

Peranakan Baba and Nyonya Kasut Manik: A Gateway to Preserving Local Art Content in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

One way to define the substance of local art is as an element or component of the culture, tradition, and legacy that are created in a community and passed down through the generations. It also sets Malaysia apart from other nations as a feature of its identity. Local art content refers to the creative expressions and cultural artefacts from a specific locality or region. It often reflects the unique identity, values, beliefs, and experiences of the people within that community. As one of the most incredible artistic legacies of the Peranakan community, which peaked in popularity in the late fifteenth century, the Peranakan Baba and Nyonya beaded shoes (or Kasut Manik) are examined in this article. These shoes, adorned with hundreds of exquisite beads, represent Peranakan craftsmanship's splendour, refinement, and luxury. Using Simon Thurley's Heritage Cycle Model, this study produced a more effective cycle of local art content. This model can aid in enhancing awareness of how cultural heritage endures and remains constantly relevant in society, since it is based on the four stages of the heritage cycle: understanding, appreciating, maintaining, and enjoying. Consequently, the tribulation process from multiple sources of data acquired is used in this study's qualitative methodology. The results of this study were produced with significant assistance from a mix of data from unstructured interviews, field research, audio-video analysis, and document or text analysis. In conclusion, paying attention to the substance of this distinctive local artwork is essential to ensure that the handicrafts' original quality is always valued.

Keywords: Peranakan, Baba Nyonya, beaded shoe, kasut manik, local art content, preserving

INTRODUCTION

Since Baba and Nyonya belong to the Peranakan ethnic group, which is of Chinese heritage and is concentrated in the Straits states of Penang, Melaka, and Singapore, they are uniquely different from other ethnic groups because they can assimilate with Malay culture, customs, and art. Nevertheless, only Melaka and Penang, two states in Malaysia, are home to this community. Some of the most fascinating hybrid identities fusing Chinese, Malay, and Western cultures are those of the Peranakan Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore. The term "Peranakan" was coined

to describe this circumstance, which occurs when Chinese and Malays marry. The term “Baba” refers to the Peranakan male community, while “Nyonya” refers to the Peranakan female community. The most well-known Nyonya item that may still be found today is the beaded slipper, or “Manek Eh” in Hokkien, the “lingua franca” of the Peranakan people. Additionally, beaded shoes are also referred to as “Kasot Manek.”

Beaded shoes are frequently regarded as distinctive and premium fashion items with a significant local component. In Malaysia, it is critical to support the diversity of local culture and preserve the legacy of traditional arts and culture through local content in fashion. Maintaining cultural heritage, forging a distinct fashion identity, and advancing sustainable fashion practices are all made possible by the fashion industry’s integration of local materials in Malaysia. Local content in Malaysian handicrafts is crucial for fostering regional tourism and legacy while also generating long-term economic prospects for local communities. According to Zarina et al. (2018), incorporating traditional themes into contemporary glass beads might open new markets for Malaysian handicraft products while maintaining the nation’s cultural heritage.

Research colleagues at the Institut Alam dan Tamadun Melayu, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, assert that a lack of knowledge and appreciation of indigenous culture could lead to the loss of Peranakan identity. The lack of promotion and insufficient wear of beaded shoes contribute to this cultural mismatch. Not only Mahwati, but Zakaria also made a similar claim in 2017. He claimed that Malaysia’s beaded shoe handicraft industry was falling behind other handicraft industries due to population decline, a lack of legitimate heirs to Baba and Nyonya, and contemporary technological difficulties. Thus, this research aims to create comprehensive documentation to honour and conserve this local art content for future use (Sohaimi et al. 2017).

While previous studies on Peranakan beaded shoes have largely focused on documentation of motifs, techniques, and materials, there remains a lack of critical engagement with their cultural meanings and theoretical implications. This study therefore aims to move beyond descriptive analysis by examining how these artefacts function as expressions of identity, heritage continuity, and socio-cultural values. In doing so, the study also engages with broader theoretical perspectives such as cultural commodification, hybrid identity, and gendered craft labour within the Malaysian context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kasut Manik Overview

The splendour and superior quality of life exhibited by the Peranakan people are also reflected in their attire. Traditional Peranakan Chinese women wear beaded shoes. These shoes are made of hundreds or thousands of tiny and vibrant beads, with handcrafted beads expertly stitched together to create fascinating patterns in vibrant colours. However, beaded shoes are more than elegant footwear. Their richness is symbolised by the beaded shoes’ distinctive design and challenging manufacturing process. Men (baba) and women (nyonya) in Peranakan culture wear beaded shoes. However, women are now more likely than men to wear beaded shoes. According to Tan Kok Oo in Fontanellaz (2017), beaded shoes gained popularity in the 1930s. He said, “Nyonya’s beaded shoes look like works of art, exquisite and unique.” As per Cheah’s (2009) findings, beaded shoes are a standard accessory nyonys wear with sarongs and kebayas. They serve as a point of reference for the community and represent their cultural identity. Thienny Lee (2016) elaborates, just like Cheah, on how a long kebaya and chequered sarong look amazing when worn with a bun on the head and square slippers (beaded shoes) on the feet. Beaded shoes complement any sophisticated, conventional, or contemporary ensemble (Fontanellaz 2017).

Heritage Cycle Model

Fallahi (2008) states that preserving cultural heritage is crucial for promoting a high standard of living that is worthy of all civilisations. It is accompanied by historical communications and data transmitted from the past to the present and future through cultural artefacts. In this regard, knowing the past or past travel experiences aids in one's comprehension or assessment of one's current circumstances (legacy). According to Stuart Hall (1999), heritage can also be seen as preserving inherited valuables based on aesthetic or historical standards. Therefore, the Heritage Cycle Model has been adopted as a guide to preserve expressive local art. The creator of this approach is the historian and cultural heritage specialist Simon Thurley in 2005. The heritage cycle is illustrated in the Figure 1.

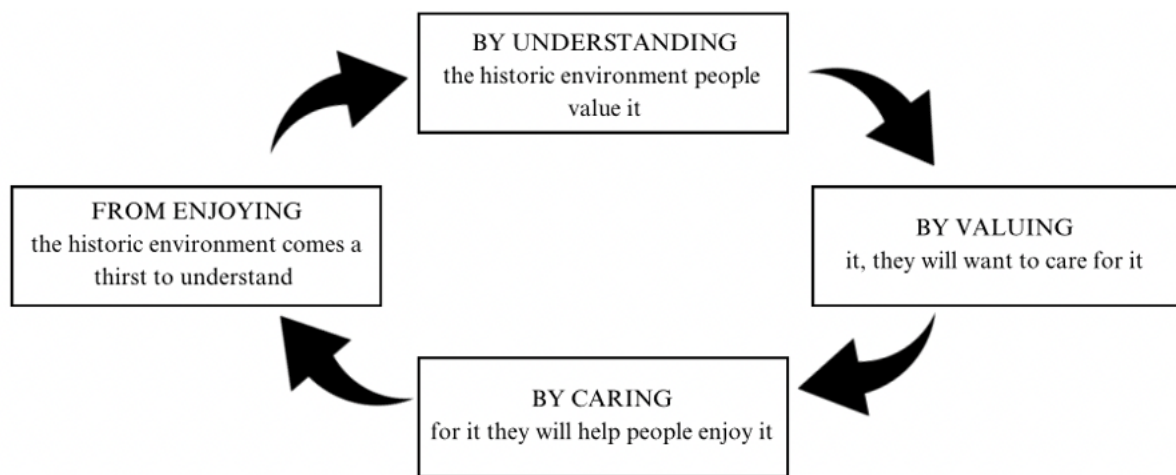


Figure 1 The Heritage Cycle by Simon Thurley (2005).

This model explains how the four stages of the heritage cycle—understanding, valuing, caring, and enjoying—can cause a legacy culture to evolve. Thurley (2005) explains that understanding leads to appreciation. When individuals truly understand something, they develop a more profound appreciation for it. This appreciation motivates them to care for and preserve what they value. Preserving cultural heritage makes it more accessible and enjoyable for the wider public. As people engage with and enjoy the heritage, they naturally desire to understand it further. Therefore, there is a cyclical relationship between understanding, appreciation, preservation, enjoyment, and deeper understanding, all of which contribute to the enduring significance of cultural heritage in society.

The Heritage Cycle Model can aid in improving comprehension of how cultural legacy endures and remains constantly significant to society. Every member of every community group must adopt a continuous cycle of seriousness in maintaining the legacy to pass it on to future generations. According to Harrison et al. (2020), as cited in May (2023), heritage is frequently understood as a collection of cultural artefacts preserved by people to benefit future generations. The goal of preservation is maintaining artefacts for as long as possible by creating and maintaining a favourable environment that protects them from harm (Tanner 2006).

In summary, Thurley's Heritage Cycle Model provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between people and heritage; its application in this study reveals the need for contextual adaptation. The findings suggest that within craft-based heritage practices in Malaysia, the cycle extends beyond understanding, valuing, caring, and enjoying. In the case of Peranakan beaded shoes, heritage is actively sustained through the transmission of knowledge and skills among artisans. This process plays a crucial role in ensuring continuity, particularly in communities where learning occurs informally across generations.

Therefore, this study proposes an extension of the Heritage Cycle Model by introducing a fifth dimension, namely "Transmission," which captures the dynamic process of knowledge transfer in sustaining intangible cultural heritage. This extension contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of heritage practices within the Malaysian context.

Cultural Heritage, Identity and Craft Practices

Craft-based heritage has increasingly been examined through critical theoretical lenses that go beyond material documentation. Scholars have highlighted the role of cultural commodification in transforming traditional crafts into market-oriented products, particularly within heritage economies. At the same time, craft practices are often embedded within hybrid cultural identities, reflecting the interaction of multiple cultural influences. In the context of Peranakan culture, this hybridity is evident in aesthetic expressions that combine Chinese, Malay, and European elements. Furthermore, traditional craft production has historically been associated with gendered labour, where women play a central role in the transmission of skills and knowledge across generations. These perspectives provide a critical foundation for understanding the cultural significance of Peranakan beaded shoes beyond their physical attributes.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is crucial for implementing accurate and effective research methods. This study adopts a qualitative approach, utilising both primary and secondary sources. Primary data collection methods include field research, observation, and interviews, while secondary sources encompass textual materials such as books, journal articles, and dissertation theses. Below is a summary of the data and sources obtained.

Table 1 Summary of data and sources.

Primary data	Sources	Secondary data	Sources
Field work	Observation	Document analysis: systematic literature review; journal, article, catalogue, thesis	Library
	Visual documentation	dissertation, books	Museum
Unstructured interview	Audio-video recording		Gallery
	Written notes		Website

FINDINGS

The research findings highlight several key aspects that enhance our understanding of beaded shoes.

Types of Kasut Manik

Because each type of beaded shoe has a unique design and style, people can select the one that best fits their demands and sense of fashion. This research found the creation of four different kinds of beaded shoe styles: (1) closed toe, (2) open toe, (3) crossed toe, and (4) double strap toe. Closed-toe beaded shoes include a fully closed shoe tip to offer better protection for the toes. It is frequently utilised for formal or semi-formal occasions where a polished appearance is required. On the other hand, open-toe beaded shoes have an exposed toe area at the tip of the shoe. Because they offer the wearer the most comfort, this design is better suited for informal or summertime gatherings. The front of the crossed-toe beaded shoes also features an appealing and distinctive design of crossed ends. It adds a touch of current and traditional style to one's appearance. The last style is a beaded double strap toe shoe with two horizontal straps up front that secure the toes inside the shoe. The wearer gains stability and comfort support from this design. Thus, this is a list of the different kinds of beaded shoes available in the market.

Table 2 Types of beaded shoes.

Types of Kasut Manik			
Closed toe			
	Rounded	Round Pointed	Pointed
Open toe			
	Open toe		
Crossed toe			
	Up and down	Side by side	
Double-strap toe			
	Double strap toe		

Source: <https://colourbeads.com/>

Different Types of Beaded Shoe Heels

Apart from the various types of beaded shoes, other factors require consideration, such as the height of the heels. Users or enthusiasts of beaded shoes can select based on comfort, style, and the occasion for which the shoe is intended, using this hierarchy of heel height levels. In addition to meeting specific demands and preferences, each heel style uniquely impacts the design of beaded shoes. Beaded shoes are unique in that their soles can be changed without affecting the functionality of the beads, as mentioned by Lim Tian Seng in Shaikh (2018). For the user's comfort and convenience, selecting the appropriate beaded shoe size is crucial. The size of a person's beaded shoes is referred to as their beaded shoe size. A user's ability to wear beaded shoes comfortably and to ensure a proper fit on their feet depends on selecting the correct size. Figure 2 provides a summary diagram of shoe size measurement and heel height levels.

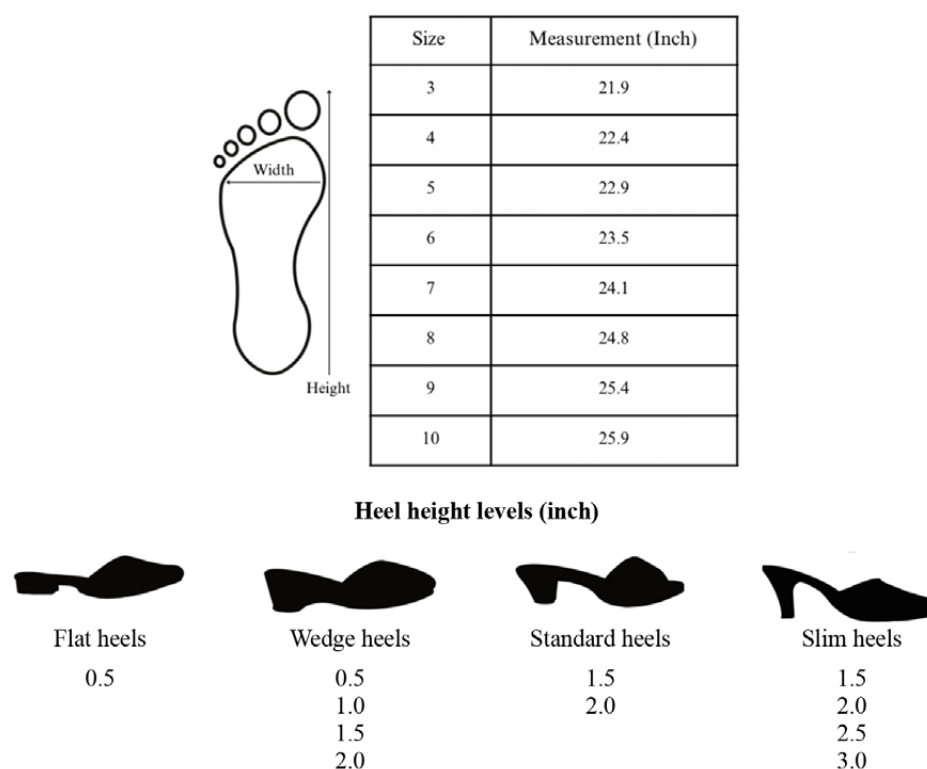


Figure 2 Beaded shoe size measurement and heel height levels.

Completion Period and Price (in MYR)

The pricing structure of beaded shoes reflects their transition from traditional craft items to commodified cultural products. As these artefacts enter broader markets, their value is increasingly influenced by factors such as branding, craftsmanship, and perceived authenticity. According to Joyce Ngiow in Bernama (2021), this shift highlights the integration of traditional crafts into contemporary heritage economies. Beaded shoes can be finished in six weeks due to the use of fine beads, while Tan Kok Oo (as cited in Fontanellaz 2017) estimates that it takes three months to complete them. Regarding the price range, beaded shoes typically range from MYR540 to MYR680 per pair. However, beaded shoes made with cut beads imported from the Czech Republic can cost as much as MYR1,800 to MYR2,250 per pair and take less than three months to complete (Bernama 2021). Other price ranges include starting at MYR450 and above

(Ezrizikri 2023), MYR280 to MYR2,000 (Jocelyn Teh Pei Lin 2020), MYR450 to MYR2,500 (Lim Tian Seng 2018), MYR150 to MYR700 (Fauzurina 2016), MYR450 to MYR950 (Richard 2016), and MYR250 to MYR800 (Beck 2013). Meanwhile, the cost of beaded shoes starts at MYR280 (Loh 2021) and MYR450 (Ezrizikri 2023).

The Variety of Motifs Used

Every design and motif of beaded shoes historically signifies the wearer's family status to a certain degree. According to Robert Sng, a wearer's social position increases with the complexity of the motif design (Life in a Dying Trade 2011). Meanwhile, Joyce Ngiow (as cited in Bernama 2021) states that there are countless ways to create shoes with beads, and each one carries a unique significance. Shoes with beaded patterns that are distinctly fashionable, such as fruits, flowers, birds, and butterflies, are likely influenced by European and Chinese styles (Bernama 2020). A motif can be defined as a symbol of the tribe, shaped by a community's customs, culture, and way of life. Popular traditional patterns like the dragon and phoenix are often used as wedding shoe motifs, exclusive to recently married couples. May Lim Siew Seng (2018) suggests that they represent love and happiness.

Additionally, there are several popular thematic patterns, such as beaded goldfish and peacock motifs. For example, the Chinese phoenix symbolises power and alertness; goldfish bring wealth; birds symbolise longevity; peacocks symbolise beauty; and flowers symbolise growth and prosperity (Bernama 2021). Moreover, beaded shoes frequently use floral themes as a joyful signal and a motif of celebration (Siti Khadijah Farhah 2019). However, it was discovered through interviews that motif design is now more flexible, based on user preference, and that dark colours are typically associated with melancholy and mourning rituals (Lim Eng Liong 2023).



Figure 3 Variations of beaded shoe designs and motifs.

Source: Image courtesy of Toko Che Rose.

The motifs identified in the beaded shoes, particularly floral elements such as roses, peonies, and chrysanthemums, reflect more than aesthetic preferences. These motifs symbolise cultural values associated with femininity, prosperity, and refinement within the Peranakan community. The visual complexity of these designs further suggests that such artefacts function as markers of identity and social distinction, where craftsmanship becomes a medium for expressing cultural belonging.

Beads as the Primary Material

Beads are the primary component required to create exquisitely designed shoes. Japan is the source of fine beads, commonly called “Japanese glass beads.” Despite their high cost, they are identical in size and have a longer lifespan. According to Kim (2019), beads are also imported from nations such as Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. Little glass beads used to be imported from European nations, including Belgium, Germany, Venice, and Vienna, to produce beaded shoes. Lim Tian Seng (2020) advises against using beads sourced from Taiwan and Vietnam due to their poor quality and tendency to shatter easily. You can select from three kinds of beads: standard, fine, or cut (known as *manik potong*). On the other hand, code numbers like 15/0 or 11/0 denote the number of beads in one inch; that is, 15 or 11 instead of 1. According to Kenny Loh (2021), this indicates that a higher value corresponds to smaller beads being utilised.



Figure 4 Type of material used.

Source: Image courtesy of Toko Che Rose and Pinang Peranakan Mansion, Penang.

In addition to beads, needles, threads, canvas, silk fabric, or “silk,” is often chosen as the basis for the finished shoe wrap. Silk is a highly popular material for beaded shoes because it creates an elegant and high-shine impression. It is also well-known for providing the wearer with softness and comfort. Silk fabric beaded shoes exude luxury and are suitable for formal occasions like weddings. However, silk fabric requires special handling since it is prone to quick staining and ripping.

Meanwhile, leather sourced from animals like cows, buffaloes, or goats is utilised for shoe linings and heels. Leather beaded shoe insoles are highly durable despite their high cost and offer a timeless and robust design. According to Wah Aik (2021), leather materials can provide comfort and a good fit with the contours of the wearer’s feet. Leather material resists moisture and is easily cleaned, although it tends to scratch quickly with friction.

For beaded shoe soles, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is used instead of leather and animal leather. The synthetic material PVC is frequently utilised to create contemporary beaded shoes. PVC is more economical, water-resistant, and easier to clean than natural materials like silk or leather. PVC beaded shoes often feature contemporary designs with eye-catching patterns and hues, making them better suited for everyday elegant or informal gatherings. The selection of materials reflects both functional and symbolic considerations. Beyond their physical properties, materials play a crucial role in maintaining cultural authenticity. The continued use of traditional materials indicates a conscious effort to preserve heritage practices, even as artisans navigate contemporary production demands.

Manufacturing Process

The beading techniques employed in the production process demonstrate a high level of craftsmanship that is deeply rooted in traditional knowledge systems. Rather than being viewed solely as technical procedures, these techniques represent intangible cultural heritage that is transmitted across generations. The precision and intricacy involved highlight the cultural value placed on patience, discipline, and artistic excellence.

To begin creating beaded shoes, May Lim Siew Seng (2018) states that the chosen motifs must be sketched and coloured by the grid squares on graph paper. Depending on their inventiveness, the chosen motifs can be stamped or sketched. According to Tan Kok Oo, beaded shoes are made through several production procedures (Fontanellaz 2017). The first step is to select the pattern and hue of the glass beads. A cross-stitched cloth is then attached to a rectangular wooden frame and nailed to the base. Tiny beads are hand-sewn into the fabric individually to create a beaded stitch. Once the face of the beaded shoe is sewn, the shoemaker will install the sole. Additionally, shoe designs increase in beauty and cost with smaller beads. An overview of the beaded shoe manufacturing process is shown in Figure 5.

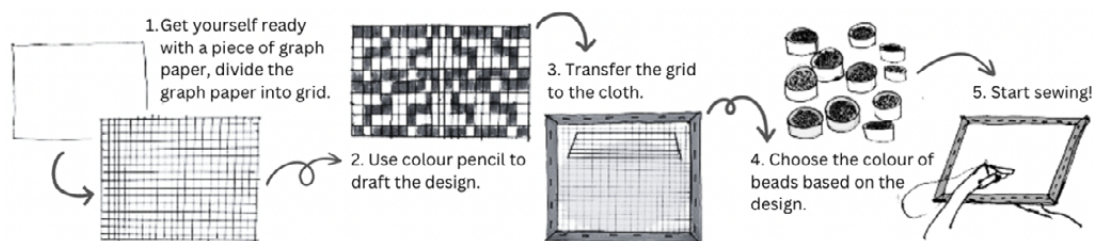


Figure 5 The process of sewing beaded shoes.

Source: Penang Heritage Trust (2018).

Additionally, there is a distinction between the states of Malacca and Penang in the beaded shoe face-making technique. In Penang, the pattern is drawn on graph paper, and the numbers serve as a reference for placing the colours and design elements. Without adhering to patterned paper, the bead embroiderer must read the squares' locations on the graph paper and stitch the beads into the grid fabric (May Lim Siew Seng 2018). In the interim, Melaka patching techniques can facilitate error-free bead sewing. However, beaded shoes produced like this will have a thicker, stricter face surface. Nevertheless, digital methods are also used to produce more interesting motif designs, or else motif designs can be purchased from sewing shops (Lim Eng Leong 2023).



Figure 6 The difference in the technique of transferring motifs: 1) technique (imitation) used in Penang; 2) technique (patching) used in Melaka.

Source: Author's observations in 2018 and 2023.

Meanwhile, beaded shoe creation requires attention to detail, finishing stitches, and the motif transfer procedure. While repairing damaged shoe beads, the finishing stitch flow is crucial in creating a seamless stitch. Tangled threads at the back of beaded shoes can be less of an issue with a methodical arrangement. Figure 7 illustrates the Peranakan Beading Kit.



Figure 7 The flow of finishing stitches on the back of the face of beaded shoes.

Source: Himi Mikazari (2023).

To begin sewing beaded shoes, follow the sewing technique in the diagram below. A seam that transports beads on the canvas' upper surface is called a line (without the "dotted" symbol). It involves a diagonal stitch. On the other hand, the line strip (marked as "dotted") represents the resulting back stitch. This sewing procedure is repeated and identical. This technique works well for sewing the backdrop of beaded shoes.

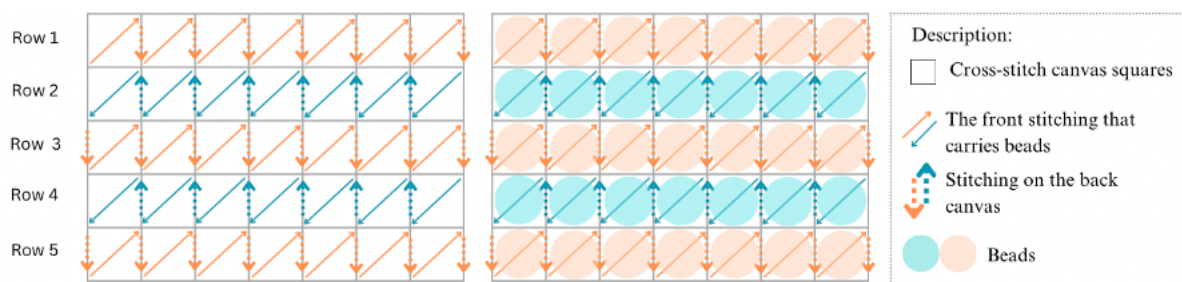


Figure 8 Sewing method one.

Source: Loh (2022).

In contrast, beginners using the second stitching method can repeat the sewing technique of method one; however, for the final stitches, they should gradually lower their stitches until they reach the next square and continue stitching until completion. This approach is more appropriate for creating motifs.

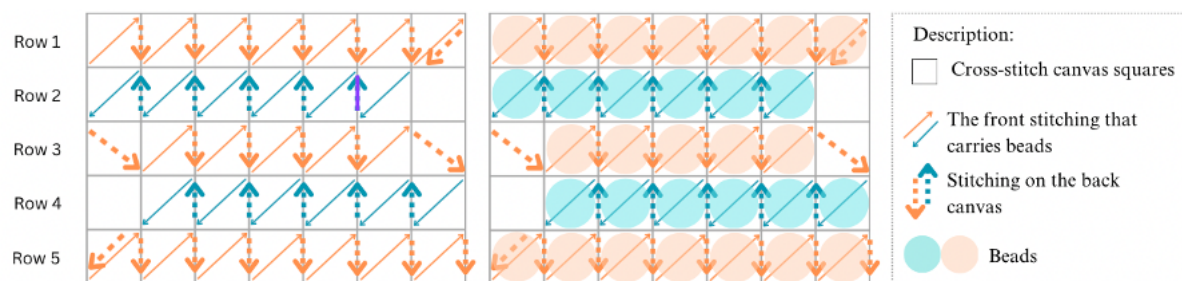


Figure 9 Sewing method two.

Source: Loh (2022).

DISCUSSION

This discussion moves beyond documenting Kasut Manik Baba and Nyonya by critically examining its cultural, social, and economic significance. While Thurley's Heritage Cycle Model (2005) provides a useful framework, understanding craft-based heritage in Malaysia requires attention to identity, commodification, and labour. The discussion is therefore structured into three interrelated dimensions: Heritage Cycle, Cultural Meaning, and Theoretical Positioning.

Heritage Cycle: Reinterpreting Thurley's Model in Craft Context

The findings of this study reaffirm the relevance of Thurley's Heritage Cycle Model (2005) as a foundational framework for understanding heritage engagement. However, rather than functioning as a linear and sequential process, the application of the model within the context of Kasut Manik Baba and Nyonya demonstrates a more dynamic, cyclical, and socially embedded process.

At the "understanding" stage, heritage engagement extends beyond recognising historical background and craftsmanship. It involves interpreting Kasut Manik as a culturally embedded artefact, where meanings are constructed through symbolic elements such as motifs, materials, and techniques. The findings suggest that understanding is an interpretive act shaped by cultural knowledge and social context. The "valuing" stage reveals that cultural significance is not fixed but negotiated. The value of Kasut Manik has shifted from its traditional domestic and

ceremonial functions to its contemporary positioning within heritage economies. This reflects how heritage is continuously redefined in response to changing socio-economic conditions. In the “caring” stage, preservation is not limited to institutional conservation but is sustained through lived practices. The transmission of artisanal skills across generations highlights that care is embedded in practice, community, and everyday engagement. Meanwhile, the “enjoying” stage reflects the diversification of heritage engagement, where Kasut Manik is appreciated not only in traditional settings but also in exhibitions, tourism, and contemporary fashion contexts.

Importantly, the findings indicate a critical gap in Thurley’s model, namely the absence of knowledge transmission as an explicit component. In craft-based heritage, sustainability is highly dependent on the continuity of skills and embodied knowledge. Therefore, this study proposes the inclusion of an additional dimension, “Transmission,” to better reflect the realities of intangible cultural heritage in the Malaysian context.

Cultural Meaning: Kasut Manik as a Cultural Text

Beyond its physical form, Kasut Manik Baba and Nyonya operates as a cultural text that embodies layered meanings, identities, and historical narratives. The study finds that its aesthetic features—such as intricate beadwork, floral motifs, and colour compositions—are not merely decorative but function as symbolic representations of Peranakan identity.

The hybridity evident in these artefacts reflects the intersection of Chinese, Malay, and European influences, illustrating a process of cultural negotiation shaped by historical interactions and diasporic experiences. This positions Kasut Manik within the discourse of hybrid identity, where cultural expressions are continuously constructed and reconstructed rather than fixed.

Furthermore, the meanings attached to Kasut Manik are not static but evolve across time and context. While traditionally associated with femininity, status, and domestic roles, contemporary reinterpretations have expanded its significance into areas such as fashion, heritage branding, and cultural tourism.

This shift demonstrates that cultural meaning is fluid and contingent, shaped by both community practices and external influences. As such, Kasut Manik should be understood not only as a heritage object but as an active medium through which identity, memory, and cultural continuity are negotiated.

Theoretical Positioning: Commodification, Gender, and Heritage Economies

To deepen the analysis, this study engages with broader theoretical debates surrounding cultural commodification, gendered craft labour, and heritage economies, particularly within the context of globalisation.

Firstly, the transformation of Kasut Manik into a product within tourism and creative industries reflects a process of cultural commodification, where traditional crafts are assigned economic value in contemporary markets. While this enhances visibility and provides economic opportunities, it also introduces tensions between authenticity and commercial adaptation. The modification of traditional designs to suit consumer preferences raises critical questions about the preservation of cultural integrity.

Secondly, the study highlights the role of gendered craft labour in sustaining this heritage practice. Historically rooted in women's domestic spaces, the production of Kasut Manik represents a form of embodied knowledge transmitted informally across generations. This underscores the often-overlooked contributions of women as custodians of intangible cultural heritage, while also revealing the marginalisation of craft labour within formal economic and academic recognition.

Thirdly, the positioning of Kasut Manik within heritage economies reflects the influence of globalisation. Increased exposure to international audiences has expanded opportunities for cultural exchange and economic sustainability. However, it also introduces risks such as standardisation, over-commercialisation, and the dilution of cultural specificity.

These intersecting dynamics demonstrate that Kasut Manik is not a static artefact, but a site of ongoing negotiation shaped by economic forces, gender relations, and cultural identity. By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study moves beyond descriptive analysis and contributes to broader scholarly discussions on the transformation and sustainability of traditional crafts in contemporary contexts.

Kasut Manik Baba and Nyonya exemplifies how craft-based heritage operates at the intersection of tradition, identity, and socio-economic change. By integrating the heritage cycle with theoretical perspectives on hybrid identity, commodification, gendered labour, and heritage economies, this study positions the artefact as a dynamic cultural text that embodies continuity, adaptation, and community knowledge, offering a contextually grounded framework for understanding and sustaining Malaysian craft heritage.

CONCLUSION

In summary, Malaysian arts and crafts, including the tradition of beaded shoes, represent a rich cultural legacy. By embracing, practising, and refining the artistry of beaded shoes, we can appreciate and safeguard this national heritage for future generations. Supporting and nurturing the regional creative arts sector fosters the sustainability of art and culture and contributes to economic growth. To secure a vibrant future for Malaysian art and culture, it is imperative to recognise and support the creative arts community while actively involving the next generation in learning about and perpetuating this legacy. This study demonstrates that Peranakan beaded shoes are not merely decorative objects but culturally significant artefacts that embody identity, heritage continuity, and socio-economic transformation. By moving beyond descriptive documentation and engaging with broader theoretical perspectives, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of craft-based heritage. The proposed extension of the Heritage Cycle Model further highlights the importance of knowledge transmission in sustaining intangible cultural practices, offering a valuable contribution to heritage studies within the Malaysian context.

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