



Empowering the Islamic Creative Economy through Traditional Weaving Enterprises: A Case Study of Community Welfare Development in Central Lombok, Indonesia

Bathin^{1*}, Mashu²

¹Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Nhdlatul Ulama Nusa Tenggara Barat

ABSTRACT

This study explores the empowerment strategies of the creative economy sector through traditional weaving enterprises in Pujut District, Central Lombok, Indonesia, from the perspective of Islamic economics. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, the research aims to analyze how weaving artisans, supported by local community networks and religious values, contribute to improving household welfare. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation involving community leaders, weaving artisans, and cooperative members. The findings reveal that empowerment occurs through capacity building, cooperation, and digital marketing adaptation. Islamic ethical principles such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ta'awun* (mutual help), and *halal livelihood* guide artisans' behavior and production processes. Despite facing challenges such as limited capital, raw material scarcity, and low technological literacy, the weaving community exhibits strong resilience grounded in faith-based motivation and social solidarity. The study concludes that the integration of Islamic moral economy and creative entrepreneurship fosters inclusive, sustainable welfare for rural communities. This research contributes to the discourse on Islamic creative economy development and highlights the role of traditional crafts as vehicles for spiritual and economic empowerment.

KEYWORDS:

Islamic creative economy; community empowerment; weaving artisans; rural entrepreneurship; social capital; Lombok; Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

The creative economy has become one of the key pillars of Indonesia's national development agenda, particularly in enhancing inclusive growth and promoting local entrepreneurship. According to the [Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy \(2023\)](#), the creative sector contributes over 7 percent to national GDP and employs millions of workers, many of whom operate in rural areas through handicraft-based industries. Among these, traditional weaving (*tenun*) plays a significant role in preserving cultural identity while providing income opportunities for women and marginalized communities. In regions such as Central Lombok, weaving has evolved from a cultural heritage practice into a strategic component of the local creative economy, linking art, religion, and livelihood sustainability.

From the perspective of Islamic economics, economic empowerment is not solely aimed at profit generation but also at achieving social justice (*al-'adl*) and collective welfare (*maslahah*). Islam views entrepreneurship as an act of worship (*ibadah*) when it is carried out with honesty, fairness, and responsibility. [Ascarya \(2020\)](#) emphasizes that the Islamic economic system integrates moral and spiritual dimensions into economic activity, promoting balanced development between material and ethical objectives. In this context, weaving artisans who adhere to principles such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), and *halal livelihood* exemplify the ethical foundation

of Islamic creative enterprises. These moral imperatives strengthen not only individual motivation but also social cohesion, which is crucial for community-based economic resilience.

The empowerment of weaving communities in Lombok aligns with the concept of *Islamic social capital*, which highlights trust, reciprocity, and shared values as drivers of sustainable development (Putnam, 2000; Rahardjo, 2022). Within weaving groups, collective collaboration and resource sharing have been vital for sustaining production despite constraints in capital and market access. The presence of religiously motivated leadership within these groups further reinforces cooperative behavior and nurtures a culture of collective responsibility. Moreover, Islamic social entrepreneurship provides an analytical framework for understanding how local creative actors pursue social goals through entrepreneurial activities rooted in faith and community identity (Hasanah & Wahid, 2022).

In the Central Lombok context, particularly in Rembitan and other weaving villages in Pujut District, the creative economy has long been intertwined with tourism and cultural preservation. The development of heritage tourism destinations such as Sade Village has provided weaving artisans with opportunities to reach broader markets. However, challenges persist. Limited access to financing, scarcity of raw materials, and low technological literacy hinders artisans from scaling their production or penetrating digital markets. As noted by Taufik and Nugroho (2023), digital adaptation among rural microentrepreneurs remains uneven, with many lacking e-commerce knowledge and online marketing skills. The absence of institutional support further exacerbates their vulnerability to market fluctuations.

Nevertheless, weaving communities continue to thrive by leveraging local resources, kinship-based labor systems, and religious motivation. Their adaptive strategies reflect the broader principles of *Islamic creative economy*, which emphasize ethical creativity, inclusivity, and community empowerment (Dewayani, E. K. U. (2024). The government's ongoing initiatives to formalize creative economy clusters in Lombok align with these grassroots efforts, yet there remains a gap in integrating faith-based values within policy frameworks. While prior studies (Hidayat & Sulaiman, 2021; Suryani & Hendrawan, 2021) have explored creative entrepreneurship and microenterprise development in Indonesia, limited research has focused on the intersection between Islamic ethics, creative production, and community welfare in rural weaving sectors.

This study seeks to address that gap by examining the strategies of creative economic empowerment implemented by weaving artisans in Pujut District through the lens of Islamic economics. Specifically, it aims to identify the mechanisms through which Islamic ethical values, community cooperation, and digital adaptation contribute to improving artisans' welfare. The research also investigates structural challenges that constrain the sector's development and proposes a model for integrating Islamic moral economy with creative entrepreneurship. By contextualizing traditional weaving within the discourse of faith-based economic empowerment, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how cultural industries can function as both spiritual and material pathways toward sustainable community development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Islamic creative economy represents an integrated system that combines ethical entrepreneurship, cultural expression, and spiritual purpose. Unlike conventional creative industries that focus primarily on market competitiveness and profit maximization, the Islamic creative economy emphasizes *barakah* (divine blessing), fairness, and collective prosperity. Ascarya (2020) defines this system as a process of economic value creation rooted in *tawhidic* principles, ensuring that creativity serves as both a means of livelihood and a manifestation of devotion. Within this framework, creativity is viewed as an ethical responsibility to contribute to human well-being and environmental harmony.

The concept of *community empowerment* in Islamic economics is closely linked to the principles of *al-'adl* (justice) and *ta'awun* (mutual assistance). Empowerment is not merely about increasing material welfare but about enhancing individuals' spiritual and moral capacity to act productively and responsibly. As [Rahardjo \(2022\)](#) asserts, empowerment in Islamic contexts must integrate economic independence with ethical awareness and communal solidarity. The process involves education, mentoring, and participatory decision-making that enable community members to transform from passive recipients of aid into active agents of change. Within weaving communities, empowerment initiatives often take the form of skill training, cooperative organization, and digital literacy development, reflecting the synergy between tradition and modernity.

From a socio-economic perspective, the literature highlights *social capital* as a key determinant of success in community-based creative enterprises. [Putnam \(2000\)](#) conceptualizes social capital as the network of trust, norms, and relationships that facilitate collective action for mutual benefit. In Islamic societies, these networks are reinforced by moral obligations derived from religious teachings. According to [Hasanah and Wahid \(2022\)](#), the combination of spiritual motivation and social trust forms *Islamic social capital*, which strengthens cooperation and resilience among microentrepreneurs. In rural Lombok, this manifests through *gotong royong* (mutual aid), trust in local leaders, and adherence to religious values that promote honest and fair-trade practices. Such capital enables communities to overcome financial limitations and maintains cohesion even during economic downturns.

The *creative economy ecosystem framework* proposed by [UNCTAD \(2023\)](#) emphasizes five interrelated dimensions: human capital, institutional support, technological adaptation, cultural assets, and market access. When examined through an Islamic lens, each of these dimensions gains moral and ethical depth. Human capital development becomes a form of *fard al-kifayah* (collective obligation), ensuring that knowledge and skills are distributed equitably. Institutional support is not limited to financial aid but includes the promotion of ethical standards and Sharia compliance. Technological adaptation, such as the use of digital platforms for marketing and branding, must also align with Islamic ethics concerning honesty and transparency in transactions. In this sense, digital empowerment in creative industries can reinforce social justice when guided by ethical principles ([Taufik & Nugroho, 2023](#)).

Research on Islamic microentrepreneurship and women's participation further enriches this discussion. Studies by [Hidayat and Sulaiman \(2021\)](#) and [Rahmawati and Effendi \(2022\)](#) indicate that women artisans often serve as central actors in rural creative economies, not only generating income but also preserving cultural heritage and transmitting values to younger generations. Their engagement demonstrates the alignment between *Islamic gender ethics*—which recognizes women's economic rights—and modern notions of creative empowerment. However, persistent barriers such as limited access to financing, unequal ownership of productive assets, and weak digital literacy continue to constrain their potential ([Hatidja & Sulana, 2025](#)). These challenges call for an integrated empowerment model that unites faith-based motivation, skill development, and institutional partnerships.

The literature also identifies the critical role of *Islamic social entrepreneurship* in fostering sustainable creative industries. According to [Ibrahim et al. \(2021\)](#), Islamic social enterprises prioritize social transformation over profit, using business activities as vehicles for moral and community development. In weaving industries, this model translates into cooperative business structures that reinvest profits into community training, education, and social welfare. This approach reflects the spirit of *maqasid al-shariah*—the higher objectives of Islamic law—which include the preservation of wealth (*hifz al-mal*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), and human dignity (*hifz al-nafs*).

Finally, the sustainability of creative empowerment relies on the intersection of governance, innovation, and ethics. [Suryani and Hendrawan \(2021\)](#) found that transparent management, participatory leadership, and adaptation to technology determine the long-term resilience of small-scale enterprises. In the context of Islamic creative economy, governance must ensure both accountability to members and adherence to religious values. The combination of institutional professionalism and moral capital thus becomes the cornerstone of ethical creativity.

In summary, the reviewed literature underscores that the Islamic creative economy embodies a multidimensional paradigm that integrates ethics, entrepreneurship, and community well-being. Empowerment through weaving enterprises exemplifies how Islamic values can guide the transformation of traditional crafts into sustainable creative industries. This theoretical foundation provides the analytical lens through which the next section examines the field findings on weaving artisans in Central Lombok and their strategies for achieving welfare through Islamic-based creative economy initiatives.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how weaving artisans in Pujut District, Central Lombok, empower themselves economically and socially through Islamic value-based creative enterprises. The qualitative method was chosen because it enables an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences, motivations, and interactions within their socio-religious context. According to [Creswell and Poth \(2018\)](#), qualitative research is suitable for exploring complex human behaviors that are inseparable from their cultural and moral environments. The descriptive orientation of this study allowed for the detailed portrayal of empowerment strategies, institutional dynamics, and community practices surrounding traditional weaving as a driver of local welfare.

The research was conducted in Rembitan Village, a well-known weaving center located in the Pujut subdistrict of Central Lombok. This location was selected purposively because it represents a community where economic creativity and Islamic cultural traditions coexist. The population of weavers in Rembitan is predominantly Muslim, and their weaving activities are deeply embedded in both religious and cultural identity. The field site provides a valuable context for examining how Islamic values inform business ethics, cooperative behavior, and market engagement.

Data collection involved interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse group of participants, including the heads of weaving cooperatives, senior artisans, youth apprentices, and local community leaders. The interview questions focused on three main themes: (1) the forms and processes of empowerment within weaving groups, (2) challenges faced by artisans in production and marketing, and (3) the role of Islamic values in guiding business and community relations. Observations were made in production sites, local markets, and exhibitions to capture artisans' daily activities and interactions. Documentation included reviewing cooperative reports, local government publications, and previous research on Lombok's weaving industry.

Data analysis followed the interactive model of [Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña \(2014\)](#), which involves three concurrent stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the first stage, all interview transcripts, field notes, and documents were coded according to key themes related to empowerment, Islamic values, creative entrepreneurship, and welfare outcomes. During the data display stage, the researcher organized the information into matrices and conceptual maps to identify patterns and relationships among the data. Finally, in the conclusion drawing stage, findings were interpreted and cross-verified with existing theories on Islamic creative economy, social capital, and community empowerment.

To ensure research trustworthiness, several validation techniques were applied. Triangulation was used to confirm data consistency by comparing multiple sources—interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking was performed by presenting summary findings to participants to verify accuracy and contextual appropriateness. Audit trails were maintained through detailed

documentation of research procedures, ensuring dependability and confirmability. Furthermore, reflexivity was practiced throughout the study, with the researcher maintaining awareness of personal biases and values to preserve objectivity.

Ethical considerations were observed in accordance with Islamic and academic research standards. All participants were informed about the study's objectives and provided verbal consent before participation (Elbadriati, B., & Larasati, I. A., 2025). Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to protect their privacy. Cultural sensitivity was also maintained during interviews, ensuring that questions and interactions respected local customs and gender norms.

This methodological framework provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding how weaving artisans in Central Lombok operationalize empowerment strategies within a moral economy framework. By combining field observation and narrative inquiry, the study captures the synergy between Islamic ethics, creative entrepreneurship, and collective welfare. The results derived from this approach not only illuminate the lived realities of artisans but also contribute to a broader theoretical understanding of how Islamic creative economies function as instruments of social transformation in rural Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Creative Economic Empowerment among Weaving Artisans

The results indicate that economic empowerment among weaving artisans in Pujut District occurs through a combination of traditional knowledge preservation, entrepreneurial innovation, and faith-based community cooperation. The artisans' empowerment journey begins with the transfer of weaving skills from older generations to younger women through informal apprenticeships conducted within households and weaving groups. These intergenerational practices represent a crucial form of human capital development that sustains both cultural identity and economic productivity. Many respondents described weaving as *ibadah* (a form of worship), emphasizing that producing handmade textiles with honesty and dedication brings spiritual reward in addition to income. This view reinforces the integration of work ethic and faith as fundamental pillars of the Islamic creative economy (Ascarya, 2020).

Empowerment initiatives at the community level are largely facilitated by local cooperatives and women's groups that provide access to shared looms, materials, and marketing platforms. These groups promote collective learning and encourage artisans to manage their businesses transparently according to Islamic ethical standards. Cooperative leaders often hold *pengajian ekonomi* (economic study circles), where discussions on fair pricing, debt management, and *halal* production align with Quranic principles of justice (*al-'adl*) and trust (*amanah*). As observed in several cases, the sense of shared responsibility among members minimizes exploitative practices and strengthens solidarity. Similar findings were reported by Hasanah and Wahid (2022), who argued that Islamic cooperatives create not only financial benefits but also moral and social cohesion among members.

The empowerment process also includes capacity-building programs supported by local government and NGOs. These programs focus on design innovation, product diversification, and entrepreneurship training, particularly aimed at improving artisans' competitiveness in the tourism market. Artisans are encouraged to integrate traditional motifs with contemporary design trends to appeal to both domestic and international buyers. This creative adaptation demonstrates how traditional industries can evolve within global creative economy dynamics without losing their spiritual and cultural essence. The artisans' innovation process can be viewed as a form of *ijtihad ekonomi*—a creative and context-specific effort to sustain economic activities while adhering to Islamic ethical boundaries.

Role of Islamic Values in Economic Practices

The study found that Islamic ethics profoundly shape the artisans' business behavior, decision-making, and interaction with customers and fellow weavers. Key values such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *ta'awun* (cooperation) are not abstract concepts but daily operational principles

guiding production and exchange. For instance, artisans refrain from exaggerating the quality or price of their products, considering honesty a religious duty that safeguards *barakah* (divine blessing) in income. Several respondents mentioned that violating *amanah*—such as using poor materials or deceiving customers—could lead to financial loss and moral decline. This perspective aligns with the findings of [Rahardjo \(2022\)](#), who emphasized that spiritual integrity forms the core of Islamic economic resilience.

Collective cooperation, another manifestation of Islamic social capital, emerges through informal labor-sharing arrangements. Artisans often assist one another in completing large orders, sharing tools, and rotating resources without formal contracts. These networks of trust mirror the principles of *social waqf*, where assets and knowledge are shared for collective benefit. The moral discipline established within this social environment reduces conflicts and enhances productivity. As observed by [Putnam \(2000\)](#), high-trust communities tend to exhibit stronger collective efficiency and problem-solving capacity—a principle clearly reflected in the Lombok weaving context.

Furthermore, religious gatherings organized by local leaders play a key role in maintaining artisans' motivation and ethical awareness. The integration of religious instruction with entrepreneurship guidance provides an environment in which economic activity becomes a continuation of spiritual practice. This model corresponds with [Ibrahim et al. \(2021\)](#), who described *sharia-compliant social enterprises* as systems that harmonize moral education and economic participation. Consequently, artisans perceive business success not only in terms of profit but also as a form of contribution to community welfare and cultural preservation.

Challenges and Structural Constraints

Despite the success of empowerment initiatives, several persistent challenges hinder the sustainable growth of weaving enterprises. The most significant internal constraints include limited access to capital and a lack of modern business management skills. Artisans often rely on personal savings or informal loans, which restrict their ability to purchase raw materials in bulk or expand production capacity. Moreover, bookkeeping and record-keeping practices remain minimal, preventing accurate financial tracking and long-term planning. These constraints echo the findings of [Suryani and Hendrawan \(2021\)](#), who identified weak administrative capacity as a recurring barrier to small enterprise sustainability in Indonesia.

External factors also pose considerable obstacles. The scarcity of quality raw materials, fluctuating yarn prices, and limited access to digital markets significantly affect artisans' income stability. While some have adopted social media for product promotion, most lack training in e-commerce or digital branding. As a result, middlemen continue to dominate the marketing chain, capturing a large portion of profits. [Taufik and Nugroho \(2023\)](#) note that digital literacy remains a crucial determinant of competitiveness for rural entrepreneurs, and without adequate training, artisans' risk being excluded from emerging online markets.

Gender-related challenges also persist, as women artisans frequently balance production with domestic responsibilities, leading to irregular working hours and limited mobility. However, empowerment groups have begun addressing these issues by introducing flexible schedules and shared childcare systems, which enable women to remain active in both family and business spheres. These initiatives reflect the Islamic economic emphasis on equity and inclusivity, reaffirming that participation in productive activities is a right and duty for all community members regardless of gender.

Integration of Islamic Creative Economy and Community Welfare

The integration of Islamic principles within creative economic activities has generated measurable social and spiritual benefits. Empowerment has not only improved household income but also enhanced artisans' self-esteem, social recognition, and sense of purpose. Weaving groups have evolved into community learning hubs where members exchange ideas about marketing, design, and

faith-based entrepreneurship. The collective outcomes are evident in the artisans' ability to sustain livelihoods while contributing to cultural and religious continuity (Duc, L. D. T., & Mujahida, S, 2024).

This alignment between ethical economy and social welfare underscores the transformative potential of *Islamic moral economy* as a framework for rural development. By embedding spiritual values into economic systems, weaving artisans embody the principles of *maqasid al-shariah*, particularly in safeguarding wealth, intellect, and social harmony. As noted by Ascarya (2020), Islamic creative industries can function as instruments of *maslahah* (public good), bridging tradition and modernity in pursuit of holistic well-being.

Overall, the findings confirm that the empowerment of weaving artisans in Lombok represents more than an economic phenomenon—it is a manifestation of ethical creativity rooted in faith and community solidarity (Dewayani, E. K. U. (2024)). The sustainability of such empowerment depends on balancing traditional craftsmanship, modern innovation, and institutional support. To advance this progress, government agencies, educational institutions, and Islamic cooperatives must collaborate to enhance digital capacity, establish ethical certification schemes, and facilitate access to global markets. Through these efforts, the weaving sector can continue to serve as a living example of how Islamic creative economy principles can drive inclusive and sustainable community development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the empowerment of weaving artisans in Pujut District, Central Lombok, represents a successful synthesis of local cultural identity, Islamic moral values, and creative entrepreneurship. Empowerment activities have transformed traditional weaving from a household craft into a dynamic component of the Islamic creative economy, contributing directly to community welfare and women's economic participation. Through the principles of *ta'awun* (mutual help), *amanah* (trustworthiness), and *halal livelihood*, artisans not only generate income but also strengthen moral discipline and social cohesion within their communities. These findings highlight that the creative economy, when guided by Islamic ethics, can serve as both a spiritual and material vehicle for sustainable development.

However, the study also identifies structural challenges that must be addressed to ensure the long-term sustainability of this empowerment model. These include limited access to capital, insufficient digital literacy, and weak institutional coordination. To overcome these obstacles, a stronger integration of government support, cooperative networks, and Islamic financial institutions is necessary. Training in digital marketing, bookkeeping, and design innovation should be prioritized to enhance artisans' competitiveness. Moreover, formal recognition of faith-based entrepreneurship can help bridge the gap between informal creative practices and national development frameworks.

In theoretical terms, this study contributes to the growing body of research on *Islamic creative economy* by demonstrating that ethical creativity and spiritual motivation can coexist with modern entrepreneurial principles. Practically, it underscores the importance of social capital and collective empowerment in sustaining micro-scale enterprises in rural contexts. The case of Lombok's weaving artisans thus offers a replicable model for other Muslim-majority regions seeking to develop creative economies grounded in faith, culture, and inclusivity. By uniting moral purpose with innovation, Islamic creative enterprises have the potential to become catalysts for equitable and value-driven economic transformation.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the publication of this study.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the design, data collection, analysis, and writing of this manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the paper.

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