

Creative Economy as a Shaper of Innovative Business Characteristics: Business Analysis of People with Disabilities at Ida Modiste

Gyda Orvala^{1*}, Rizkiyana Permatasari², Ratih Pratiwi³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Wahid Hayim, Semarang, Indonesia

***Corresponding email: Gydaovl@gmail.com**

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Abstract. This study discusses how the creative economy can shape the characteristics of innovative businesses in disabled entrepreneurs in Ida Modiste, Semarang. This study aims to analyze the role of the creative economy in supporting independence, innovation, and the development of entrepreneurial character of disabled entrepreneurs. The method used is a qualitative approach with observation techniques and in-depth interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of the internal dynamics and character of the business run by the owner of Ida Modiste as a person with disabilities. The results of the study show that Ida Modiste does not only focus on product innovation, but also on empowering people with disabilities, creating creative, inclusive, adaptive, and socially oriented businesses. This business empowers people with disabilities by providing training, creating a supportive work environment, while strengthening economic independence. The conclusion of this study is that the creative economy is not only a means of economic empowerment, but also forms the characteristics of innovative, inclusive, and adaptive businesses.

Keyword : Creative Economy; People with Disabilities; Business Characteristics; Ida Modiste

INTRODUCTION

The “Merah Putih Cooperative” program, which was officially launched through Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2025 and Circular Letter No. 1 of 2025 from the Indonesian Ministry of Cooperatives, is a major national effort to strengthen the rural economy through cooperatives. The Red and White Cooperative is designed not only as a savings and loan business unit but also as a distribution center for agricultural products, local goods, including crafts and creative products of the community, thereby promoting the well-being and economic independence of rural areas based on the creative economy (Barowa PPID, 2025). The creative economy has evolved into one of the key pillars of global economic growth, focusing on creativity, innovation, and the utilization of technology, offering promising opportunities for inclusive economic growth, including for people with disabilities. The creative economy is a concept aimed at realizing economic development based on creativity (Purnomo, 2016). Rather than relying solely on natural resources or physical labor, this economy is based on ideas, knowledge, and innovation to create economic and social value. People with disabilities often face challenges in accessing conventional job opportunities.

In accordance with Law No. 8 of 2016, which serves as the primary legal basis for equal rights for persons with disabilities and non-disabled persons in Indonesia (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2019). With a commitment to inclusive development, Indonesia has a great opportunity to integrate persons with disabilities into the creative economy ecosystem. Participation in the creative economy can provide persons with disabilities with opportunities to enhance their economic independence, self-esteem, and social integration. A creative economy run by a person with disabilities will inevitably have

distinct business characteristics. Certain characteristics are essential for entrepreneurs to succeed in their ventures. According to Ezzel (2019) in (Dwiastanti & Mustapa, 2020), the characteristics of entrepreneurs that are internal factors determining business success include: having a high level of enthusiasm, a desire to innovate, always taking responsibility to the best of one's ability, a desire to achieve, and the courage to take risks. Meanwhile, according to Hendro (2011) in (Sitinjak, 2021), a successful entrepreneur is one who can endure all limitations, leverage, and enhance their ability to market (not just sell) opportunities effectively, and continuously build a reputation that drives the company's growth.

In 2045, Indonesia will celebrate its 100th anniversary of independence, known as "Indonesia Emas 2045" (Golden Indonesia 2045). By that year, Indonesia is expected to have achieved its goals and prosperity and to be leading in various fields of life. To that end, there is a great need for the creation of jobs through social entrepreneurship (sociopreneurship). One concrete example of the integration between the creative economy and the empowerment of people with disabilities as sociopreneurs can be seen in micro-enterprises like "Ida Modiste," which has been in operation since 1966. As a sociopreneur, Hidayah Ratna Febriani has successfully become an entrepreneur who not only produces unique clothing based on local designs but also creates inclusive work spaces for people with disabilities. Such initiatives reflect the synergy between the values of the creative economy and entrepreneurial development, and can serve as a model for community-based inclusive economic development.

According to research (Maulana & Yuliani, 2023), future research should expand its focus to specific areas in Central Java, where MSMEs are still surviving and growing. Meanwhile, in the study (Rinaldi, 2023), based on existing research, there is a need for more empirical research on the impact of training on people with disabilities to enhance their skills and competencies in the creative economy within SMEs in Central Java, specifically in Semarang, particularly the Ida Modiste SME in the fashion sector.

That's why it's super important to dig deeper into how people with disabilities can actively contribute to the creative economy. This active involvement not only shows a spirit of inclusivity, but it can also drive innovation and build entrepreneurial character that's full of enthusiasm, responsibility, and the courage to take risks. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding the role of people with disabilities in the internal dynamics of creative businesses and their influence on entrepreneurial characteristics. By examining the real-life experiences of entrepreneurs who employ individuals with disabilities, this study aims to provide new, relevant perspectives for the development of inclusive labor policies and strengthen the creative economy as a fair and open sector.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of the role of the creative economy in shaping the characteristics of innovative businesses at Ida Modiste, a business run by people with disabilities. A qualitative approach is a research approach that focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through the collection of descriptive data (Somantri, 2005). This approach was chosen because it is able to explore the meaning, perceptions, and internal dynamics experienced by business owners. The research was conducted at Ida Modiste, Jl. Medoho Raya No.61, Sambirejo, Kec. Gayamsari, Semarang City, Central Java. Data was collected through observation and in-depth interviews with people with

disabilities who are actively engaged in entrepreneurship in the creative economy sector and understand the characteristics of Ida Modiste's business. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to allow flexibility in exploring relevant information. The data will then be collected and analyzed qualitatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of an interview with Mrs. Hidayah Ratna Febriyani, owner of Ida Modiste, a service-based business, show that creative economy practices are not only carried out in the context of production and marketing, but also in the aspect of social empowerment, especially for people with disabilities. In this interview, the researcher explored three main focuses: the creative economy dimension, the empowerment of people with disabilities, and the characteristics of innovative businesses.

1. Creative Economy as a Driver of Business Innovation

The creative economy at Ida Modiste is driven by the use of social media as a source of design innovation and as a marketing tool. Ida herself actively utilizes internet technology, such as Pinterest and Instagram, to adapt fashion designs and models to current market trends. This aligns with (Sutriyanti, 2023) who states that the economic value of a product or service in the creative era is no longer determined by raw materials or production systems as in the industrial era, but rather by the utilization of creativity and the creation of innovation through the advancement of technology. The use of modern production technologies such as embroidery machines, high-speed sewing machines, and wolsum also demonstrates the adoption of technological innovation in the production process.

In the field of marketing, the use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and Google Reviews demonstrates openness to technology as part of a creative economy strategy. In this creative economy landscape, Ida Modiste highlights crucial elements such as innovation, technology, and market orientation. The 1998 monetary crisis proved that Ida Modiste not only survived but also thrived during that time. This reinforces the argument that the creative economy can serve as an adaptive solution amid global economic crises, as mentioned in the literature (Romarina, 2016).

2. Empowering People with Disabilities as the Core of the Business

Ida Modiste is not only profit-oriented, but also focused on empowering people with disabilities through recruitment and training of people with disabilities as employees. The training is conducted within the disability community and is led directly by Mrs. Ida. Ida Modiste has employed three people with disabilities, including two deaf people and one person with intellectual disabilities. This demonstrates a shift from conventional business models toward social entrepreneurship, where business is operated as a means to empower the community. Training methods are implemented gradually and tailored to each individual's abilities, with family involvement to ensure balanced support at home and in the workplace. Communication is facilitated through sign language and lip reading, reflecting the tangible form of an inclusive workplace environment.

3. Characteristics of Innovative Businesses: Inclusive, Adaptive, and Social.

Ida Modiste demonstrates the characteristics of innovative businesses built on three main foundations:

- **Inclusivity:** Inclusivity is reflected in the fact that people with disabilities are part of the core of Ida Modiste. This business provides space for people with disabilities

to develop and work on an equal footing with non-disabled people. A family-based work system and mutual support among employees create a safe and supportive work environment, especially for employees with disabilities who require non-conventional approaches.

- Adaptability: Innovation is also evident in the flexibility of the work training model, tailored to the individual needs of each person with disabilities. Not all employees are immediately ready to work; some require up to two years of training before they can work independently.
- Socially-based: Ida has made her business not only an economic tool, but also a form of social responsibility towards her community. This marks the orientation of the business not only towards profit, but also towards the process of developing inclusive human resources (HR).

Creativity is also evident in the approach to product personalization, where Ida Modiste not only follows fashion trends but also tailors each design to the needs and characteristics of the customer. The kebayas crafted by Ida Modiste are known for their comfort and perfect fit, highlighting user comfort as the primary selling point. From ordinary customers to prominent figures in Central Java such as Ganjar Pranowo and his wife, Atikoh Ganjar, all find the garments from Ida Modiste to their liking. Over time, Ida Modiste's customer base has expanded beyond local areas or the island of Java, reaching beyond the island and into international markets, including Australia, Japan, and the United States. This demonstrates that the quality, comfort, and inclusive values championed by Ida Modiste are widely accepted, even in the international market.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the creative economy plays a crucial role in shaping the characteristics of innovative businesses capable of addressing social challenges while driving economic growth. Through a case study of Ida Modiste, it was revealed that the utilization of creativity, digital technology, and an understanding of market trends enables this business to be adaptive and highly competitive, even capable of penetrating international markets. Furthermore, Ida Modiste practices an inclusive business model by empowering people with disabilities as an integral part of the production process. The approach of training and mentoring from the ground up, combined with a family-based work system, creates a supportive and humane work environment. This shapes a business character that is not only profit-oriented but also focused on social values and empowerment. Thus, Ida Modiste serves as a concrete example that the creative economy not only produces innovative products but also has the potential to create widespread social impact, strengthen business identity, and inspire the development of entrepreneurship based on diversity and inclusion.

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