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Operating a business with local wisdom: a grounded research of women in the creative industry

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the extent to which local wisdom influences Indonesian women's businesses, especially in the creative industry sector. This research was conducted in several locations in Indonesia. Grounded research employs a constructivist grounded theory approach for its analytical operations. The data obtained from interviews was coded in three stages to construct a theory. The coding analysis showed five main elements of local wisdom that affect Indigenous women's ways of life, particularly in crafting ethnic products, including religion or beliefs, traditional culture influenced by the traditional monarch or their ancestors, traditional livelihoods, natural resources around their lives, and barriers. The participants preferred to adjust modernization to their local wisdom rather than vice versa. Based on these local wisdom elements identified, the research examined contributing factors as these women's key success factors such as financial support, marketing support, and business knowledge support that led to growing the creative business. These ethnic products have the potential to be developed into diversified commercial ethnic and attract many potential buyers because of the traditional value and wisdom embedded in the product.

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KEYWORDS
Traditional belief; local wisdom; women entrepreneur; ethnic product; grounded theory

SUBJECTS
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Research background

In addition to the discrimination challenges related to the gender issues faced by women (Dyer & Hurd, 2018; Mehng et al., 2019), numerous studies have identified conflicting evidence regarding the crucial role of women, specifically in the context of a nation's economic development (Costa et al., 2016; Sajjad et al., 2020; Welsh et al., 2018). Recent research has revealed that women, as integral members of society, have the potential to assume a significant role in the economy by engaging in entrepreneurial endeavors. However, the limited number of current studies exploring women's participation in economic growth still requires a certain depth of examination (Costa et al., 2016). Many scholarly investigations have been conducted to explore the correlation between women entrepreneurs and their affiliation with ethnicity and culture, particularly within creative sectors (Anggadwita et al., 2017; De Vita et al., 2014; Gbadamosi, 2019). In general, women exhibit heightened enthusiasm when investigating opportunities within the creative industry. Findings confirm the enduring popularity of the creative sector in the study of women's entrepreneurship and its consequential impact on the local economy (Anggadwita et al., 2017; Irjayanti, 2020; Kourtesopoulou & Chatzigianni, 2021). In the context of Indonesia, a significant proportion of women entrepreneurs engaged in the production of cultural or ethnic goods predominantly operate within the creative industry sector. The potential for women to enhance their personal growth through entrepreneurial endeavors, including those associated with cultural and ethnic goods, is confirmed by research findings (Anggadwita et al., 2017; Byrne et al., 2019; De Vita et al., 2014; Gbadamosi, 2019; Sajjad et al., 2020).

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In Indonesia, a significant proportion of women entrepreneurs who produce cultural or ethnic goods primarily operate within the creative industry sector. Research findings (Anggadwita et al., 2017; Byrne et al., 2019; De Vita et al., 2014; Gbadamosi, 2019; Sajjad et al., 2020) confirm the potential for women to enhance their personal growth through entrepreneurial endeavours, including those associated with cultural and ethnic goods. Indonesia, as a growing nation, is acknowledged for its diversity in terms of ethnicity, traditional culture, and religion. People in Indonesia perceive women as possessing significant economic potential that could boost the domestic economy (ChoudhuryKaul et al., 2023). However, many Indonesian women entrepreneurs encounter challenges, particularly within their sociocultural context, during the initiation or operation of their businesses (Anggadwita et al., 2017). The Ministry of Manpower has reported that women in Indonesia constitute over 50% of the overall population. Additionally, approximately 10% of the country's total population engages in entrepreneurial activities within the micro and small business sectors (Irjayanti, 2020). The significance of micro, small, and medium companies (MSMEs) in Indonesia is vital because of their substantial contribution (over 50%) to the country's gross domestic product (Tambunan, 2019). Notwithstanding their inherent potential, these enterprises often exhibit a considerable propensity for failure (Anggadwita et al., 2017). Despite Indonesia's reputation for being business-friendly, as indicated by the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index in 2020, a significant number of Indonesian women engaged in micro-businesses continue to experience a considerable rate of business failure (Worldbank, 2020). Nevertheless, the potential of these individuals presents a promising prospect for the Indonesian economy, as they can contribute to the enhancement and growth of businesses in the nation as a whole. From this standpoint, Indonesian women entrepreneurs are well positioned to capitalize on valuable resources by utilizing their Indigenous knowledge while initiating and advancing their commercial endeavours. By engaging in such activities, women can provide financial assistance to their households while simultaneously contributing to the overall economic development of the surrounding region.

Many scholarly investigations have claimed that values, conventions, attitudes, and behavioural patterns exert a significant influence on the socioeconomic structure of society (Rahyuda et al., 2018, 2019). Many scholars in the field of traditional culture have extensively studied these features, considering them integral components of local wisdom (Arsal et al., 2023; Rahyuda et al., 2018, 2019; Rahiem, 2018). These studies have demonstrated that the utilization of local wisdom includes the capacity to serve as a promising economic asset, facilitating the advancement of local economies, and effectively mitigating economic disparities across different locations. The extensive range and heterogeneous nature of cultural artifacts imbued with indigenous knowledge represent a significant potential to foster economic growth, particularly within the creative industry of Indonesia. Women predominantly produce creative products in Indonesia, which have distinct cultural characteristics (Bekraf, 2018).

Indonesia's unique geographical structure, characterized by its vast archipelago of over 17,000 islands, inherently connects to the concept of local wisdom. The five most prominent islands in terms of size were Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi, Papua, Sumatra, and Java. According to Jati (2014), Indonesia is home to a diverse array of over 1300 distinct ethnicities and sub-ethnicities, each with its own unique cultural characteristics. The country not only speaks the official language of Indonesian, but also more than 300 traditional languages. Indonesia is geographically situated amidst two major oceans and two continents, encompassing a total area of 5.8 million km^2, comprising both land and water, and its coastline extends approximately 81,000 km (Haryanto, 2015). Indonesia's geographical location contributes to its status as a nation that is endowed with abundant natural resources. The integration of ethnic diversity, cultural diversity, and abundant natural resources provides Indonesian local wisdom a valuable asset with significant potential for strategic management and economic development. However, the majority of local wisdom consists primarily of tacit knowledge that has been transmitted through generations, lacking substantial documentation regarding its origins and heritage. One manifestation of indigenous knowledge is the creation of a commodity that combines many cultural elements, traditional practices, tales, and local resources within the geographical vicinity of its production. Local wisdom products refer to items originating from the creative industry sector, which the government of Indonesia recognizes as promising industries (Bekraf, 2018). The government need to force the creative industry to play a significant role in bolstering Indonesia's economic climate by contributing to GDP expansion, enhancing participation rates and productivity among the Indonesian workforce, and fostering an

increase in the country's export growth (Bekraf, 2019). Culinary and craft product industries are significant subsectors within the broader creative industry sector. The focus of this study was on the micro, small, and medium enterprises of women entrepreneurs in the creative industry sector, specifically in the areas of fashion, culinary, and handicraft products, recognized as the primary drivers of the creative industry in Indonesia.

This study focused on a specific part of a larger investigation that examined the influence of indigenous wisdom held by women entrepreneurs in West Java, Central Java, and South Kalimantan on the development of products in the creative industry sector. The focus of this study is on how women utilize indigenous knowledge to produce ethnic products with economic value. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the factors of traditional wisdom that affect women's entrepreneurship in Indonesia, particularly within the creative industry sector.

Literature review

Local wisdom and creative industries

The notion of local wisdom contains various interpretations; nevertheless, for the objective of this research, the definition provided by Arsal et al. (2023) is the most relevant to the scope of this study. According to a previous study, the conceptualization of 'wisdom' in the context of local wisdom closely intertwines with the attribute of being 'ancient', encompassing not only knowledge and culture but also the perpetuation of local stories, narratives, and artistic manifestations across generations that follow (Arsal et al., 2023; Rahyuda et al., 2019). Hence, local wisdom can be defined as collective information and social norms passed down through generations within a community. Many scholars have argued that local wisdom in Indonesia encompasses a diverse array of practices and knowledge systems (Arsal et al., 2023; Jati, 2014; Rahyuda et al., 2019; Rahiem, 2018). They include herbal medicine, natural resource management, cultivation techniques, cultural norms, religious beliefs, artistic expressions, local language usage, philosophical perspectives, and traditional culinary practices. Local wisdom comprises a diverse range of cultural elements including beliefs, philosophies, and rituals, which contribute to the distinctiveness of different societies.

The theoretical framework illustrated in Figure 1 illustrates the influence of local wisdom on entrepreneurial endeavors, particularly in the creative sector, where producing goods culminates in a viable economic income source that fosters regional economic growth (Rahyuda et al., 2019). Until now, no research has conducted a thorough integration of the economic potential of local wisdom, female entrepreneurs, and the creative sectors under a single study framework. This research is highly significant because it has the potential to improve the efficiency of all sectors that can contribute to economic resilience, both at the local and national levels. The goal of this project is to deepen our understanding of the effective utilization of cultural resources and innovation for economic growth, social inclusion, and gender equality, all within the framework of sustainable economic growth. This will be achieved by integrating the factors depicted in Figure 1.

The significance of women entrepreneurs' role in the creative sectors and the value of local wisdom connect these three subjects. The dynamic link that forms between women entrepreneurs, indigenous knowledge, and the creative industries greatly benefits sustainable development and cultural preservation (Anggadwita et al., 2017; Gbadamosi, 2019; Henry, 2009; Papadimitriou et al., 2022; Rahiem, 2018). For entrepreneurs in the creative industries, local wisdom—which has its roots in traditions and knowledge—can serve as a source of creativity and inspiration. Women entrepreneurs with a sense of place may utilize local wisdom, and available resources to their benefit to develop distinctive goods and services that appeal to a wide market. In addition to being beneficial economically, this symbiotic relationship promotes resilience and cultural diversity.

Various factors, such as values, customs, attitudes, and behavioral patterns, influence the socioeconomic system of a local community (Arsal et al., 2023; Hånell et al., 2020; Rahyuda et al., 2018, 2019). These elements significantly shape a community's entrepreneurial activities, particularly when utilizing local resources to develop ethnic products. Initially, the local community crafted ethnic products that embodied their creative ideals and ideas, serving their interests. At the same time, there has been a

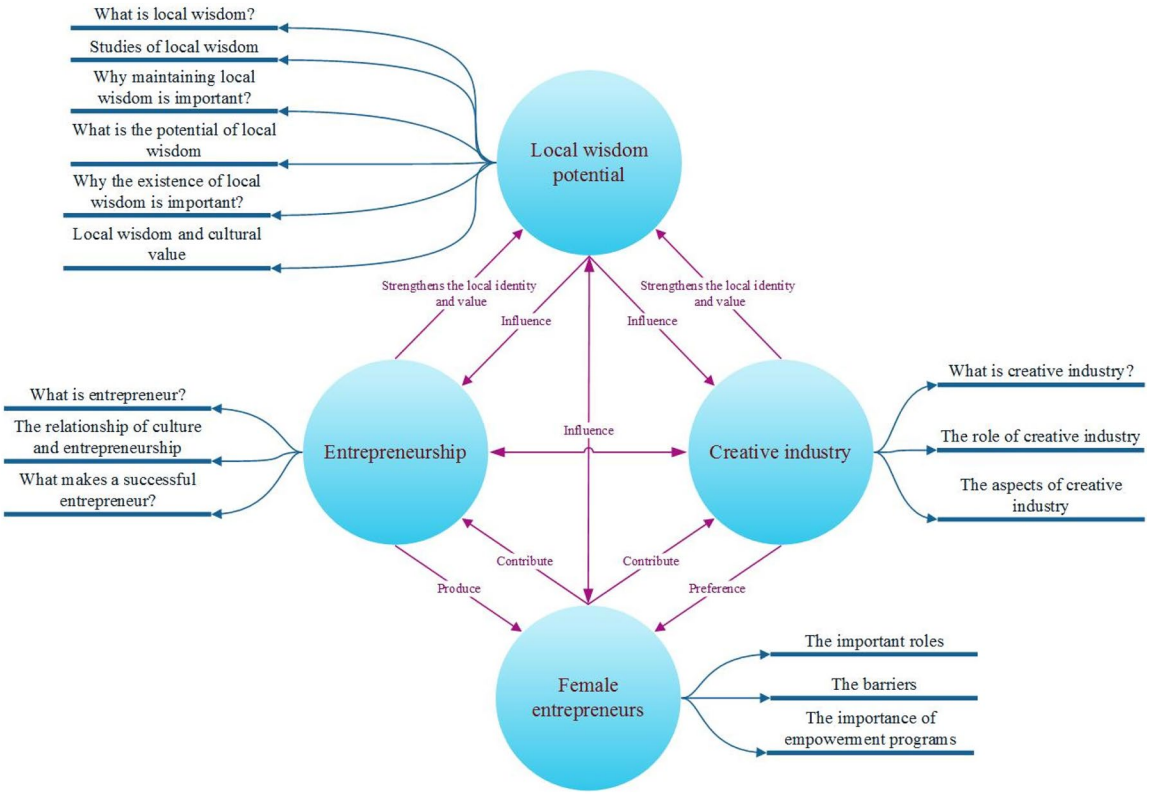

Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

significant increase in the development and availability of ethnic products to serve the visitors to the area, thus providing a positive impact on local economic development.

The creative industry can be defined as a sector within the economy that involves the production of content or intellectual property, with creativity as the primary input. Many scholars have highlighted the significant correlation between economic growth and human creativity (Chen et al., 2018; Hånell et al., 2020; Stojcic et al., 2018), particularly in urban communities, where the majority of economic endeavors rely on the creative contributions of professionals such as engineers, consultants, writers, architects, designers, artists, and scientists (Rodgers, 2015). The integration of cultural elements and artistic projects has the potential to serve as a remedy for economic decline while ensuring the preservation of cultural harmony through the implementation of certain rules (Stephan & Pathak, 2016). Hence, the preservation of local expertise and traditional knowledge is of significant importance, particularly when it holds the potential to foster local economic growth. This is because creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation can be transmitted through generations can occur (Roper et al., 2017).

Women entrepreneurship

This research relates to a study conducted by Rahmawati and Kusuma (2019) on women entrepreneurs in the creative industries in Indonesia, including fashion, artisan, and culinary. In that study, women own businesses to maintain the family legacy that has already been established and to provide for their families (Rahmawati & Kusuma, 2019) thus this makes the family wisdom become the story behind the business establishment. An additional qualitative study supported the investigation of women entrepreneurs' experiences. This study demonstrates that entrepreneurial learning is a dynamic process that is influenced by the personal and social experiences that mostly related to the local wisdom of women entrepreneurs throughout their entrepreneurial journeys. Creative entrepreneurs distinguish their learning process through a high level of collaboration, sharing, and personal experiences (Abrar, 2004).

This study examines the relationship between local wisdom and female entrepreneurship. Previous studies have consistently shown that individual beliefs and values, which are integral components of

local wisdom, have a significant impact on entrepreneurial behavior (Hånell et al., 2020; Rahyuda et al., 2019; Urban & Ratsimanetrimanana, 2015). Urban and Ratsimanetrimanana (2015) developed a variety of conceptual models to elucidate the complex relationship between culture and entrepreneurship. This study identified ethnic group diversity as a significant influence on entrepreneurial desires. Individuals who demonstrate the ability to generate novel ideas, recognize favorable circumstances, and effectively utilize available resources to bring forth innovative outcomes are frequently associated with entrepreneurship (Stojcic et al., 2018; Zutshi et al., 2021). In addition, entrepreneurs show certain attributes, such as the capacity to see possibilities and generate creative ideas to develop a product.

The average number of businesses owned by women globally is 10%, although the scope of research on female entrepreneurship remains limited (Koçak et al., 2013). The involvement of women in economic development not only decreases poverty rates but also serves as a crucial underpinning for various sectors. Women are highly valuable resources with the capacity to alleviate poverty and foster development and security (Mouazen & Hernández-Lara, 2023). Moreover, women's economic and intellectual empowerment is a crucial factor in fostering societal and national growth. Although the creative industry offers numerous options, a significant number of women have yet to fully explore and capitalize on their strengths and potential within this field of work. The examination of ethnic and cultural influences on female entrepreneurship has gained attention in contemporary multicultural societies because it holds considerable importance for the local economy. In the previous literature, women exhibited greater relevance in subjects pertaining to ethnicity and culture within creative industries, such as fashion, handicrafts, art items, and culinary activities (Henry, 2009; Henry & De Bruin, 2011; Papadimitriou et al., 2022). Women entrepreneurs who show strong affiliation with cultural or ethnic items generally occupy positions within the fashion business. Therefore, emerging economies provide women with the chance to develop their entrepreneurial skills in industries related to cultural and ethnic products. Women's involvement in the creative sector also promotes social inclusion and gender equality by raising the profile and vibrancy of local culture. However, a number of obstacles can prevent this potential from being fully realized. There are multiple sources that provide evidence of the challenges that women usually encounter while initiating a business endeavour (Tabari & Chen, 2022). In many impoverished and conservative societies, many women opt for entrepreneurship because of necessity (Afza & Amir Rashid, 2009; França Marques et al., 2021). At this stage, women continue to encounter greater challenges than men when it comes to initiating their own businesses (Laguía et al., 2022). In recent studies, rural women influenced by their conditions such as age, education, motivation, personal characteristic and the ability in decision-making when conducting a business (Ghouse et al., 2021, 2023) Thus, the key to releasing the revolutionary potential of local wisdom, women's entrepreneurship, and the creative industries is to provide a conducive environment through capacity building, networking, and external supports. Evidence showed that external support including government support is crucial in helping women entrepreneurs to sustain and survive their creative businesses during Pandemic Covid-19. The supports involve the technology role, the collaboration, the government role, and strategic options (Anggadwita et al., 2023). Taking into account entrepreneurial and artistic orientation, networking, and creative personality, another finding indicates that women's business performance in creative industries is statistically significant. On the contrary, mentoring does not appear to have a statistically significant effect on the performance of women's businesses in creative industries (Papadimitriou et al., 2022).

Research method and design

Data

The data was obtained by individual and small-group interview. The size of the data is 36 participants. There were 34 female participants and two male participants who agreed to be involved and met the criteria of theoretical sampling in this study. The total sample size across all the locations was 36. The study areas covered West Java, Central Java, and South Kalimantan based on the number of population and the size of the area. The researcher visited those three provinces (several cities for each province) and utilized local network to locate all potential participants to be interviewed. All participants mostly run a micro-small business in separated area of Indonesia and several participants were coming from the

authority who played essential roles in this study, particularly in the data triangulation. Some participants, especially those who were from remote or rural areas, preferred to be questioned in small groups because they were reluctant to talk about themselves and the company for personal reasons.

Research paradigm

This study adopts an inductive research methodology that utilizes a qualitative approach. The implementation of the grounded theory strategy was driven by its appropriateness as a research method for exploring the varied characteristics of cultures and experiences (Dunne, 2011). Because of the grounded research strategy was considered appropriate for this study because of its capacity to explore diverse ethnicities and experiences. The methodology utilized in this study promotes active engagement of participants in articulating their unique experiences, particularly in relation to societal phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study applied a theoretical framework inspired by Charmaz's (2017) constructivist approach to fundamental philosophical research (Charmaz, 2017). The constructivism-based research method explains the facts, beliefs, and values that are found while collecting data. This, in turn, leads to explanations, assumptions, and interpretations that make sense based on what the people being studied say (Charmaz, 2017). In this methodology, researchers collaborated with participants to construct data collectively.

Before the data were collected, this study has obtained ethic approval from the Human Research Ethics Office Curtin University Western Australia with the Approval number: HRE2017-0454. The primary data collection included semi-structured interviews. All participants who stated their approval to participate in this study signed the consent form provided by the researcher before the interview was started. The interview were audio recorded as stated in the consent form, the data were securely stored and maintained in strict confidence.

According to Charmaz (2017), the purpose of conducting interviews in grounded research is to encourage exploration instead of interrogation. Hence, the interview questions were thorough in nature, focusing on the subject matter, and relevant to the participants' experiences. This study aims to investigate the potential of local wisdom by utilizing indigenous knowledge and examining its potential for development as a creative industry product.

The researchers identified study participants by using purposive or judgmental sampling, a homogeneous sampling method that focuses on a specific sub-group characterized by the similarity of all sample members, as suggested by Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (Etikan et al., 2016).

Secondary data were obtained from a range of local papers, archives, photographs, traditional arts, local heritage, and other relevant sources found within the research field. These secondary sources were used to verify and provide further support for the claims made by participants.

The participants had considerable experience in entrepreneurial endeavors, particularly within the creative industry, focusing on small and micro enterprises that specialize in traditional ethnic products. The researcher interviewed several government officials to ensure data triangulation, as previously mentioned. This exploration focuses on the role of entrepreneurship training and mentoring in the research area. This research applied a back-translation process to establish semantic equivalence between the English questions and their Indonesian versions. This methodology entails recruiting bilingual individuals who are native speakers of both the source and target languages. These people were responsible for translating the items from the source language into the target language, and subsequently translating them back into the source language. As a result, two versions of the instrument were generated: the original language version and back-translated version. In this research, a researcher fluent in the Indonesian language conducted the process of reverse translation with the support of the field coordinator, who is a native English speaker.

In research and professional settings, both individual and group interviews are common practices. Some participants indicated that engaging in group interviews was their preferred mode of participation. This aligns with the collective characteristics inherent in the Indonesian society. The interviews were systematically documented using an audio recording device to ensure that no statements were missed during the interview process. Prior to conducting the analysis, all interviews were transcribed. Interview durations varied between 60 and 90 minutes. The researcher identified and documented findings related

to local knowledge and creative product potential by analyzing participants' responses to specific inquiries. The researcher examined local wisdom alongside local products that embodied elements of local culture, rituals, symbols, and other significant characteristics.

Data collection and analysis were conducted concurrently, using a systematic methodology. The derived theory covers a collection of fundamental concepts organized through the process of integrating many categories. This form of data analysis involves three coding steps: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Williams & Moser, 2019) as illustrated in Figure 2. This study utilized open coding to record a variety of terms, quotes, statements, symbol, and gesture that were pertinent to the research topic under investigation. In this scenario, the responses of the participants to the research queries would be a collection of codes that were subsequently categorized into a variety of categories. The next stage involved the classification of groups that were associated with one another to analyze axial coding. During this phase, a theory began to develop as the categories were identified as the essence of the phenomenon, causal condition, strategies, or consequences. These categories were subsequently assessed and associated with each other. Finally, the selective coding phase was implemented, during which the researcher developed a narrative that clarified the process and the interrelationships between each category. This narrative served as a broader description of the theory, as suggested by Charmaz (2017). During the selective coding stage, the core categories are established to generate a theory that embodies the potential of local wisdom and can be applied by local women in a creative industry business in the area under study.

Findings

The female participants from Indonesia in this study indicated a collective society culture that emphasized the welfare of the group (or family) rather than individual desires. This condition confirmed a recent investigation that found women tend to be more comfortable in a collectivist society (Bastian et al., 2023). While a small number of participants mentioned business drive as a factor for their personal growth, most ascribed their decision to engage in entrepreneurial activities to the influence of their background and surrounding environment. Cultural diversity in Indonesia has a significant impact on the lifestyles of cultural communities that strive to preserve their traditional cultural practices.The majority of individuals residing at the three research sites exhibited strong adherence to traditional belief systems. The findings of the study indicate that while the increasing number of religious beliefs has an influence on customary practices, it does not inevitably eradicate long-standing traditions.

Research on these areas revealed remarkable creative products influenced by local wisdom, crafted by participants, and imbued with traditional values and purposes. Figure 3 displays the items derived from the local wisdom produced in the three designated study areas. As was stated previously, this study was carried out in three major provinces of Indonesia, of which two correlate to the two most populous regions in the country (Sundanese from West Java and Javanese from Central Java), while Borneo was selected as it represents as the largest island in Indonesia.

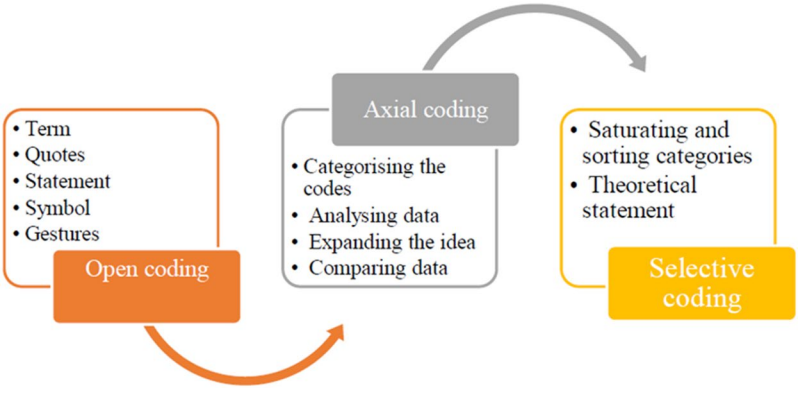

Figure 2. Coding analysis stages.

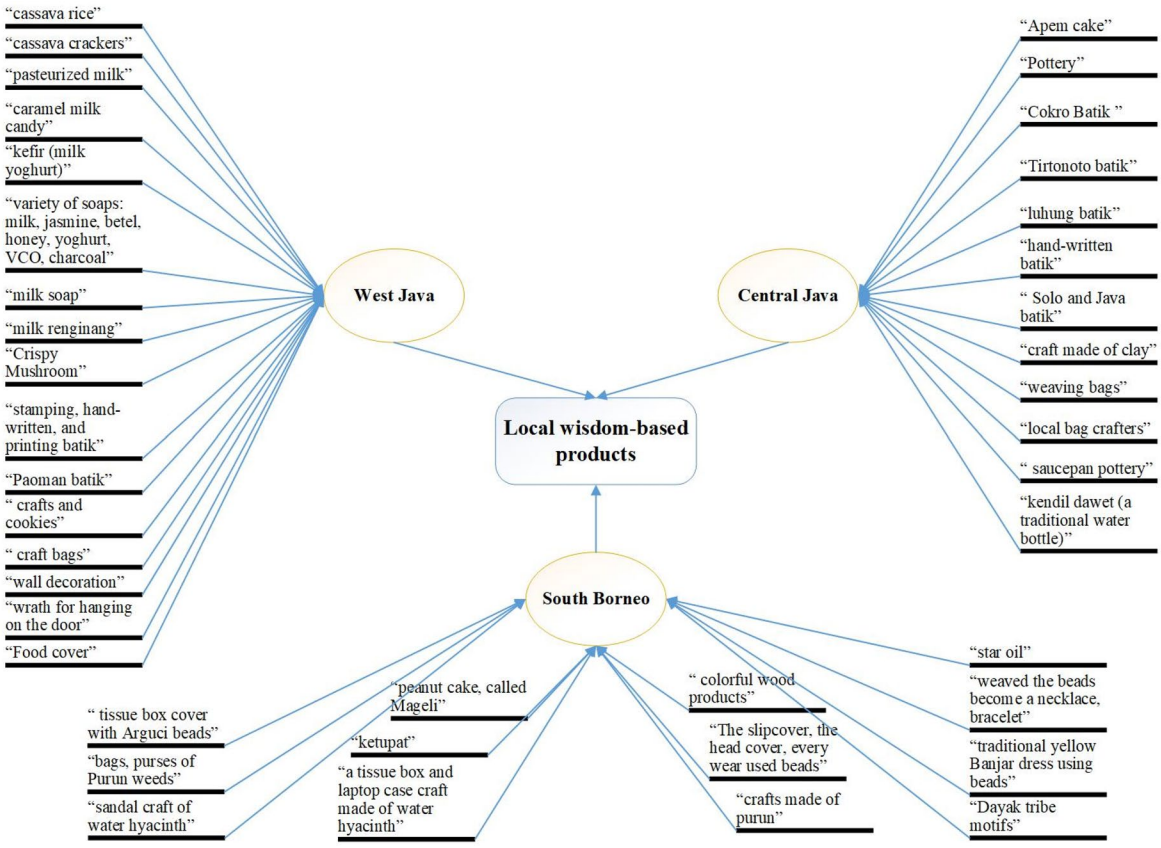

Figure 3. The local wisdom-based product.

Figure 3 demonstrates the distinctive goods inspired by local wisdom relevant to that field in three large areas in Indonesia. The area's natural resources influence the quality of the products produced. For instance, there are highlands in Central Java that have excellent clay that can be used to make pottery; in South Borneo, Purun, a swamp plant, is utilized for weaving sandals and pouches; in West Java, there is an abundance of agricultural and livestock products enriches this area with a variety of traditional food and drink products. Nonetheless, certain objects share commonalities, such as woven or painted fabric (called Batik) and crafts made with basic materials derived from wild plants. Therefore, each study location had both commonalities and unique characteristics in which the elements of local knowledge were identified.

At each research location, the participants consistently emphasized the interconnectedness between religion and culture. Consequently, many cultural practices have been assimilated into religious traditions, while others are considered incompatible with the prevailing religious norms. In multiple instances, it has been observed that some customs or ceremonies that were once deemed acceptable by society are no longer followed to prevent any infringement of religious norms. Nevertheless, there continues to be the production of art-inspired objects derived from this particular culture, which are intended for sale as souvenirs.

> WJ07: … I am personally disinclined to endorse any commemorative event that contradicts my personal convictions.

The integration of religious beliefs and cultural practices frequently leads to new rituals related to many celebratory occasions, including wedding ceremonies, thanksgiving festivities, baby showers, and the commencement of religious holy months. The traditions and festivities in question imply the requirement for material possessions or attire to facilitate ceremonial events. These innovative endeavors ultimately generate artistic outputs that are economically valuable to the tourism industry, potentially fostering a beneficial influence on the local economy.

Similarly, the people of South Kalimantan have shifted their view of Sasirangan batik from its traditional use in black magic healing rituals to its current status as fashionable clothing. Nevertheless, the community continues to acknowledge prior beliefs. According to SB05, certain batiks have therapeutic properties.

The historical use of Sasirangan batik initially revolved around its therapeutic properties in the treatment of various ailments. If individuals exhibit a preference for adhering to cultural practices when addressing ailments, utilization of the Sasirangan batik becomes vital.

> SB05: "Initially, Sasirangan batik was used for illness treatment. If the people prefer to treat any illness using our traditional custom, it will need that Sasirangan batik."

The preservation of specific traditions and cultural customs has significant sensitivity within the context of Indonesia. Nevertheless, the participants expressed that people residing in the study area exhibited strong resistance to leaving their customary practices. Consequently, people modify their conduct to reconcile customary and religious principles, thus promoting a harmonious relationship characterized by tolerance and acceptance. Local cultural traditions have a significant impact on royal customs in the city of Jogjakarta, located in Central Java. However, these cultural events have undergone modifications to align with the main faith of Islam in the region. A specific Islamic month was selected as the designated celebration day for multiple events. This commemoration includes customary food, enabling the integration of cultural and religious elements in a socially acceptable manner.

People residing in Central Java initially developed unique foodstuffs to satisfy customs and religious rituals. At present, many local women continue to engage in the production of these products, not merely for the preservation of cultural customs and religious rituals but also as local commodities marketed to tourists.

> CJ04: "we always have a tradition to create the event for Java day, we always participate by making Apem cake or Utun Bedeng. The Apeman celebration is usually celebrated in Maulud of Prophet Muhammad. So, there will be a whole village tradition to gather and make Apem cake then share it. The first Shura month celebration is also still celebrated. Since the Kadipaten is located around the Bedeng – a royal palace – so the tradition is still kept"

Furthermore, local wisdom is typically closely linked to specific seasons. For instance, in the city of Indramayu, located in West Java, the practice of trading written batiks between batik artisans and rice-field landlords predominantly occurs during the rice harvest season. During the harvest season, rice field owners generally see an increase in their financial resources and express an intense preference for purchasing handmade batik, which is widely regarded as a prestigious fashion product. The general public currently perceives handcrafted batik, as opposed to machine-produced batik, as a form of artistic expression that carries significant value and commands a high price in the market. Batik, a traditional textile art form, involves distinct strokes of paint and symbolic motifs that are meticulously painted into the fabric, thereby expressing profound meanings understood by the ethnic community.

In addition to the influence of history and culture, local wisdom serves as an inspiration for the development of distinctive ethnic products within traditional communities, which effectively embodies and demonstrates a unique local culture. Initially, these traditional products were limited to the regions of production. The local community depends on an increase in tourists to their area to support their economy through the sale of culturally valuable products as souvenirs.

Batik, renowned for its embodiment of local wisdom, is a prominent cultural artifact originating from Indonesia. A batik is a textile characterized by a variety of motifs, symbols, methods, processes, functions, and meanings. Batiks with unique names and distinct qualities may be found in nearly every region of Indonesia. Over successive lineages, the practice of batik, an ancestral craft, has been closely associated with cultural customs, religious systems, and the daily existence of individuals. The community's cultural practices and values typically shape the distinct connotations of the symbols employed in batik. Traditional royal culture significantly shapes batik production in regions like Central Java and South Kalimantan. In Central Java, where the local population holds a monarchy in high regard, this is particularly evident. However, the participants observed that people who currently purchase a product may not attribute the same level of significance to its original function.

CJ05: "Solo batik was created by the royal family; it has it is own rule from generation to generation. We are not allowed to change it; it should subject to the theme of the event. For example, Sidomukti batik is for a wedding ceremony. Well, it used only for the wedding ceremony; however, common people who live nowadays wear it as they want."

Compared to the batik traditions observed in Central Java and South Kalimantan, the batik produced in Indramayu, West Java, indicates a distinct absence of royal cultural influence. Livelihoods in this region primarily influence local wisdom, as evidenced by the themes present in batiks. Indramayu batik, also known as Paoman batik, began to develop in the early 15th century. However, the batik industry in this region began flourishing in the 1970s. During this time, a woman relocated to Indramayu and took the initiative to gather and preserve a comprehensive collection of locally produced batiks. This initiative aimed to empower the wives of the fishermen residing in the area. Indramayu is a prominent urban center with a significant history of maritime commerce, attracting a diverse array of settlers, predominantly comprising Chinese and Arab traders. The batik designs created by Paoman emphasized elements inspired by marine life, reflecting the artist's close association with the fishing industry through their spouse. The sustenance of the community has seen little shift across many generations, with the wives of fishermen continuing to produce written batik. This study's cultural heritage explains the distinctiveness of Paoman's batik motifs compared to those in other regions. The Paoman batik's themes have undergone minor modifications as a result of the influence of immigrant populations. However, their native environmental contexts, particularly the sea and coastal regions, continue to shape them primarily. Currently, Paoman batik encompasses a collection of over 120 distinct motifs, each imbued with a unique storytelling context.

WJ13. In 1970s, there was no printed batik; all were handmade [handwritten] batik … When we were celebrating Islamic holidays, such as the Maulid of the Prophet, usually there were fashion batik competitions. There was a time when I became a jury, and the participants must wear batik Paoman, not another batik, in order to make this batik famous.

Yogyakarta's royal tradition has significantly influenced the local population, fostering a culture that produces ethnic products among its members. One way in which they uphold cultural traditions involves encouraging the preservation and celebration of customary practices through the provision of traditional cuisine, artifacts, and attire for ceremonial occasions as well as the creation of clay-based household utensils. The residents of Yogyakarta reside in close proximity to a mountain that possesses abundant clay reserves, which serves as the foundation for their primary source of livelihood through the production of clay-based products as illustrated in Figure 4. The local populace believes that employing traditional clay utensils for the preparation of traditional cuisine or for the utilization of containers for drinking provides a distinct flavor when compared to modern cooking equipment.

In addition to conventional culinary practices, the women's communities in Central Java province engage in the production of handicrafts derived from coastal vegetation, alongside traditional crafts such as batik and clay crafts. Coastal plants provide the potential for unrestricted collection, yet require specific protocols for transforming them into diverse handicraft pieces, including but not limited to home decorations, bags, wallets, and other customary artifacts.

Similarly, South Kalimantan initially developed a variety of ethnic items for certain ceremonies or traditions, utilizing natural resources. The region is well known for its range of traditional products that embody rich local knowledge. These include the exquisite Sasirangan batik, delicate Arguci beadwork, carefully handmade Purun handicrafts derived from the wild swamp plant, and renowned traditional healing oil, also referred to as Bintang oil. Apart from the traditional products mentioned earlier, this region boasts abundant natural resources such as precious gemstones, crystals, diamonds, gold, and coal. Kalimantan, the largest island in Indonesia, is known for its indigenous population, particularly the Dayak tribe, which continues to thrive in the region to this day. South Kalimantan is home to a population of Dayak people. The research participants reported that the Dayak tribe utilizes Sasirangan extensively.

SB05: For the fashion item we have Sasirangan batik, for the craft we have Purun weeds craft and beads that inspired by the Dayak tribe, also mat craft that is made of rattan

Religion emerged as an important part of local wisdom and was frequently mentioned by participants. The study setting acknowledges the substantial influence of religion on financial factors, especially

Figure 4. The illustrative instance of a product that embodies local wisdom. *Source:* Author's personal document.

when it comes to business funding decisions. One example is related to the prevailing tendency among a significant proportion of participants who express hesitancy or outright refusal to approach banks to secure finance to advance their entrepreneurial endeavours, primarily due to religious convictions. In Islamic society, the concept of 'Riba' refers to the perception of high interest rates charged by banks, which is widely regarded as a significant transgression. Riba refers to an inequitable and exploitative advantage acquired through financial transactions or business activities, exemplified by the charging of interest on loaned funds. This practice has the potential to impose a burden on borrowers.

> WJ11: Actually I am not interested in borrowing [money]. … Because of Riba.
>
> SB02: Alhamdulillah, it is because this business is blessed … for me the important is as long as I get the blessing, better than I got unblessed money

However, a minority of participants who were open to borrowing from banks believed that they were not eligible to secure loans due to a range of limitations, such as their lack of necessary business documentation. Various sources, including local governments, academics involved in community service programs, and local entrepreneurs, have so far provided business support to participants. This support includes training, supply of resources for production processes, and access to marketing facilities such as exhibitions organized at different venues.

Figure 5 presents a visual representation that demonstrates the connections between local wisdom and the creation of products, which lead to economic value items. This process is beneficial for a group of local women as it enables them to earn extra income. This study involved participants who created a range of products including attire, traditional foods, and handicrafts. These products were not solely intended for ceremonial or traditional purposes, but also intended to respond to the diverse needs of tourists visiting the area. The transformation of products initially intended for local consumption into commodities presents an opportunity to enhance welfare and local economic development.

In modern times, because of the widespread use of Internet-based technology, people residing in different geographical regions have a comprehensive understanding of the attributes of various products. Therefore, they can introduce innovative ethnic products from different locations to alternative marketplaces, frequently capitalizing on the opportunity to sell these goods at elevated prices. A wide range of products is available in both domestic and global markets. Several products that have demonstrated successful marketing efforts in international markets involve handicraft items originating in South Kalimantan. Notably, an agent effectively engaged in the procurement of handcrafted bags manufactured from wild swamp plants in large quantities, then exported them to foreign destinations. In another area, a reseller facilitated the transportation of traditional food originating from West Java to Singapore. The Indonesian government has sponsored a worldwide exhibition of art and craft, prominently

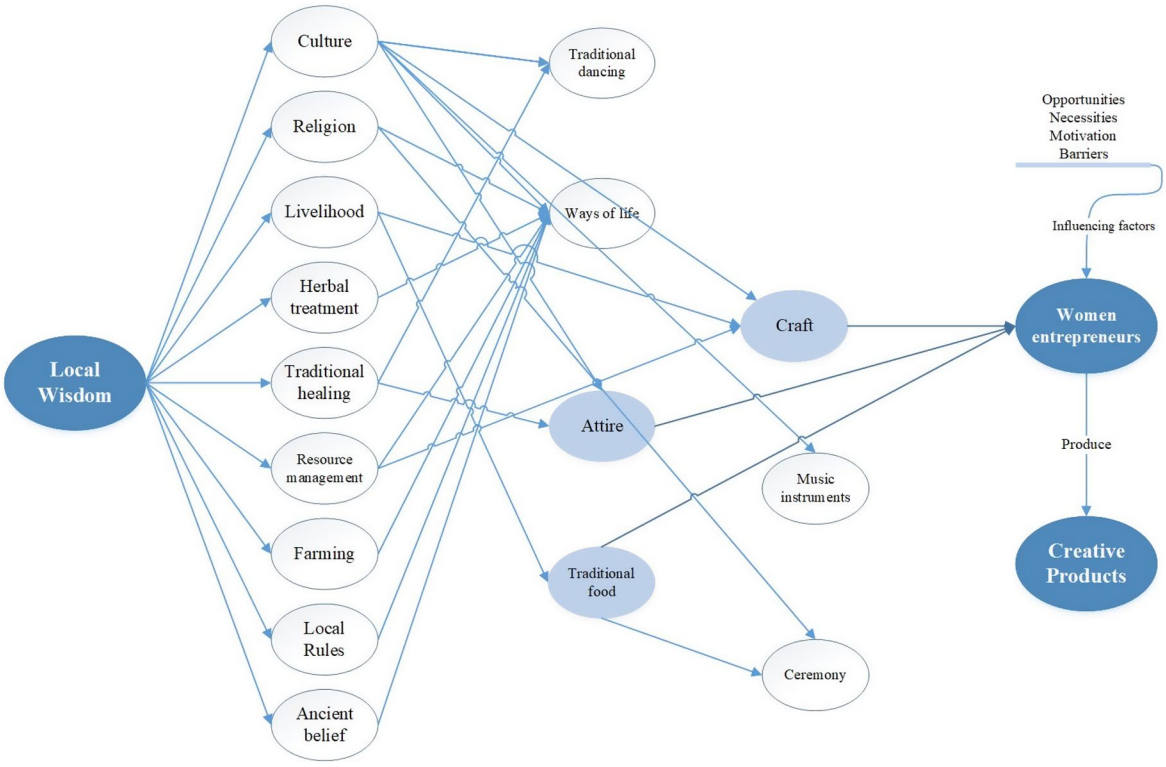

Figure 5. The integration of local wisdom elements for the development of creative products.

showcasing the Paoman batik from West Java. Nevertheless, many participants in these marketplaces rely on assistance from other parties to facilitate the sale of their products. They encountered challenges in promoting their items. The investigation uncovered numerous factors related to their limited marketing acumen. Nevertheless, a consistent issue among all locations was their unwillingness to change their lifestyle or relocate in pursuit of enhanced prospects for business expansion. The presence of conventional gender norms and expectations raises challenges for promoting and selling products across different geographical locations.

The persistent challenge of addressing the barriers experienced by women in business remains a significant endeavor, especially when these challenges are associated with local wisdom within their respective communities. In South Kalimantan, participants expressed a tendency to easily sense gratitude towards their present income and showed satisfaction with the existing economic circumstances despite the lack of significant improvements for a long time. In addition, these women demonstrated a preference for residing in their hometown. Furthermore, these women tend to select a life partner who originates from and resides in the same geographical area after marriage. This phenomenon is also observed at different locations, wherein it becomes apparent that women in local communities continue to preserve traditions by engaging in the production of creative products. These activities serve not only as a form of livelihood for these women, but also as a means of cultural preservation. Therefore, we can attribute the continuous existence of Indonesian wisdom to this element. The majority of participants in this study indicated that their business activities were a side job that generated extra income. Current social values in Indonesia, which assign the role of breadwinner to husbands in the family, influence this pattern of behaviour.

Based on the analysis and research findings, as depicted in Figure 6 above, we can conclude that five primary factors, rooted in local wisdom, shape the decisions participants make to start the production of creative products. These factors include (1) the religious or belief system currently embraced by the participants, (2) long-standing traditions that have been experienced for generations, (3) the predominant livelihoods prevalent in the location, (4) the availability of local resources that are utilized as the main inputs for crafting ethnic products, and (5) the participants' consideration of potential barriers that may interfere with the process of product creation.

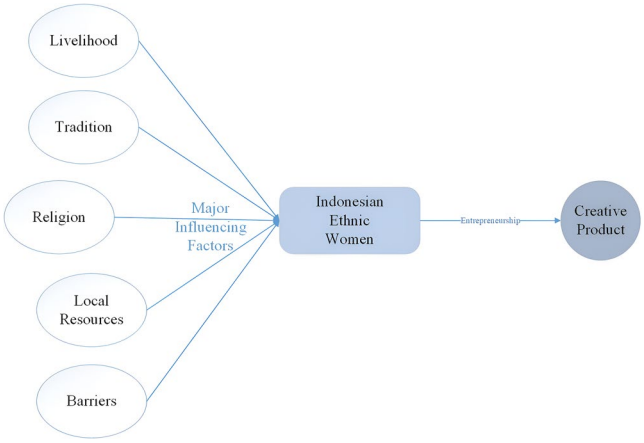

Figure 6. Five primary factors of local wisdom in shaping the creation of products.

Discussions

The development of Indonesian wisdom is strongly associated with the spread of diverse cultures, traditions, natural resources, and religions throughout the country. Currently, Indonesia acknowledges the existence of six officially recognized religions: Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Each religion and culture includes distinct rituals and customs typically observed during specific ceremonial events. The presence of ethnic and cultural traditions in Indonesia has spanned several centuries.

According to the findings, local wisdom has a significant role in shaping individuals' perceptions of their lives and also impacts how a community utilizes its local resources. No study specifically addresses the significant role of local wisdom in the development of the creative industry in Indonesia, despite numerous studies examining culture and local wisdom in Indonesia, including those exploring the connection between local wisdom and creative industries.

Local wisdom identified in this study was characterized as encompassing beliefs, habits, and traditions that are deeply embedded in the lives of community groups and manifest in a variety of activities. Recent studies have confirmed this fact through a range of literature sources (Arsal et al., 2023; Rahiem, 2018; Roper et al., 2017). The activities covered in this study included rituals, religion, work, livelihoods, traditional medicine, entertainment, and traditional food. Several researchers have explored and documented these activities (Arsal et al., 2023; Jati, 2014; Rahiem, 2018; Roper et al., 2017). During the data analysis phase, a resilient category emerged, providing a comprehensive depiction of the concept of local wisdom, particularly in relation to the advancement of creative products by women within the local community. This study found five pertinent elements related to the utilization of local wisdom in establishing entrepreneurial enterprises, along with the necessary requirements for further enhancing their potential. The five elements encompassed in this study were tradition, religion, livelihood, local resources, and barriers.

The participants' strong commitment to upholding traditional community culture led to a prevailing preference for adapting to reduce the effects of modernity on their lives. People meticulously weave cultural values into the creation of ethnic products. Modernization had a minimal impact on the livelihoods of the people involved and the nature of their product creation. Despite their willingness to accommodate customer preferences, these entities continue to engage in conventional business practices and uphold their local knowledge and cultural values. The present findings validate the arguments made by Rahyuda et al. (2018, 2019) on the impact of cultural preservation on the extent to which the public embraces novel products introduced to them. Individuals immersed in a specific culture tend to consider the merits of changing their cultural practices, rather than accepting new businesses based on traditional items that could potentially transform their cultural environment. A study in a research setting characterized by robust and deeply ingrained cultural practices similarly observed this phenomenon. Hence, the government faces a problem in its efforts to modernize enterprises rooted in traditional products, as the majority of participants in the study express a preference for aligning their products with tradition rather than pursuing adaptation in the opposite direction.

Culture, as a part of tradition considered a local wisdom, is recognized as a potent instrument for promoting local development. The idea corroborates the findings of this study, which demonstrate that the creative products made by local women hold a marketable worth due to the cultural values ingrained in the products. The majority of participants asserted that their customers initially visited their place as tourists in search of ethnic products that authentically represented the local identity as souvenirs.

This research investigation aims to provide valuable insights into the potential of women entrepreneurs, specifically in terms of their knowledge of local opportunities and their level of entrepreneurial determination. This study will provide thepolicymaker with further information to enhance their current small business empowerment initiatives. The investigation revealed gaps and challenges in the government's program. This study has effectively identified the primary elements of local wisdom that impact women leading them to become entrepreneurs. No existing literature was discovered pertaining to the local knowledge element of Indonesian women. Prior research has mostly examined the indigenous knowledge included in a specific product or process, rather than the overall activities that are the subject of this study. Furthermore, the identification of local potential in specific areas of Indonesia can serve as a successful approach to enhance the growth of ethnic products into globally recognized and competitive creative products.

The research findings, as a practical contribution, led to the provision of specific action suggestions. The participants in this study reside in a community that strongly adheres to their cultural values and ideas. The findings of this study indicate that several critical components of local wisdom have a substantial impact on women entrepreneurs in the creative industry. The government should specifically design financial assistance programs for women entrepreneurs to capitalize on these factors. Grants and subsidies for innovative products that are built in local wisdom, as well as microfinance and small business loans that provide low-interest rates and flexible repayment plans, could be included in these programs. Furthermore, it is important to establish capacity through frequent workshops and classes that emphasize financial literacy, digital skills, business management, and marketing strategies. Providing valuable guidance, support, and networking opportunities, mentorship programs that connect experienced businesswomen with new entrepreneurs can be organized.

Additionally, marketing and promotion assistance could prove significant. Therefore, the government should encourage the creation of traditional events such as a flower festival, batik festival, traditional craft festival, or traditional food festival. These activities have the potential to attract more visitors and contribute to the sustainability of small businesses, particularly in the creative industry. Regularly organizing such events will significantly influence numerous other economic activities. By facilitating women entrepreneurs' participation in trade fairs and expos, both locally and internationally, they can connect with potential buyers and investors, obtain exposure, and showcase their products. Furthermore, the creation of e-commerce platforms and online marketplaces that primarily feature products produced by women entrepreneurs can facilitate the expansion of their customer base and exposure. In addition to the development of co-working spaces and business incubators that offer affordable workspace and shared resources, providing access to technology and digital tools that enhance productivity, such as affordable internet services and training on the use of these technologies, can further support their endeavours.

It is necessary to establish policy frameworks that prioritize the participation of women entrepreneurs in decision-making processes. This includes the provision of tax incentives, the reduction of bureaucratic obstacles, and the creation of a business-friendly regulatory environment. Public support and policy changes can be achieved by initiating advocacy campaigns to increase awareness of the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and their contributions to the economy. Given that many participants have identified the government's engagement as a crucial aspect, the government needs to establish specific policies that promote the growth of micro and small businesses. Government programs' finances should have more flexibility in addressing the immediate requirements of the participants' businesses. To address the community's potential resistance to engaging with government officials, it is crucial to establish a dedicated communication channel that directly connects government authorities with business owners. This channel should offer various communication options such as landlines, text messaging, or internet-based social media. Furthermore, the government should employ specialized personnel tasked with documenting and regularly updating information on all local industries with potential

and creativity. It is crucial to maintain a strong and beneficial partnership between the government, entrepreneurs, academics, and companies to ensure that each side benefits from their respective roles.

The limitations

The study's limitations include the comparatively small number of participants interviewed, which may not provide a comprehensive representation of the actual situation. Note that the researchers conducted this study at three specific locations in Indonesia. As a result, it is critical to conduct additional research covering various fields in which women produce goods based on indigenous knowledge systems. This study should expand the research to encompass a wider range of creative industry sector enterprises. Also, additional investigation is required to verify, through consultation with the appropriate parties, whether the suggested solutions outlined in this study are endorsed and attainable. This study could use a quantitative methodology to gauge their support for the concepts aimed at promoting creative businesses in the region.

Conclusion

This study aims to identify the essential elements of local wisdom that influence Indonesian women entrepreneurs in three provinces of Indonesia, inspiring them to engage in entrepreneurial activities. This study identified the relevant elements that relate to the utilization of local wisdom in forming entrepreneurial activities, and the necessary conditions for further enhancing potential. These elements include tradition, religion/belief, livelihood, local resources, and barriers. Prior to this research, there was a lack of existing literature specifically addressing the local wisdom and practices of Indonesian women in relation to business. Remarkably, the participants' subjective experiences suggested that they enjoyed comparable rights to their partners while bearing the responsibility of caring for the home and child-rearing. This issue does not provide a significant challenge for the individuals in question, as they see their business activities as an opportunity to balance their household and work responsibilities. It is important to acknowledge that although the participants in this study were exposed to significant cultural and religious influences throughout their lives, no gender-related concerns were reported.

People often view the decision to pursue self-employment as providing participants with flexibility, allowing them to balance their responsibilities and foster the growth of their own businesses. Nevertheless, the level of entrepreneurial dedication exhibited by the participants did not consistently reflect their aim of optimizing the environment for their business. Many expressed contentment with their current accomplishments. The participants demonstrated a state of satisfaction and hesitated to step beyond their established boundaries. However, these women have many opportunities to foster business growth.

The long-term sustainability of a business depends on external support. Support manifests in the form of ethical or intangible assistance. The participants in this study discussed the involvement of other parties in their business operations. This demonstrates that the presence of support from external entities is an additional factor that contributes to entrepreneurial success.

This study demonstrates that the integration of local wisdom related to cultural traditions, beliefs, and the use of local resources (including the natural environment) facilitates the production of creative ethnic products with significant economic potential for further development. These findings can serve as a foundation for developing an effective strategy focused on increasing the development of ethnic products into globally innovative and competitive commodities, thereby making a significant contribution to Indonesia's general economic development.

To improve the support for women entrepreneurs, it is essential to establish policies that encourage the growth of micro and small enterprises in the creative industry. This entails acknowledging the distinctive cultural contributions of women entrepreneurs and incorporating them into more comprehensive economic development strategies. Government programs should be designed to be flexible, and able to accommodate the diverse requirements of women entrepreneurs in various sectors and regions.

In addition, a comprehensive support network can be established by building strong partnerships among government, entrepreneurs, academia, and private companies. This collaborative approach guarantees that women entrepreneurs receive comprehensive support, including access to financial resources,

markets, and networking opportunities, as well as capacity development. The potential of women entrepreneurs can be completely realized by focusing on these practical measures, which will make a substantial contribution to the economic development of both the local and national communities.

Authors contributions

The authors (MI and LL) affirm that we were both actively engaged in the conception and design of the study, the analysis and interpretation of the data, as well as the drafting of the paper. Both authors contributed substantially to writing the manuscript critically for intellectual content. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work conducted in this study, and MI has the role as corresponding author in this article.

Disclosure statement

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [MI], upon reasonable request.

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