some meanings have also changed. Bintangan is no longer restricted to aristocratic users, and motifs once tied to strict customary categories may now circulate through fashion or general ceremonial wear. Such change does not necessarily erase heritage. It can extend access and keep motifs in use, provided that interpretation is documented and communicated. The risk arises when names and stories are detached from products so completely that motifs survive only as anonymous decoration.

Economic Roles: Household Income and Women's Agency

All five women weavers described weaving as economically useful, particularly as flexible work that could be combined with household responsibilities, farming, small trade, or care work. The income was used for daily consumption, children's education, and other family needs. Because the study did not collect financial records, the relative contribution cannot be quantified. Nevertheless, testimony consistently shows that sesek reduces exclusive dependence on a husband's income and enables women to convert inherited skill into cash or exchange value.

This role reflects a wider pattern in craft-based rural livelihoods. Handloom work can remain viable where households combine multiple income sources and where production is compatible with domestic schedules (Rosyadi et al., 2022). In Indonesia, weaving training and home-industry organization have been used to expand women's skills and family income (Imaniar et al., 2020). The Kembang Kerang Daya case adds a historical dimension: the same skill that once demonstrated conformity to customary womanhood can now provide a basis for economic agency.

Economic value, however, is constrained by production time and market structure. A handmade cloth requires substantial labor, while machine-made alternatives are inexpensive and rapidly available. Informants reported that marketing remains predominantly local and dependent on personal networks or occasional cultural events. Product adaptation—new colors, modern clothing combinations, accessories, and household items—was viewed as necessary to widen demand. Similar artisanal economies often benefit from product diversification, social entrepreneurship, and connections between heritage narratives and market presentation (Milgram, 2020; Rosyadi et al., 2022).

Village-level organization remains incomplete. Several informants referred to plans or needs for a formal weaver group, training, shared promotion, and easier access to raw materials. Collective organization could reduce fragmented production, establish quality standards, document motif ownership and meaning, and improve bargaining with intermediaries. Yet organization should not become top-down standardization that excludes older women or privileges only commercially attractive designs. The economic institution must recognize weavers as knowledge holders, not merely as labor suppliers.

The potential link with tourism is substantial but still emergent. Visitors can observe the loom, learn the history of motifs, purchase cloth directly, and participate in short educational experiences. Research in Pringgasela confirms that women's weaving work can support tourism while retaining domestic and community roles (Rohmi & Mahagangga, 2020). International cases also show that craft tourism can contribute to territorial development when experiences are designed around knowledge transmission and fair local benefit (Pagán et al., 2020; Seddighikhavidak & Jamal, 2022). In Kembang Kerang Daya, tourism should therefore be treated as a complementary market and educational strategy rather than as a spectacle that displaces everyday craft life.

Social Roles: Identity, Reciprocity, and Changing Status

Sesek continues to perform social work beyond income. Informants associated cloth with weddings, circumcision, aqiqah, nyongkol, funerary practices, guest reception, cultural festivals, and other forms of collective gathering. The precise frequency of use has declined or varies by family, but the cloth remains a recognizable marker of Sasak belonging. Wearing or presenting it transforms an individual object into a statement of participation in community history.

Weaving also creates networks of reciprocity. Historically, families contributed materials, labor, or knowledge to produce cloth for significant occasions. Sabuk peraban, in particular, was interpreted through gotong royong and the involvement of relatives. The production process therefore materialized social cooperation. Even when cloth is now purchased, relationships among weavers, sellers, relatives, and ceremonial participants continue to structure its circulation.

The social position of women is similarly layered. Earlier prestige derived from mastering an expected feminine skill. Contemporary recognition increasingly derives from productive contribution, artistic expertise, and cultural authority. A woman weaver explained that sesekek demonstrates that women as well as men can sustain family welfare (WW-1, interview, 20 June 2024). This does not mean that domestic burdens disappear. Rather, weaving can expand women's roles while also adding labor to already complex schedules. Studies of women artisans elsewhere caution that empowerment must be evaluated through control over income, decision-making, recognition, and workload—not only participation in production (del Solar, 2019; Mashapure et al., 2022).

Status symbolism has become more inclusive. *Bintangan*, once associated with nobility, is now used more broadly in marriage-related events because of its visual richness. This change reduces inherited social exclusivity but may also weaken older distinctions understood by elders. The social history of sesekek is therefore not a simple movement from tradition to modernity. It is a renegotiation in which some restrictions disappear, some meanings remain, and new forms of prestige emerge around authenticity, craftsmanship, and cultural pride.

The decline in household weaving has consequences for social cohesion because learning traditionally occurred through repeated intergenerational contact. When daughters no longer sit near mothers and grandmothers at the loom, a venue for storytelling, correction, and moral education is lost. Comparable studies show that weaving helps construct cultural identity through interaction and shared interpretation (Dias et al., 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021). Regeneration efforts must therefore recreate social learning environments, not merely teach mechanical steps.

Cultural Roles, Vulnerability, and Local Preservation Efforts

Culturally, sesekek is a form of memory stored in movement, terminology, pattern, and occasion. The loom records knowledge in the body: how tightly to pull a thread, when to change color, how to count repeats, and how to recognize an error before it becomes permanent. The finished cloth records relationships among religion, environment, gender, and social order. This combination explains why the loss of active weavers would be more serious than the disappearance of a single product line. It would remove a system for reproducing cultural knowledge.

The most immediate vulnerability is weak regeneration. Most active informants were over sixty, and they observed limited interest among younger women. Young people often regard the process as slow, tiring, and insufficiently profitable. Similar succession problems appear across traditional weaving communities, where cultural transmission must compete with formal education, urban employment, and modern consumption (Hwang & Huang, 2019; Samuel et al., 2022). The challenge is not to restore compulsory gender norms, but to make learning voluntary, respected, and compatible with contemporary aspirations.

The village government has used the *Maloka* cultural festival to display sesekek alongside other local cultural expressions. According to a village staff informant, the event is intended to keep local culture visible to younger generations and prevent heritage from surviving only in stories (VS-1, interview, 20 June 2024). Festivals can increase recognition, but intermittent display is insufficient without year-round transmission, production support, and market access. Cultural policy must connect celebration with training, documentation, and fair sales opportunities.

Documentation is especially urgent because motif knowledge is uneven. Some current weavers reproduce patterns learned from elders without knowing all associated stories. Digital tools can support a community-controlled archive of motif names, photographs, color variations, oral explanations, weaving sequences, and permitted uses. Digital heritage projects demonstrate that documentation can aid education, design, and public access, although technology should support rather than replace living practitioners (Pagán et al., 2020; Song et al., 2019; Yu, 2023).

Environmental knowledge also deserves attention. Earlier use of plant fibers and natural dyes linked production to local ecology. Contemporary yarn and dyes are practical, but documentation and selective revival of plant-based techniques could strengthen distinctiveness and sustainability where safe and economically realistic. Research on inherited handloom techniques and plant-dyed silk shows that traditional knowledge can inform contemporary sustainability and innovation rather than remain a nostalgic remnant (Memon et al., 2022; Memon et al., 2022).

A synthesis of the findings is presented in Table 2. It shows that each dimension of sesekek contains both value and vulnerability, requiring interventions that integrate cultural, social, and economic objectives.

Table 2. Synthesis of sesekek continuity, vulnerabilities, and safeguarding priorities

Dimension	Main evidence	Current vulnerability	Priority direction
Historical transmission	Home-based learning; weaving as a former marker of women's maturity; oral memories of persistence	Living memory concentrated among older informants; limited archival chronology	Record oral histories and material techniques while clearly distinguishing memory from verified chronology
Economic livelihood	Flexible supplementary income; support for daily needs and education; product diversification	Long production time, local market dependence, fragmented organization, machine-made competition	Strengthen weaver groups, direct sales, quality standards, product development, and fair pricing
Social relations	Ceremonial use, reciprocal labor, identity, women's public recognition, changing status boundaries	Reduced everyday use and fewer intergenerational learning spaces	Create community learning settings and recognize women's knowledge and decision-making authority
Cultural meaning	Named motifs encode religious, kinship, fertility, ritual, and status values	Motifs may be reproduced without stories; commercialization may detach designs from meaning	Develop a community-controlled motif archive, interpretation materials, and cultural protocols
Adaptive sustainability	Color and motif innovation, festival promotion, tourism potential, possible digital documentation	Innovation can become superficial; festivals may be episodic; tourism may commodify artisans	Link innovation to documented meanings, establish year-round programs, and position weavers as principal beneficiaries

Source: Research Data, 2024

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that sesekek should be interpreted as living heritage rather than as a static artifact. Its persistence rests on repeated social enactment: women operate the loom, families transmit terminology and values, ceremonies activate symbolic meanings, and buyers convert cloth into livelihood. This interpretation aligns with studies showing that weaving joins cultural identity, informal education, and entrepreneurial practice (Dias et al., 2020; Inanna et al., 2020). The Kembang Kerang Daya case is distinctive because the same practice has moved through three overlapping regimes of value: customary obligation, symbolic-social communication, and creative livelihood.

First, the historical shift from compulsory feminine competence to voluntary economic and cultural participation is central. Earlier expectations tied weaving to marriageability and adulthood. Such norms gave the skill high social value but also limited it within a gendered definition of proper womanhood. Contemporary decline in compulsion can be read as loss, yet it also reflects expanded choices for women. Safeguarding cannot ethically mean reinstating a rule that women must weave. The more appropriate objective is to transform inherited skill into an accessible cultural and economic option for women and men who choose to learn. Family education remains important, but it should be reinforced by community workshops, school partnerships, apprenticeships, and recognition of master weavers. Hwang and Huang (2019, 2024) similarly show that continuity is strongest when ecological setting, community learning, and micro-industry mechanisms are connected.

Second, motif meanings are a crucial form of intangible knowledge. Fauzi et al. (2023) found that Sasak woven motifs embody geometry and cultural values; the present study extends that insight by mapping meanings to specific social uses. Subahnale is not merely a complex hexagonal arrangement, because its difficulty and narrative evoke patience and devotion. Sabuk peraban transforms linear pattern into an account of mutual assistance. Pucuk rebong links plant growth to fertility and agricultural observation. These interpretations make cloth pedagogical: motifs communicate values to wearers and observers. When designs are separated from their names and narratives, cultural transmission becomes thinner even if production continues.

Third, economic adaptation is necessary but insufficient on its own. The perceived contribution of weaving to household welfare is consistent with research on women weavers in Lombok, Peru, India, and other rural settings (Rosyadi et al., 2022; del Solar, 2019; Rohmi & Mahagangga, 2020). However, the economic potential observed in Kembang Kerang Daya remains constrained by a predominantly local market and the absence of systematic income and production data. Claims about export growth or major poverty reduction would therefore be premature. A credible development program should begin with a baseline: number of active weavers, production time, raw-material costs, price distribution, sales channels, household income share, and youth interest. Such data would allow cultural policy to move beyond symbolic promotion.

Fourth, quality must be understood from the community's perspective. Semuel et al. (2022) argue that the sustainability of Indonesian traditional weaving depends on interpretations of quality that include authenticity, material, process, design, and market expectations. For Kembang Kerang Daya, quality also includes narrative traceability: a cloth should be linked to its motif name, maker, method, and local meaning. A simple product card or digital tag could communicate this information. It would differentiate handmade seseq from anonymous machine imitation and justify prices based on labor and cultural value.

Fifth, innovation should follow a principle of anchored adaptation. Weavers already modify color and motifs to respond to contemporary fashion. This is not inherently a threat; textile traditions have always changed through exchange, availability of materials, and consumer preference. Memon et al. (2022) show that inherited techniques can become pillars of sustainability, while Phukrongpet and Daovisan (2025) demonstrate that plant-dyed textiles can innovate through multiple trajectories without abandoning intangible heritage. Anchored adaptation means that experimentation is encouraged, but classic motifs, names, techniques, and stories are documented and remain available as reference points. New designs should be identified as contemporary variations rather than presented as ancient forms.

Sixth, collective organization is necessary to negotiate markets and institutions. Individual home-based production offers flexibility but can weaken bargaining power and make quality inconsistent. A weaver group could coordinate raw-material purchases, training, shared exhibition, direct ordering, pricing discussions, and succession programs. Imaniar et al. (2020) show that training can empower low-income women, while Rosyadi et al. (2022) identify public-policy barriers faced by creative-economy small enterprises. In Kembang Kerang Daya, institutional support should address practical constraints—capital, marketing, product photography, packaging, bookkeeping, and access to events—while avoiding dependence on short-term projects.

Seventh, cultural tourism is promising when designed as knowledge exchange rather than staged consumption. The village possesses a viable narrative sequence for visitors: history of seseq, introduction to the loom, demonstration of weaving, explanation of motifs, and direct purchase. The experience can be integrated with other local cultural expressions displayed in the Maloka festival. Seddighikhavidak and Jamal (2022) emphasize the interrelation between weaving and its vernacular workspace, while Maldonado-Erazo et al. (2025) propose safeguarding plans that connect intangible heritage with territorial development. These approaches suggest that the home or workshop should not be treated merely as a backdrop; it is part of the cultural ecology of production.

Tourism nevertheless creates risks. Visitor demand may favor fast demonstrations and simplified motifs, while intermediaries may capture most revenue. Older artisans can be displayed without gaining authority or fair compensation. A community protocol is therefore needed to set demonstration fees, direct-sales arrangements, group scheduling, photographic consent, and the stories that may be publicly shared. The objective is not maximum visitor volume but a manageable form of cultural tourism that supports continuity and dignity.

Eighth, digital documentation can connect dispersed strategies. A community archive could store high-resolution images of cloth, oral histories, loom components, production videos, and bilingual motif descriptions. Digital platforms have opened new opportunities for traditional crafts and designers (Pagán et al., 2020), while studies of intangible cultural heritage stress that digital sustainability depends on living participation rather than one-time digitization (Song et al., 2019; Yu, 2023). For seseq, the archive should be governed locally, with clear attribution to individual weavers and collective community knowledge. It can support school materials, tourism interpretation, design collaboration, and legal documentation.

Legal and cultural governance are closely related. Martini et al. (2019) argue that Sasak weaving requires integrated protection inside and outside intellectual-property law, including databases and local regulation. A motif archive can help establish prior knowledge, but legal protection alone cannot sustain practice. The strongest protection is a functioning cultural ecosystem in which people continue to learn, produce, interpret, use, and value the cloth. Formal rules should therefore support transmission and equitable markets rather than freeze designs or transfer control away from weavers.

The study's integrated finding can be expressed as a continuity cycle. Cultural meaning motivates learning; learning maintains production; production creates social recognition and income; income and recognition encourage further learning; and institutions can strengthen or interrupt every link. If commercial demand grows without meaning, seseq risks becoming detached decoration. If meaning is preserved without viable livelihood, the number of practitioners may continue to decline. Sustainable continuity requires both: cultural depth and practical value.

Conclusion

Seseq weaving in Kembang Kerang Daya has persisted through change because it has never had only one function. Historically, it was a household skill transmitted among women, a marker of maturity, a source of status, and an element of Sasak ceremonial life. In the present, it remains a cultural identity while also serving as supplementary household income, a sphere of women's agency, a creative product, and a potential basis for cultural tourism. The six principal motifs documented in this study demonstrate that visual form carries religious, kinship, fertility, ritual, partnership, and status meanings. The central problem is therefore not simply declining production; it is the weakening relationship among practitioners, stories, motifs, occasions, and markets. The article concludes that sustainable safeguarding must adopt an anchored-adaptation strategy. Classic motifs and oral histories should be documented; younger learners should gain voluntary access through families, schools, and apprenticeships; weaver organizations should support fair pricing, product quality, and direct marketing; innovation should be clearly connected to inherited meanings; and tourism and digital platforms should be governed with weavers as knowledge authorities and principal beneficiaries. The research also recommends a quantitative follow-up survey of active weavers, production costs, income contribution, sales channels, and youth participation. Such evidence would allow village and regional policies to combine heritage protection with realistic livelihood planning. Seseq will remain living heritage only when the community can continue to make it, explain it, use it, and derive dignified value from it.

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