

The Role of Cepagan Village Weaving in the Development of the Creative Economy in Warungasem District

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Abstract. *This study examines the role of Cepagan Village weaving in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District, Batang Regency, Central Java. Using a qualitative approach and case study design, this study explores the economic and social contributions of the weaving industry, the challenges faced, and development strategies in the context of the creative economy. The results of the study show that Cepagan weaving plays an important role in cultural heritage preservation, product innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. This industry has a significant impact on job creation, increasing regional income, and economic multiplier effects. However, challenges such as competition with modern products, regeneration of artisans, and limited market access need to be overcome. Development opportunities through digitalization, ecotourism, and collaboration with the fashion industry open up new prospects for the sustainability of the weaving industry. This research provides valuable insights into the integration of traditional crafts into the modern creative economy and can be a reference for the development of local wisdom-based community empowerment policies and programs.*

Keywords: *Traditional weaving, Creative economy, Community empowerment.*

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengkaji peran tenun Desa Cepagan dalam pengembangan ekonomi kreatif di Kecamatan Warungasem, Kabupaten Batang, Jawa Tengah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan desain studi kasus, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kontribusi ekonomi dan sosial dari industri tenun, tantangan yang dihadapi, dan strategi pengembangan dalam konteks ekonomi kreatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tenun Cepagan berperan penting dalam pelestarian warisan budaya, inovasi produk, dan kolaborasi lintas sektor. Industri ini memiliki dampak yang signifikan terhadap penciptaan lapangan kerja, peningkatan pendapatan daerah, dan efek pengganda ekonomi. Namun, tantangan seperti persaingan dengan produk modern, regenerasi pengrajin, dan akses pasar yang terbatas perlu diatasi. Peluang pengembangan melalui digitalisasi, ekowisata, dan kolaborasi dengan industri fesyen membuka prospek baru bagi keberlanjutan industri tenun. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang berharga tentang integrasi kerajinan tradisional ke dalam ekonomi kreatif modern dan dapat menjadi referensi untuk pengembangan kebijakan dan program pemberdayaan masyarakat berbasis kearifan lokal.

Kata kunci: Tenun tradisional, Ekonomi kreatif, Pemberdayaan masyarakat.

1. BACKGROUND

The creative economy has become an important driving force in Indonesia's economic development, with an ever-increasing contribution to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to (Bappenas 2023), the sector accounted for 7.4% of GDP in 2022, showing significant growth from previous years. Among the various subsectors of the creative economy, the traditional craft industry, including weaving, has great potential to be developed. Cepagan Village in Warungasem District, Batang Regency, Central Java, has long been known as a traditional weaving production center that has high cultural and economic value. However, in the midst of globalization and digitalization, the traditional weaving industry faces various

challenges to remain relevant and develop (Darmawan et al. 2023). Cepagan weaving, with its unique motifs and production techniques, reflects the rich local cultural heritage that has been passed down through generations (Tinggi and Saumlaki 2021). This craft not only has economic value, but also plays an important role in maintaining the cultural identity of the local community. However, like many other traditional craft industries, Cepagan weaving faces challenges in adapting to changing consumer preferences and competition from modern textile products (Iqbal Denies 2022).

In this context, the development of the creative economy is a key strategy to revitalize and develop the traditional weaving industry. The integration of digital technology, design innovation, and modern marketing strategies can open up new opportunities for Cepagan weaving to reach a wider market (Agriculture 2020). In addition, collaboration between traditional artisans and contemporary designers and the tourism sector can create significant added value (Lubis et al. 2023). This study aims to analyze the role of weaving in Cepagan Village in the context of creative economy development in Warungasem District. By understanding the dynamics, challenges, and potential development of this weaving industry, it is hoped that effective strategies can be formulated to increase its contribution to the local and national economy, while preserving valuable cultural heritage (Nurhalimah and Nurhasikin 2024). The research will also explore how innovation and government policies can support the transformation of the traditional weaving industry into an integral part of a dynamic and sustainable creative economy ecosystem. Despite having great potential, the weaving industry in Cepagan Village still faces several crucial problems that need to be overcome.

First, how to optimize the contribution of the weaving industry to the local economy in the context of the creative economy? Second, what are the main challenges faced by weaving artisans in developing their businesses in the digital era? Third, what strategies can be implemented to integrate traditional weaving into a broader and modern creative economy ecosystem? Fourth, what is the role of various stakeholders, including local governments, the private sector, and the community, in supporting the development of the weaving industry as part of the creative economy? This study aims to comprehensively analyze the role of Cepagan Village weaving in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District. Specifically, this study will: (1) Examine the economic and social contribution of the weaving industry to local communities; (2) Identifying the challenges faced by weaving artisans in the context of the creative economy; (3) Formulate innovative strategies to optimize the potential of traditional weaving in the creative economy ecosystem; and (4) Analyze the role and potential for collaboration between stakeholders in supporting the development of the weaving

industry. The results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, this study will enrich the literature on the creative economy based on local wisdom, especially in the context of the preservation and development of traditional crafts in the digital era (Riswanto, Zafar, Chatra P, Sunijati, Harto, Boari, Astaman, Dassir 2023). The research findings can be the basis for the development of a theoretical model on the integration of traditional crafts into the modern creative economy. Practically, the results of this research can be a reference for local governments in formulating policies and community empowerment programs that focus on the development of local creative industries.

For artisans and businesses in the weaving sector, this research can provide strategic insights into opportunities and ways to increase the competitiveness of their products in the wider market (Nugraha et al. 2022). Furthermore, this research also has significant social and cultural benefits. By understanding and optimizing the role of weaving in the creative economy, it is hoped that it can support efforts to preserve cultural heritage while improving the welfare of local communities. This study can also be a model for the development of a creative economy based on local wisdom in other regions of Indonesia, supporting the government's vision to make Indonesia one of the world's creative economy centers (Preserving and Culture 2024). Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of the local economy, but also to broader efforts to preserve and revitalize Indonesia's cultural heritage in the context of sustainable economic development.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design, which allows an in-depth exploration of the weaving phenomenon of Cepagan Village in the context of creative economy development. The qualitative method was chosen because of its ability to capture the complexity and nuances of the socio-economic dynamics associated with the traditional weaving industry (Feny Rita Fiantika et al 2022). The case study allows researchers to holistically understand how local, cultural, and economic factors interact in shaping the role of weaving in the creative economy in Warungasem District. The location of the research is Cepagan Village, Warungasem District, Batang Regency, Central Java, which is known as a traditional weaving production center. The selection of this location is based on the historical and economic significance of the weaving industry in the area. The research will be conducted over a six-month period, from January to June 2024, to allow for comprehensive observation

of the production, marketing, and creative economy cycles associated with the weaving industry.

The data collection technique will combine several methods to ensure triangulation and validity of the data. First, in-depth interviews will be conducted with various stakeholders, including weavers, community leaders, local government officials, and business actors in the creative economy sector. Semi-structured interviews will be used to allow flexibility in the exploration of topics that arise during the conversation (Haryoko, Bahartiar, and Arwadi 2020). Second, participant observation will be carried out at weaving production locations and events related to the creative economy in the area. This will allow researchers to directly understand the production process, social interaction, and market dynamics. Third, document analysis will be carried out on government reports, statistical data, and related publications to provide a broader context for field findings. Finally, a focus group discussion (FGD) will be organized with a group of weavers and other stakeholders to validate initial findings and explore collective development strategies. Data analysis will use a thematic approach, which allows the identification of patterns and themes that emerge from the data (Oentoro 2021).

The analysis process will begin with the transcription of interviews and field notes, followed by open coding to identify key concepts. Next, these codes will be grouped into broader categories, and finally into the main themes that answer the research question. Qualitative data analysis software such as NVivo will be used to assist in the coding and thematic analysis process. To increase the validity of the results, a member checking technique will be applied, where the initial interpretation will be discussed with the study participants to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the findings. In addition, constant comparative analysis will be used to compare findings between various data sources and participants, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the role of weaving in the local creative economy. This methodological approach is designed to produce a rich and contextual understanding of the role of Cepagan Village weaving in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District. By combining various rigorous data collection and analysis methods, this research aims to produce findings that are not only in-depth and comprehensive, but also relevant and applicable for the development of policies and practices in supporting cultural heritage-based creative industries.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Cepagan Village and its weaving industry

Cepagan Village is located in Warungasem District, Batang Regency, Central Java. The village has long been known as a hub for traditional weaving crafts that have strong historical and cultural value. The weaving industry in Cepagan Village has been going on for generations, with weaving skills passed down from one generation to the next (Date 2023). Cepagan weaving has its own characteristics, both in terms of motifs and manufacturing techniques. The resulting motifs are often inspired by the surrounding nature and the daily life of the local community. The weaving production process in Cepagan Village still uses traditional looms, known as Non-Machine Looms (ATBM), although some artisans have begun to adopt modern technology to improve production efficiency (Prastika and Nasution 2022).

a. The role of Cepagan Village weaving in the creative economy

Cepagan Village Weaving plays an important role in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District. The creative economy, which focuses on creativity and innovation as the main resource, has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in Indonesia in recent years (Eviatun, Hasan, and Sari 2023).

- 1) Preservation of cultural heritage: Cepagan weaving is not only an economic product, but also functions as a medium for the preservation of cultural heritage. The traditional motifs used in Cepagan weaving tell the story and local values that have been passed down through the centuries (Ulfa, br Sinulingga, and Sinulingga 2023).
- 2) Product innovation: The weaving artisans in Cepagan Village continue to innovate in the design and application of their products. In addition to traditional woven fabrics, they also produce modern products such as bags, wallets, and other fashion accessories that use Cepagan woven fabric as the basic material (Mohadi and Aminy 2023).
- 3) Cross-sector collaboration: The Cepagan weaving industry has started collaborating with other sectors such as fashion, tourism, and education. This collaboration not only expands the market for Cepagan weaving products, but also creates added value and increases product competitiveness (Khaerul Rahman, Budi Utami, and Pancasilawan 2021).

b. Economic impact of the weaving industry

The weaving industry in Cepagan Village has had a significant economic impact on the local community and the surrounding area:

- 1) Job creation: The weaving industry provides employment opportunities for the local population, especially women. This not only increases household income but also empowers women in the economic aspect (Sulaiman 2020).

- 2) Increased regional income: Through the sale of weaving products and related tourism activities, this industry contributes to the increase in local original income (PAD) of Warungasem District (Jaenudin. MT 2019).
 - 3) Multiplier effect: The development of the weaving industry also has an impact on other supporting sectors, such as raw material suppliers, transportation services, and the tourism sector, creating a multiplier effect in the local economy (Sarjanti, Rahmawati, and Sriwanto 2019).
- c. Development challenges and opportunities

Despite having great potential, the Cepagan Village weaving industry also faces several challenges in its development:

- 1) Competition with modern textile products: Traditional woven products must compete with cheaper mass-produced textiles. To overcome this, an effective product differentiation and marketing strategy is needed (PRATIWI 2021).
- 2) Regeneration of artisans: There are challenges in attracting the younger generation to continue the tradition of weaving. Innovative training and education programs are needed to address this problem (Rosita, Ruja, and Kurniawan 2021).
- 3) Market access and capital: Weaving artisans often face difficulties in accessing a wider market and obtaining capital for business development. Collaboration with the government and the private sector can help address these challenges (Hamid et al. 2023).

However, behind these challenges, there are various development opportunities:

- a) Digitalization: The use of digital technology for the marketing and sales of woven products can expand the reach of the market, including the international market (Saragih et al. 2024).
- b) Ecotourism: The development of weaving-based tourism villages can be a new attraction for tourists, as well as increase the economic value of the weaving industry (Triyono 2020).
- c) Collaboration with designers: Collaboration with fashion designers can produce innovative products that combine traditional elements with contemporary design, increasing the competitiveness of Cepagan woven products in the fashion market (Ningsih and Widjaja 2021).

Cepagan Village Weaving has a strategic role in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District. Through the preservation of cultural heritage, product innovation, and cross-sector collaboration, the industry not only provides a significant economic impact but also maintains the sustainability of local traditions. By overcoming

existing challenges and taking advantage of development opportunities, Cepagan Village weaving has great potential to continue to develop and contribute to the growth of the creative economy in the region.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Cepagan Village Weaving plays a vital role in the development of the creative economy in Warungasem District, Batang Regency, Central Java. This weaving industry not only contributes economically but also becomes a means of preserving valuable cultural heritage. Through product innovation and cross-sector collaboration, Cepagan weaving has successfully adapted to the demands of the modern market while still maintaining its traditional values. The resulting economic impact includes job creation, especially for women, an increase in local income, and a multiplier effect on related sectors. Despite facing challenges such as competition with modern textile products, the regeneration of artisans, and limited market access and capital, the Cepagan weaving industry has great potential to develop further. Development opportunities through digitalization, ecotourism, and collaboration with fashion designers pave the way for the sustainability and growth of the industry. The success of Cepagan weaving in the creative economy shows that local wisdom can be a driving force for sustainable and inclusive economic development.

5. SUGGESTION

- a. Development of a comprehensive training program to attract the interest of the younger generation in the art of weaving, with a focus on design innovations and modern production techniques.
- b. Implementation of an integrated digital marketing strategy, including e-commerce and social media, to expand the market reach of Cepagan woven products.
- c. Facilitating collaboration between weaving artisans and national and international fashion designers to create innovative products that combine traditional and contemporary elements.
- d. The development of a weaving-based ecotourism program in Cepagan Village, involves the local community in its planning and management.
- e. The establishment of cooperatives or associations of weaving artisans to increase access to capital and markets, as well as strengthen the bargaining position of artisans.
- f. Preparation of intellectual property rights protection policies for typical Cepagan weaving motifs and techniques.

- g. Integration of learning about traditional weaving into local school curricula to promote cultural preservation from an early age.
- h. Procurement of business assistance and financial management programs for weaving artisans to increase their entrepreneurial capacity.
- i. Collaboration with research institutions and universities to develop innovations in raw materials and production techniques that are more efficient and environmentally friendly.
- j. The organization of an annual weaving festival at the district or provincial level to promote Cepagan weaving products and attract investment and tourists.

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