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Revitalization of Dompu Traditional Industry as a Pillar of Creative Economy Based on Local Culture

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the potential for revitalizing traditional industries in Dompu Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, as a pillar of creative economic development based on the local culture "Ngaha Aina Ngoho", which means the spirit of working and loving the homeland. The research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques with traditional industry players, local artisans, traditional leaders, and local governments. Secondary data were obtained from regional policy documents, economic statistics, and cultural studies. The findings show that various conventional industries such as weaving, woven crafts, local food processing, and performing arts have high economic potential and artistic value, but are hampered by lack of market access, limited production technology, and minimal regeneration of young artisans. This study recommends a revitalization strategy through synergy between cultural preservation, design innovation, creative entrepreneurship training, and integration of digital technology for marketing.. This revitalization not only revives the local economy but also strengthens the cultural identity of the Dompu community in the flow of globalization.
Keywords: *Traditional Industry; Creative Economy; Dompu; Local Culture; Ngaha Aina Ngoho.*

INTRODUCTION

In the era of global economic transformation, the revitalization of traditional industries has become an essential strategy to promote inclusive and sustainable development in rural regions. For areas rich in cultural heritage like Dompu Regency in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), Indonesia, traditional industries offer not only economic potential but also cultural preservation. Dompu is known for its deep-rooted local philosophy, Ngaha Aina Ngoho, which translates as "work hard and love the land." This philosophy embodies the community's resilience, diligence, and commitment to local development. However, despite this cultural strength, many traditional industries in Dompu are struggling to survive in a rapidly modernizing world.

Historically, Dompu has had vibrant traditional industries such as weaving, wood carving, pottery, food processing, and conventional herbal production. These industries were passed down through generations and played significant roles in the social and economic lives of the people. The increasing dominance of mass production, urbanization, and the decline of local interest in traditional crafts have placed these industries under threat. The younger generation is often more attracted to urban employment and digital careers, leaving traditional knowledge

unpreserved.

Furthermore, the traditional industries in Dompu face multiple challenges, including outdated production techniques, limited access to modern markets, lack of branding, and minimal support for product innovation. These issues are further exacerbated by the lack of integrated Government policies to sustain local craftsmanship. The creative economy paradigm offers a promising framework for reviving traditional industries. Defined as an economy that bases its value on creativity, intellectual property, and cultural heritage, the creative economy emphasizes the fusion of tradition and innovation.

By aligning traditional industry development with creative economy principles, Dompu can create new economic opportunities while preserving and rebranding its cultural heritage. Such a strategy is particularly relevant for achieving regional development goals aligned with Indonesia's vision of a resilient local economy. Global best practices show that the integration of culture-based industries with design thinking, digital marketing, and sustainable tourism can significantly improve the livelihoods of artisans and local entrepreneurs.

In this context, revitalizing Dompu's traditional industries is not merely an economic issue; it is a cultural mission. Strengthening Ngaha Aina Ngoho through enterprise can become a symbol of resilience and pride for Dompu's society. This study explores how traditional industries in Dompu can be revitalized as pillars of a sustainable creative economy. The research identifies core challenges, available potentials, and strategic interventions needed for regeneration.

The study adopts a qualitative approach that combines interviews with traditional artisans, local leaders, and Government stakeholders, along with a review of existing regional economic data and policies. Several successful initiatives from other regions in Indonesia and abroad are also considered to provide comparative insights. These models inform recommendations tailored for the cultural, economic, and geographic context of Dompu.

One of the critical dimensions of revitalization is education. Encouraging young people to engage with traditional industries through vocational programs, design innovation, and entrepreneurial training can stimulate sustainable succession. Another vital aspect is digitalization. In the digital era, access to online markets and digital storytelling about heritage products can help reposition traditional crafts as modern and desirable commodities.

Moreover, collaboration between the Government, civil society organizations, and private sector actors is key to creating an enabling ecosystem. Joint platforms for financing, capacity building, and marketing must be developed to support this vision. At the cultural level, campaigns that elevate the identity and pride associated with Ngaha Aina Ngoho can rekindle community ownership and motivation to sustain their cultural industries.

This paper also investigates how creative hubs or cultural centers can act as catalysts in rural creative economy development, by serving as incubators for ideas, art, and enterprise. The synergy between tourism and traditional industries is another strategic pillar. Cultural tourism in Dompu, if well-curated, can become an avenue for artisans to reach global markets without leaving their villages.

Revitalizing traditional industries is a long-term process that requires policy consistency, intergenerational engagement, and flexible innovation. It is not about restoring the past but reimagining a culturally-rooted future. In summary, the introduction sets the stage for understanding the urgency, opportunity, and

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pathways for reviving Dompu's traditional industries as a core component of its creative economy transformation, rooted in the philosophy of Ngaha Aina Ngoho.

The knowledge part also becomes one with “Literature Review” The concept of traditional industries refers to economic activities based on ancestral knowledge and local skills, often passed down through generations. According to (UNESCO, 2013), traditional industries contribute to cultural sustainability and social identity while providing employment in rural regions. In Indonesia, traditional industries such as batik, tenun, ukiran kayu, and kuliner lokal have played a crucial role in regional development (Pranowo, 2019). However, many of these industries face decline due to modernization, market competition, and lack of innovation.

The creative economy, as defined by (Howkins, 2001), is an economic system where value is derived from creativity, cultural expressions, and intellectual property. It encompasses sectors such as art, design, fashion, heritage, and digital media. Combining traditional industry with creative economy strategies has proven effective in many developing countries. The research from UNCTAD (Creative Economy Report, 2022) emphasizes the potential of cultural and creative sectors to drive inclusive growth in rural and underserved areas.

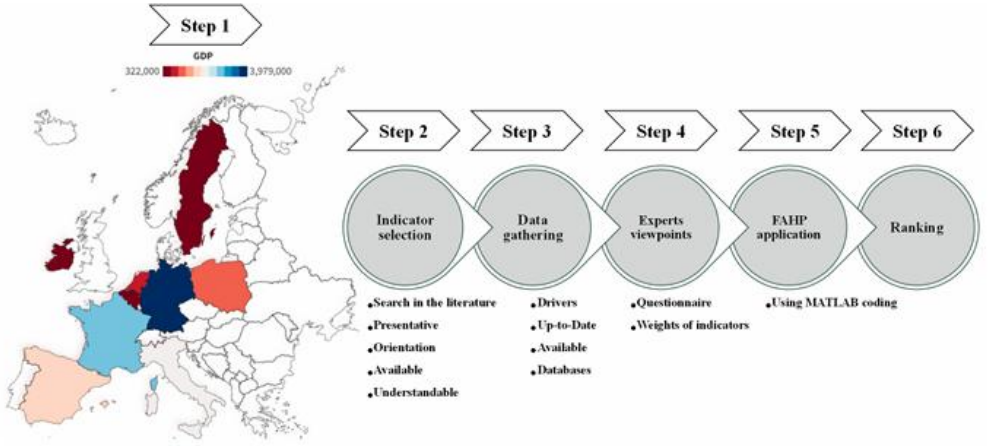


Fig 2.1 Sustainable industry assessment indicators in developed countries in Europe (Shoeib, 2023)

The Indonesian government recognizes the creative economy as a strategic sector for national development. Based on the Presidential Regulation No. 72 of 2015, the creative economy must integrate local wisdom, digital technology, and sustainable practices. Kuota Dompu, with its cultural philosophy Ngaha Aina Ngoho, holds a unique position in promoting creative industries rooted in tradition. This value system emphasizes diligence, land-based loyalty, and cultural pride qualities that can underpin sustainable enterprise development.

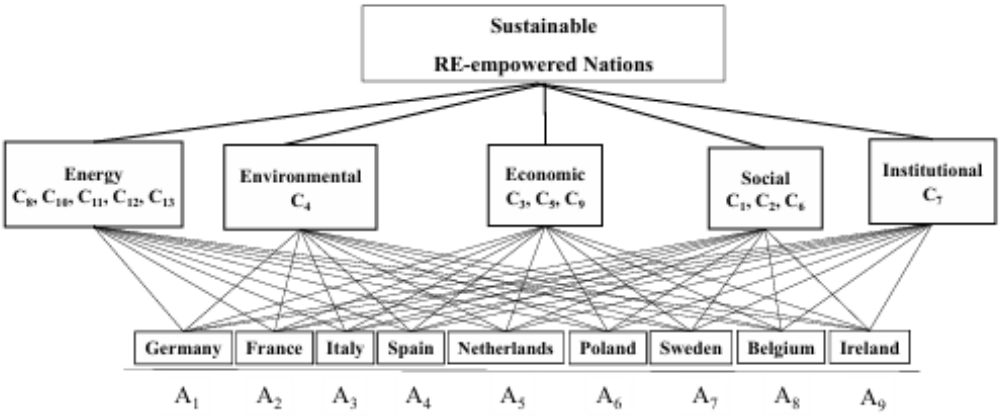


Fig 2.2 Alternative countries in sustainable industry using renewable energy (Shoeib, 2023)

Several studies show that traditional industries in rural areas often lack access to finance, training, and technology (Dhewanto & Novianti, 2017). These barriers hinder productivity and competitiveness in both domestic and international markets. The revitalization of traditional industries requires a multidimensional approach. According to theory (Porter's, 1990), the competitiveness of regional industries can be enhanced through collaboration among businesses, governments, and academic institutions.

Cultural identity plays a vital role in economic revitalization. Research by (Richards and Wilson, 2006) states that place-based cultural industries can differentiate regions in a globalized economy and attract both investment and tourism. A study by (Sari et al. 2020) on weaving communities in East Nusa Tenggara found that design innovation and online marketing significantly increased artisans' income and expanded their customer base.In the context of youth engagement, (McRobbie, 2016) highlights the importance of cultural entrepreneurship training that blends traditional values with modern business acumen to prevent knowledge extinction.

Another key area in the literature is the use of digital platforms. Platforms like Etsy, Tokopedia, and Instagram have enabled rural artisans to enter broader markets, as shown in a study by (Purwani & Astuti 2021). The preservation of intangible cultural heritage, such as language, rituals, and oral traditions, is also part of revitalization. The synergy between material production and intangible elements strengthens brand authenticity and emotional connection with consumers (Smith, 2006).

Green economy integration is increasingly relevant in traditional industry discourse. Using sustainable raw materials, reducing waste, and promoting circular practices can enhance environmental responsibility and consumer trust (UNEP, 2020). Government policy support is a determining factor. A case study in Yogyakarta (Wibowo, 2018) showed that local government involvement in facilitating workshops, certifications, and market linkages accelerated the revival of batik home industries.

The role of cultural centers or creative hubs has emerged as an important theme in the literature. These spaces provide production facilities, training,

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exhibitions, and collaborative opportunities for artisans and youth (Rohman, 2022). Tourism-based development is also widely cited. A study in Bali found that integrating traditional performances and craft villages into tourism itineraries increased local economic participation while enhancing cultural awareness (Sudarma, 2017).

However, researchers also caution against over-commercialization. Excessive market adaptation may dilute traditional values, leading to cultural commodification rather than empowerment (Cohen, 1988). The literature agrees that revitalization efforts must be rooted in local participation and intergenerational knowledge transfer. Without community ownership, top-down programs tend to fail or produce unsustainable results (Chambers, 1997).

In summary, existing studies suggest that successful revitalization of traditional industries especially in regions like Dompu requires a combination of cultural sensitivity, economic innovation, digital enablement, and policy support, all rooted in the local context and value system such as Ngaha Aina Ngoho.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, which is appropriate for exploring the socio cultural, economic, and institutional aspects surrounding traditional industries in Dompu. The methodology is designed to understand the lived experiences of artisans, community leaders, and local stakeholders involved in traditional industry, and to examine how cultural values like Ngaha Aina Ngoho shape their participation in economic activities.

The research design used is a case study, focusing specifically on Dompu Regency as a bounded system. This allows for an in-depth exploration of phenomena within their real life context (Yin, 2014). The study uses a triangulation strategy, combining three main data sources: primary field interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. This approach enhances the validity and credibility of the findings.

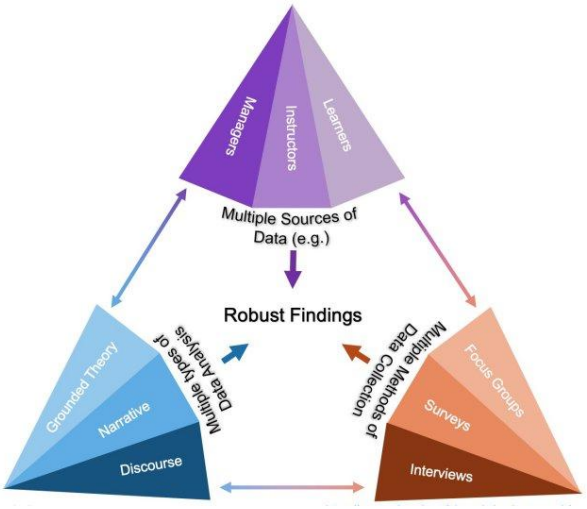


Fig 3.1 Triangulation strategy method

Primary data collection was conducted through semi structured interviews with 20 informants. They include local artisans (weavers, food processors, craftsmen), cultural leaders, youth representatives, government officials, and

NGOs involved in cultural and economic development. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, with selection criteria including: (a) active involvement in traditional industry, (b) minimum 3 years of experience, and (c) willingness to participate and share insights openly.

Interview questions focused on key themes such as: (1) the current state of traditional industry, (2) perceived challenges and opportunities, (3) the role of culture and community, and (4) needs for innovation and revitalization. Interviews were conducted in the local language (Dompu-Samawa) and Bahasa Indonesia depending on the preference of the participant. Each interview lasted between 45 to 90 minutes and was recorded for transcription with participant consent.

In addition to interviews, direct observations were carried out in production spaces, community workshops, and cultural events. These observations helped contextualize the findings and uncover nuances not always captured in interviews. Field notes were taken to document social interactions, the condition of workspaces, production tools, product designs, and community dynamics during cultural events such as Muna Towa and Pesta Panen.

Secondary data included policy documents from BAPPEDA Dompu, publications from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, local economic development plans, and archival records on Dompu's cultural traditions. Data analysis followed thematic analysis procedures as outlined by (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Transcripts were coded manually using both open and axial coding to identify patterns, contrasts, and emergent themes.

The analytical process moved through six stages: (1) familiarization with the data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) searching for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. Key themes that emerged included: (1) cultural pride and decline, (2) youth disengagement, (3) market barriers, (4) the need for design innovation, (5) institutional fragmentation, and (6) resilience through local values.

Validation of the data was conducted using member checking, where participants were invited to review the summaries of their interviews to confirm accuracy and provide clarification if needed. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and pseudonyms were used to protect identities in published results.

The research also followed reflexivity principles. The researcher's positionality as an external observer with regional knowledge was critically reflected to minimize bias and increase cultural sensitivity in interpretation. The study encountered several limitations, such as geographic access to remote villages and scheduling challenges due to participants' farming/livelihood routines. These were addressed through flexible fieldwork planning.

The study period lasted for three months, from June to August 2025. Fieldwork was supported by a local community organization that helped facilitate entry and rapport building with artisans and elders. Ultimately, this methodology was designed not only to gather data, but also to empower participants by making them co-producers of knowledge. It aligns with the spirit of Ngaha Aina Ngoho, where knowledge is shared through work, storytelling, and community solidarity.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Current State of Traditional Industry in Dompu, West Nusa Tenggara

The research revealed that traditional industries in Dompu particularly weaving (**tenun**), herbal medicine preparation (**jamuan kampo**), bamboo crafts, and local food processing are still active but operate with limited economic scale and low market visibility. Artisans expressed deep pride in their crafts, associating them with cultural identity and family legacy. However, most traditional practices are inherited informally, without structured training or documentation, resulting in loss of technique among younger generations.

The philosophy of 'Ngaha Aina Ngoho' was consistently mentioned by participants as a moral foundation. It motivates persistence and quality craftsmanship but is seldom translated into modern business strategies or entrepreneurial action. Most artisans rely on manual, non-mechanized tools. This lack of modernization leads to slow production, irregular product quality, and difficulty meeting bulk or export demands. Market access emerged as a critical constraint. Artisans typically sell their products in weekly markets (pasar mingguan) or through middlemen, with little knowledge of branding, packaging, or e-commerce.

Youth participation in traditional industries is alarmingly low. Many young people view these crafts as outdated and unprofitable, preferring to migrate to urban areas for formal employment or digital gig work. Several artisans acknowledged the negative stigma associated with rural craftsmanship, indicating that revitalization must begin with changing perceptions and creating aspirational narratives around local industry.

On the positive side, respondents showed openness to innovation, particularly in product design, coloring techniques, and storytelling-based marketing, provided that external interventions respect cultural values. Government support is perceived as fragmented and inconsistent. While some training programs exist, they are often short-term and disconnected from follow-up support or market linkages.

Discussions with officials from the Office of Industry and Trade (Disperindag) indicated that while budgets for creative economy development are available, coordination among departments (culture, education, tourism) remains weak. A few local initiatives, such as "Pasar Budaya Dompu" and school-based weaving workshops, showed promise but lacked continuity due to leadership changes and funding limitations.

Respondents emphasized the need for creative hubs or community centers that offer not only training and workspace but also exposure to design trends, digital marketing, and youth engagement. Digital literacy remains low among older artisans, though some younger family members assist in uploading products to platforms like Facebook Marketplace and Shopee, albeit sporadically and informally.



Fig 4.1 Muna Pa'a weaving craftsmen in Dompu district

4.2 Perceived Challenges and Opportunities

Observational data confirmed that product design stagnation is a significant issue. For example, many woven products still use 1990s patterns, making them less appealing to contemporary consumers. However, opportunities exist in eco-tourism integration, where tourists can visit artisan villages, participate in workshops, and purchase cultural souvenirs. This model has succeeded in similar regions like Ende and Lombok Timur.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Issues and Opprotunities in Dompu

Aspect	Challenges	Opportunities
Production	Manual tools, low output	Potential for low-cost mechanization
Market Access	Local only, middlemen dominated	E-commerce, tourism markets
Youth Involvement	Low interest, skill erosion	Creative education, digital engagement
Cultural Identity	Erosion due to migration	Strong community pride and philosophy
Design	Outdated, limited variation	Design collaboration with professionals

The findings also suggest that Ngaha Aina Ngoho can be reinterpreted as a branding concept positioning Dompu's products as handcrafted with integrity, heritage, and cultural resilience. Comparative analysis with literature shows alignment: similar challenges such as generational gaps, market marginalization, and weak policy support have been documented in other rural creative economies globally.

However, Dompu's unique cultural capital, combined with community pride and emerging local champions, presents a strong foundation for grassroots-driven

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revitalization. Strategic interventions must focus on three fronts: (1) cultural revalorization through education and tourism, (2) economic scaling via design and market access, and (3) digital transformation for visibility and operational efficiency.

One major challenge is limited access to capital. Artisans report difficulty obtaining loans from banks or cooperatives due to lack of collateral, credit history, and formal business licenses. Access to markets remains highly localized. Without strong supply chains or logistics infrastructure, many artisans cannot scale their products or expand into urban or international markets.

Aging artisans and generational gaps pose sustainability issues. Youth are generally disinterested in traditional crafts, associating them with poverty and a lack of future prospects. Skill erosion is real. With few apprenticeships or formal training, key knowledge such as natural dye processing or loom operation is at risk of disappearing in the next decade.

However, several opportunities are emerging. Dompu's growing interest in eco-tourism could be linked with traditional craft demonstrations, hands-on workshops, and sales to tourists. There is also increasing national and international demand for authentic, handmade, and sustainable products especially from consumers who value ethical production and cultural stories.

Technology offers a gateway to new markets. Even basic digital marketing via WhatsApp, Instagram, Tiktok, or Facebook Marketplace could allow artisans to reach regional or national buyers. Artisan cooperatives are beginning to form in some villages, although these remain few and often under-resourced. With support, they could facilitate bulk production, collective branding, and market access.

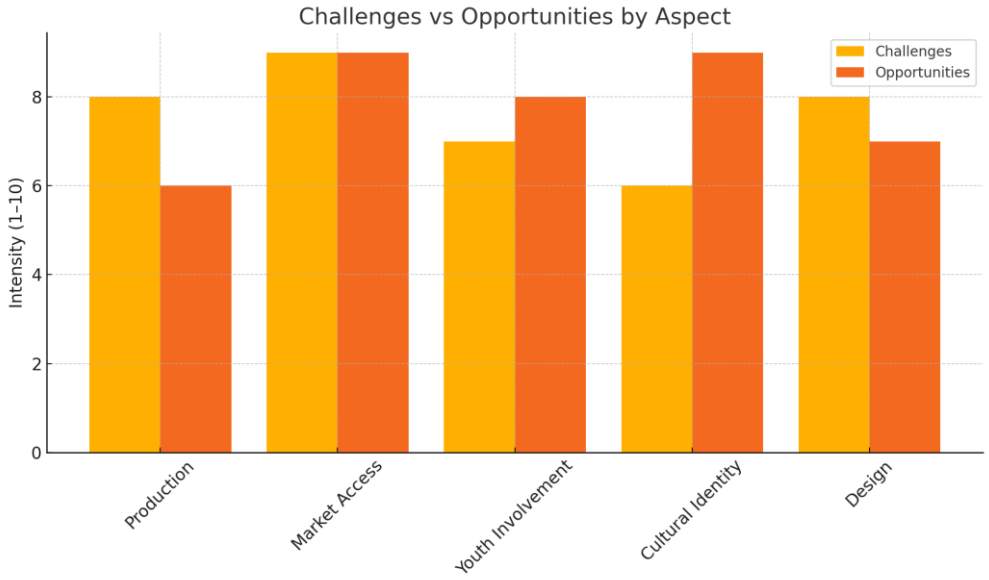


Fig 4.2 Challenges vs Opportunities by Aspect

Regional pride and identity offer leverage. When positioned properly, products from Dompu could carry the “Ngaha Aina Ngoho” ethos as a unique selling point, emphasizing integrity, endurance, and love for the land. In short, while traditional industries face serious structural barriers, there are emerging windows of opportunity that can be harnessed with the right combination of investment, innovation, and institutional support.

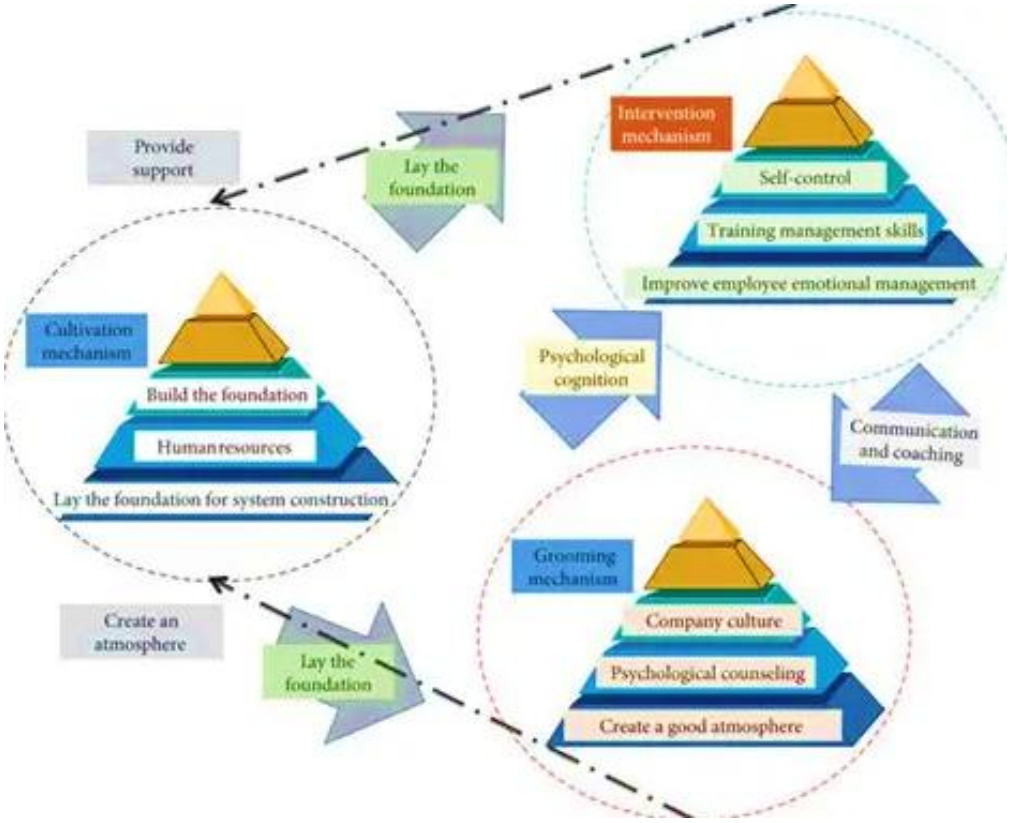


Fig 4.3 Revitalization of traditional Dompu industry using the triangular method

4.3 The role of Culture and Community

The philosophy of Ngaha Aina Ngoho which emphasizes hard work, community cooperation, and connection to the land is deeply embedded in the daily lives of Dompu’s artisans. It acts as a moral and cultural compass. This cultural ethos strengthens resilience among artisans. Despite market pressures, they continue to work with pride and patience, seeing their crafts as part of ancestral obligations and spiritual identity.

Community plays a vital role in sustaining traditions. Weaving, food processing, and medicinal practices are often performed in family or neighborhood groups, fostering intergenerational bonds and informal learning. Local festivals and ceremonies also help preserve traditional industry. Events like Muna Towa provide platforms for showcasing crafts and reinforcing collective memory around cultural practices.

Religion and Adat Dompu (customary law) intersect with artisan life. Many

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crafts are made for ceremonial purposes, giving them sacred status. This protects some aspects of tradition from complete erosion. However, community-based value systems are under pressure. Migration, digital distraction, and the commercialization of daily life reduce the time and energy available for traditional participation.

The community structure also affects gender roles. While women are central to craft production, they often lack visibility in leadership or market negotiation, reinforcing economic inequality. The absence of youth engagement weakens community cohesion around traditional industry. Without generational transfer, entire skills and stories risk being lost in just one cycle.

Still, there is community interest in revitalization if it brings dignity and prosperity. Elders express hope that their traditions can adapt and survive through collaboration with younger generations and outside support. In essence, culture and community are both the foundation and future of traditional industry in Dompu. Any revitalization effort must start with the community, work with its rhythms, and honor its cultural priorities.



Fig 4.4 Muna Pa'a weaving carnival at Dompu Fashion Week

4.4 Needs for Innovation and Revitalization

Innovation is essential to make traditional industries economically sustainable while maintaining cultural integrity. This includes product design, marketing, materials, and digital adoption. Product innovation must begin with understanding market trends. Introducing new colors, patterns, and utility (e.g., weaving for fashion or decor) could attract younger, and urban consumers.

Design thinking should be integrated into artisan workshops. Co-creation between local artisans and professional designers can result in culturally rich yet commercially viable products. Branding is a major gap. Few products carry labels, stories, or certification. A place-based brand such as “Ngaha Aina Ngoho Craft” could create recognition and pride in origin.

E-commerce platforms offer tremendous potential. Training artisans or their

family members in smartphone photography, pricing strategies, and social media can dramatically increase visibility.Innovation in tools is also needed. While preserving handcraft values, introducing semi-mechanical looms or safe dyeing facilities can improve efficiency and reduce fatigue.

Business model innovation, such as establishing rural creative cooperatives or community-based business incubators, can help distribute resources and risks more equitably. Institutional partnerships with universities, NGOs, and tourism boards can bring technical expertise and long-term mentoring for artisan groups.

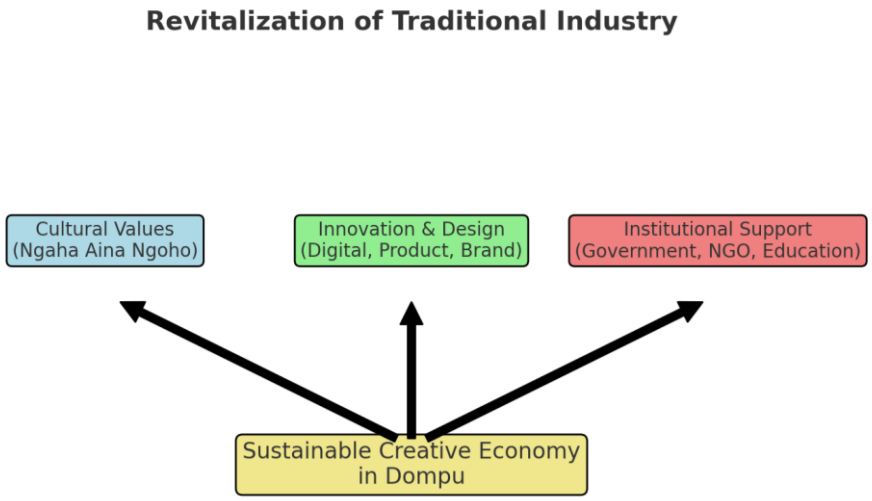


Fig 4.5 Revitalization framework of traditional industry in Dompu

Innovation should also extend to education. School curricula that include local heritage, craft practice, and entrepreneurship can foster pride and future participation among youth. Ultimately, revitalization is not about copying urban business models but crafting context-sensitive innovation that respects local rhythms, builds on Ngaha Aina Ngoho, and sustains community resilience through creative adaptation.

In conclusion, the revitalization of Dompu's traditional industries is not merely an economic project but a cultural renaissance rooted in Ngaha Aina Ngoho a reminder that local wisdom, when connected with innovation and inclusive policy, can become the engine of sustainable creative economy development.

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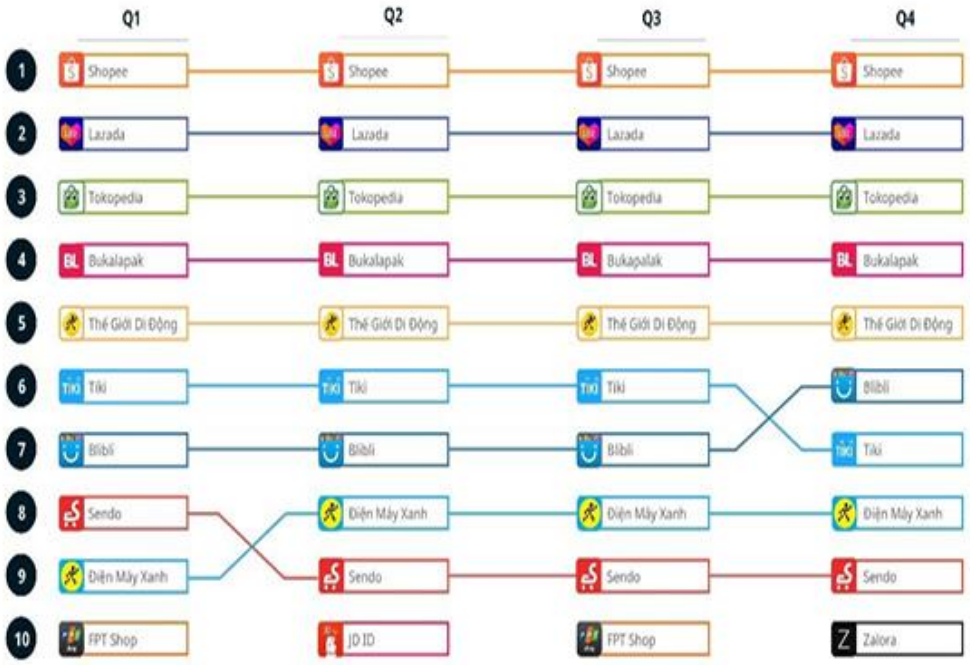


Fig 4.6 List of e-commerce to increase industrial revitalization in Dompu

Conclusion & Recommendation

This study set out to examine the revitalization of traditional industries in Dompu Regency, NTB, through the lens of local cultural values particularly Ngaha Aina Ngoho and how they intersect with the development of the creative economy. The findings confirm that traditional industries in Dompu are rich in cultural heritage but economically underdeveloped, facing persistent challenges in technology adoption, generational sustainability, market access, and policy alignment.

Despite these limitations, there remains a strong foundation for revival: the deep-rooted pride in craftsmanship, the moral and cultural anchor of Ngaha Aina Ngoho, and the willingness of artisans to adapt if given proper support.The revitalization of these industries must be understood as both a cultural mission and an economic strategy where the preservation of tradition becomes a competitive advantage in the era of creative industries.

A key insight from this study is that cultural values, such as diligence, respect for the land, and intergenerational solidarity, can be powerful drivers of sustainable entrepreneurship when framed within contemporary development frameworks. However, these values must be translated into action through structured programs that engage youth, integrate technology, and strengthen identity while ensuring economic relevance.

The absence of integrated support structures has hindered the growth of Dompu's traditional industries. Government interventions, while present, are often fragmented and disconnected from long-term vision and community ownership. To bridge this gap, a multi-stakeholder approach is necessary one that involves local

government, cultural institutions, educational centers, NGOs, and private partners in co-designing revitalization strategies.

Recommendation

First, it is recommended to establish Creative Industry Hubs in Dompu that serve as incubators for artisans and youth. These hubs should offer space for innovation, product testing, branding workshops, and marketing support. Second, cultural entrepreneurship training must be developed in partnership with vocational schools and universities. This can facilitate knowledge transfer while inspiring young people to value traditional skills as viable career paths.

Third, policy frameworks must prioritize long-term funding mechanisms, possibly through village-level budgets or regional development banks, to ensure continuity of artisan activities and innovation pipelines. Fourth, the integration of digital platforms is critical. Training in e-commerce, photography, and content creation should be provided to increase visibility and enable artisans to directly access markets across Indonesia and beyond.

Fifth, the branding of Dompu's traditional products should center around the narrative of Ngaha Aina Ngoho framing these goods as not only handmade but also rooted in philosophy, integrity, and environmental respect. Sixth, product innovation must be encouraged, not through cultural disruption, but through collaborative design that honors tradition while responding to contemporary consumer demands.

Seventh, community-based cultural tourism programs can be leveraged to drive demand while building local awareness. Tour packages that include artisan workshops, cultural performances, and storytelling tours can generate new income streams. Eighth, a public awareness campaign targeting Dompu's youth can help reposition traditional industries as modern, respectable, and profitable. This campaign should involve local influencers, schools, and social media.

Ninth, gender inclusion must be considered. Many artisans in Dompu are women, and revitalization must ensure they have equal access to training, leadership, and decision-making opportunities. Tenth, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be institutionalized, allowing stakeholders to track progress, share lessons, and adjust strategies dynamically based on community feedback.

In the broader national context, Dompu can serve as a model for rural creative economy development showcasing how local wisdom, when embraced as policy and practice, can foster resilience, identity, and prosperity. In closing, revitalizing traditional industries in Dompu through the cultural lens of Ngaha Aina Ngoho is not simply about saving old practices. It is about crafting a future where tradition and innovation walk hand-in-hand, shaping an economy that is proudly local, creatively dynamic, and socially just.

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