

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ATTACHMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE KNITTING INDUSTRY IN TANJUNG ENIM

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Abstract This study aims to analyze the socio-economic embeddedness in the development of the knitting creative industry in Tanjung Enim, which is supported by the CSR program of PT Bukit Asam. The research employed a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving knitting artisans and CSR representatives, then analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The results show that the knitting creative industry has developed as a form of creative economy based on social collaboration, yet it remains dependent on external support from CSR Bukit Asam in terms of mentoring, training, and marketing. Based on Granovetter's embeddedness theory, the relationship among artisans reflects relational embeddedness through trust, norms, and solidarity, while structural embeddedness is evident in the role of CSR as the main facilitator. The development efforts of the knitting industry are directed toward enhancing human resource capacity, product innovation, and expanding social networks and markets to achieve independence and sustainability as a competitive creative economy.

Keywords: socio-economic embeddedness, knitting creative industry, community empowerment, CSR bukit asam,

I. INTRODUCTION

The creative industry in Indonesia is currently growing rapidly. This can be seen in several regions in Indonesia, which certainly makes the creative industry very promising for development in Indonesia. Exports from the creative industry in Indonesia are increasing every year. There are several factors behind the growth of the creative industry, including (1) a high level of creativity, (2) technology as a supporting factor for the creative industry, (3) social media as a platform for promoting creative industry products, and (4) marketplaces, which serve as platforms for buying and selling products through electronic media. (Wisudawati, 2021). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Trade (2009), the creative industry is an industry that originates from the utilization of creativity and skills based on individual talent to create prosperity and employment opportunities by producing and empowering individual creativity and inventiveness. Currently, the creative industry in Indonesia is one of the contributors to the country's economy. (Setiawan, 2020).

The creative industry is integral to the creative economy, and the two are interrelated. Currently, the creative economy, particularly in the tourism sector, plays an important role in Indonesia's economy. In 2020, the creative economy sector contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 1,157.00 trillion and exports worth 16.90 billion US dollars. This has not only impacted economic growth but also

created job opportunities for the younger generation, absorbing 19.01 million workers. (Syahbudi, 2021). The contribution of the creative industry to Indonesia's national economic growth based on data from the central statistics agency over the last six years has been quite significant. According to BPS data from 2018, the creative industry sub-sector contributed 7.44 percent to gross domestic product (GDP), 14.28 percent to employment, and 13.77 percent to exports. The creative businesses that contributed the most based on the data were culinary, fashion, and crafts, amounting to 8.2 million. (Limanseto, 2021).

The creative industry is currently one of the sectors with great potential to support the economy, open up business opportunities, and strengthen local cultural identity. However, at present, many creative industry players still face obstacles in dealing with various challenges, especially those related to social and economic aspects. Many of the problems faced by artisans include limited business capital, a lack of marketing skills, failure to keep up with technological developments, and limited capacity for innovation. In general, Indonesia lags behind other ASEAN countries in terms of innovation. (Wuryaningrat, 2020).

The creative industry currently exists within the community. This is evident in Tanjung Enim, located in the operational area of the state-owned mining company PT Bukit Asam. PT Bukit Asam, through its Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR) division, facilitates the community in the creative industry sector as part of its social responsibility towards the surrounding community. Bukit Asam's CSR facilitates this by providing an industrial center (SIBA Center) to support community empowerment activities. Currently, there are 10 industrial centers that have been established and are being utilized as centers for creative industry development activities, including SIBA Rosella, Bukit Asam Coffee, Garment Manufacturing, Carpentry, Nursery, Fisheries, Bonsai, and Fashion (batik, songket, and knitting). (Aries, 2020).

Knitting crafts are part of one of the creative industries that is growing in the Tanjung Enim community and has the potential to be developed to promote local products amid the proliferation of imported products that are currently in high demand by the general public. The creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is known as SIBA Rajut, which is one of the CSR programs of PT Bukit Asam. SIBA Rajut was initially formed at the end of 2018 with 45 members participating in the initial training. SIBA Rajut is still under the guidance of Bukit Asam's CSR program, but only 15 active members remain. The existence of SIBA Rajut is not as well-known as other creative industries that are also under the guidance of Bukit Asam's CSR program, such as SIBA Batik, SIBA Songket, SIBA Kopi, and SIBA Rosella.

SIBA Rajut was established a long time ago and continues to exist today, making various efforts to develop SIBA Rajut so that it continues to grow and will never disappear. As in previous studies related to batik creative industry development strategies, Bukit Asam's CSR program provides significant support to the batik industry and provides training to artisans to improve the quality of human resources. (Solihan et al., 2022). Another strategy implemented by Bukit Asam CSR for the development of the creative industry is conducting comparative studies in other regions to broaden knowledge and acquire new insights, as well as conducting monthly training sessions. (Afifah, 2023).

The formation of the Tanjung Enim creative knitting industry group has created opportunities to increase community income. In addition, the formation of this knitting group can also increase solidarity among fellow members of the knitting group. Well-functioning social relationships will eventually form networks called social networks. Social networks are groups consisting of three or more people, each with their own identity, who are connected through existing social relationships. (Nasdian, 2015). In the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, relationships are formed not only among group members but also with PT Bukit Asam's CSR program. These relationships also create opportunities to share knowledge, expand business networks, and build a sense of shared ownership of the program's success. Thus, CSR involvement not only strengthens economic aspects but also strengthens social bonds among members of the artisan community and the wider community.

The relationship between knitting industry groups and companies is inseparable, with the relationship between the two parties governed by regulations that regulate such relationships. When knitting industry groups enter into

cooperation agreements and are designated as companies' CSR partners, an industrial relationship governed by agreed policies and regulations is established. Based on this, knitting groups are essentially entitled to receive assistance in the form of facilities and other support for their activities. Companies are obliged to provide or facilitate the continuity of creative knitting industry activities.

Based on initial observations, knitting production is still entirely handmade, so it takes a long time to produce a finished product and the price is also expensive compared to factory-made knitted products that are popular among the public today, resulting in a lack of public interest in purchasing them. The limited ability of knitting artisans to find new innovations and identify opportunities to attract public interest is also one of the problems faced by SIBA Rajut.

Other problems encountered by SIBA Rajut are that knitting is not widely known among the general public. SIBA Rajut seems to be neglected by the team that developed it, and is rarely exposed compared to other creative industries that have been developed. Unlike the batik creative industry, which is always featured at every event, the knitting industry is rarely seen. This is what causes the creative knitting industry to seem to be stuck in one place. Knitting marketing is also very limited, with artisans only able to rely on sales through companies and demand at certain times. These artisans have limitations in using social media as a promotional medium because they do not really understand how to use the available technology. Therefore, this research is important to ensure that the knitting creative industry does not disappear and can develop in line with other creative industries.

The use of the concept of embeddedness proposed by Granovetter (1985) in this context is considered relevant. Attachment is an economic action that is socially situated and attached to the personal social networks that exist among actors. All forms of economic actions and social decisions made by an individual are not only driven by economic motives, but also by social networks. Economic behavior is always related to social structures, such as family, friends, or work colleagues, which can influence an individual in making economic decisions. This is not only done to obtain profit, but also based on norms and trust in social networks.

Several studies related to social embeddedness have previously been conducted by (Sari et al., 2021) Regarding the cohesiveness of farmer groups, the results show that the cohesiveness of the Punai hill group has created a network of social relationships based on tribal ties and friendships. The actions and behavior of farmers in the group create economic value in the form of trust, information sharing, and joint problem solving in distributing their fish farming products. In addition, the study Ren, 2021 shows that the attachment of an institution is a way to improve their ability to accumulate transnational social capital and strengthen their socio-economic networks with China.

Hajar (2018) about the Phenomenological Study of Community Attachment. The results show that the PSB unity was formed because of their similar backgrounds, originating

from the same foundation and having the same profession as entrepreneurs. (Chotimah et al., 2024) Regarding the Analysis of the Relationship Between Garden Owners, Workers, and Middlemen. The results show that the relationship between them occurs because of trust and network ties, which then lead to business relationships. This good relationship also affects the surrounding conditions, and the interactions between them in cultivating garden grass play a role in environmental conservation efforts, namely by protecting and preserving nature.

Some of the previous studies have discussed the social and economic attachment of several economic actors. Although there are some similarities, there are also differences, whereby the research to be conducted will focus on social and economic attachment in development efforts in the creative industry sector, particularly creative knitting in Tanjung Enim.

However, the development of the creative industry in Tanjung Enim is not as imagined. In fact, developing this knitting industry is not easy. Knitters face challenges from both economic and social aspects. Knitting groups still have limited access to markets and technology. Amidst the increasingly advanced global development, the knitting industry must also be able to compete with the proliferation of factory-made knitted products, which are more attractive in terms of price and design and keep up with the times. In addition, the success of the knitting industry also depends on the social and economic networks and connections between members of the knitting group and the community, as well as relevant stakeholders.

For the sustainability of businesses in the creative knitting industry, appropriate and relevant strategies are needed so that CSR programs not only provide temporary assistance but also continue to support the independence of creative knitting industry groups. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify and gain a deeper understanding of the economic and social ties that are formed in efforts to develop the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive type and case study strategy to explore in depth the socio-economic attachment and development strategies of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. The main data in the form of words and actions were obtained through primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include field observations and interviews with knitting artisans and Bukit Asam's CSR department, while secondary sources were obtained from articles, journals, and relevant literature. The unit of analysis in this study was the Tanjung Enim knitting group. Data collection techniques included observation, involved interviews, and documentation in the form of notes and photographs of activities. To ensure data validity, source and method triangulation were used. Data analysis was conducted interactively through the stages of data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification to obtain valid and in-depth results.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Development of the Creative Knitting Industry

Seeing the current development of knitting, knitting groups in Tanjung Enim still need to make various efforts to encourage them to continue to develop and exist among the wider community. In an effort to develop the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, strategies are needed to encourage the creative knitting industry to develop well. A strategy can be briefly defined as a specific action or steps to achieve a desired goal or benefit. (Alim et al., 2022). Conceptually (Mardikanto, 2020) Defining strategy through various approaches, including strategy as a plan, strategy as an activity, strategy as a tool or instrument, strategy as a system, and strategy as a mindset. It can be concluded that strategy is a process and a key tool related to the management and implementation of activities used to achieve a specific goal.

The creative industry in Tanjung Enim has been actively supported by Bukit Asam's CSR program since 2018 and continues to this day. Since the inception of the knitting industry, there have been many changes and developments. Knitters continue to strive to develop their creativity and innovate to create knitted products that are increasingly unique and of high quality. The development of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is one of the strategic efforts to improve the community's economy through the creative industry sector. The creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim originated from the activities of housewives who filled their spare time by channeling their hobbies through knitting crafts. Development efforts can be carried out through various aspects, such as increasing the capacity of human resources, namely knitting artisans, improving the quality of knitting materials, product innovation, and expanding and strengthening marketing networks.

1. Forms of Creative Knitting Industry Development

The growing creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is a form of community empowerment based on the creative economy, supported by the local company's CSR program. Activities within this industry showcase local skills that have the potential to help promote community welfare, especially for women, as the program is primarily aimed at women and housewives. The development of the creative knitting industry does not only rely on individual creativity, but also on social support and mentoring programs. The development of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim includes various efforts to increase knitting productivity, expand marketing networks, strengthen social networks, and create prosperity for knitters.

The forms of development carried out in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim include various aspects, among which are efforts to develop human resources (HR) through various efforts such as training, efforts to develop products and designs through improving the quality of raw materials, and efforts to develop marketing by utilizing technology such as social media in order to reach a wider market.

a. Human Resource Development

Human resources in the knitting industry play an important role in the continuity and sustainability of the knitting

industry. The development of the knitting industry depends on the creativity and innovation capabilities of knitters. Improvements in the quality of human resources in the knitting industry are achieved through various training programs that support increased creativity and quality of human resources. The potential knitting workforce that can be developed in the Tanjung Enim area includes housewives and local youth who have the potential to become the next generation of knitters.

In the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, human resource development is one of the most important aspects to be addressed. Given that knitters are typically housewives who utilize their free time to pursue their hobby of knitting, their knitting skills are naturally limited. Therefore, it is important to develop the technical and managerial skills of knitting artisans, because if this is not done, it will be difficult for the creative knitting industry to adapt to developing market trends, technological developments, and consumer tastes. The following statement was made by an informant with the initials VV, who stated that HRD development in the creative knitting industry is important:

Artisans acknowledge that their skills play an important role in the quality of their knitted products because knitted products in this industry are handmade, not factory-made, so product quality is highly dependent on the skills of the artisans. To improve the skills and creativity of knitting artisans, they participate in many training programs and CSR initiatives as mentors for knitting groups also provide support by offering various types of training that can help improve the skills and creativity of knitting artisans.

Human resources (HR) are a major factor in maintaining and developing the creative knitwear industry as a pillar of the local economy. Most informants emphasized that the success and quality of knitwear products are determined by the skills, creativity, and motivation of the artisans involved in the creative knitwear industry.

Human resource development in the knitting industry from a sociological perspective emphasizes that improving individual capabilities depends not only on technical aspects, but also on social relationships, values, and community structures. Human resources develop through social processes such as interaction, collective learning, and knowledge transfer within the community. According to Granovetter's view, the abilities and skills possessed by individuals often grow from social attachment within networks, for example through cooperative relationships, mentoring, and knitting group activities that strengthen mutual trust and learning. Thus, human resource development in the creative knitting industry cannot be separated from the social context because it is a form of the result of a social process that fosters individual capacity while strengthening the social structure of the community.

b. Product Development and Design

Product development and knitting design innovation are essential. In product development and design, efforts are usually made to create more diverse products, improve product quality, and strengthen product identity. This is so that the creative knitting industry can grow and compete with

other creative products and factory-made knitted products, which are more affordable on the market. Therefore, knitters in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim continue to strive to develop knitted products and innovate to create new knitted product designs.

These development efforts are largely supported by Bukit Asam's CSR through various forms of training that can encourage the development of knitting, as well as the initiative of the knitters themselves to adapt to market tastes in order to be accepted by the community. In the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, the development process of both knitted products and product designs is not solely determined by the technical skills possessed by knitting artisans, but also by the social networks established between actors involved in the creative knitting industry. Innovation arises from social interaction, cooperation, and the exchange of knowledge and experience within the creative knitting industry network.

In product development and knitwear design, artisans must be able to innovate. Innovation can be defined as new ideas, products, technological information, institutions, behaviors, values, and practices that are not yet widely known, accepted, and applied by the community in a particular locality. Innovation is useful for encouraging change in various aspects of community life to bring about a better life. (Mardikanto & Soebiato, 2020).

Product development and design in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim not only demonstrate a technical and aesthetic process, but also illustrate the social embeddedness between the actors involved. Based on Granovetter's (1985) perspective of embeddedness, economic activities in the creative knitting industry, such as innovations in knitted products, are embedded in a network of social relationships that influence each other. Craftsmen in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim work together, interact and collaborate, united in a knitting community. Through these social interactions, they generate various ideas and inspiration related to knitting designs, as well as production strategies that can keep up with market tastes.

c. Social Networks and Cooperation

Social networks and cooperation are an important part of the development of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. Through social networks and cooperative relationships between the actors involved, information can be exchanged, mutual support can be provided, and economic opportunities can be opened up. In the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, social networks are formed through communities such as Siba Rajut, which serves as a forum for collaboration between artisans, the CSR department of PT Bukit Asam, and local government agencies. Through this network, artisans not only share their skills and experiences with each other, but also expand their access to raw materials, capital, and markets.

The social networks established within the creative knitting industry, particularly with CSR and local governments, can expand market access for knitting artisans. From an economic sociology perspective, these social networks also serve as social capital that facilitates economic activity in the creative

knitting industry. Through social networks, knitting artisans in Tanjung Enim collaborate with various parties such as Bukit Asam CSR, local government, and buyers from outside the region. These relationships open up opportunities to introduce products to a wider market, both directly and through digital media.

In line with this perspective Granovetter (1985) Regarding attachment, the economic activities of artisans in the creative knitting industry are attached to the social structures they build, such as through community cooperation or joint exhibition activities. Strong networks enable information about market trends, exhibition opportunities, or consumer demand to spread quickly. Thus, social networks not only strengthen internal solidarity, but can also be a strategic means of expanding market reach and increasing the competitiveness of knitwear products.

d. Marketing Development

Marketing is also very important in this knitting activity, because regardless of the current conditions, the initial purpose of forming this knitting group is not only as a hobby but also to earn additional income. Therefore, a marketing strategy is needed so that they can compete with others. Currently, the marketing that is being done is adequate, but there are still several obstacles for knitters in marketing their knitted products.

Marketing development is important to encourage the development of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. The marketing strategies that can be implemented to encourage the development of this knitting industry include digital marketing by utilizing existing media such as social media and e-commerce, participating in exhibitions or festivals, collaborating with influential parties such as influencers, and promoting through interesting content. In the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, a specific marketing application called PaDi (Pasar Digital) UMKM is already in use. In addition, the Tanjung Enim knitting industry often participates in exhibitions or MSME bazaars, especially those organized by companies.

The marketing of knitted products in Tanjung Enim is already good and has a fairly wide reach. The marketing of knitted products is tech-savvy and takes advantage of certain moments for product marketing opportunities. In addition to using social media, the PaDi UMKM application is one of the tools for marketing knitted products. The following is an image of the PaDi UMKM application for the knitting industry in Tanjung Enim.

Figure 1 shows the display of the PaDi (Pasar Digital) application for the creative knitwear industry in Tanjung Enim. PaDi or Pasar Digital UMKM is a digital marketplace launched by the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises in collaboration with state-owned enterprises, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, and government procurement policy institutions to advance MSMEs through strategic measures. There are four strategic steps to promote MSMEs, namely: Development, Sustainability, Growth, and Contribution. (Munizu et al., 2023).

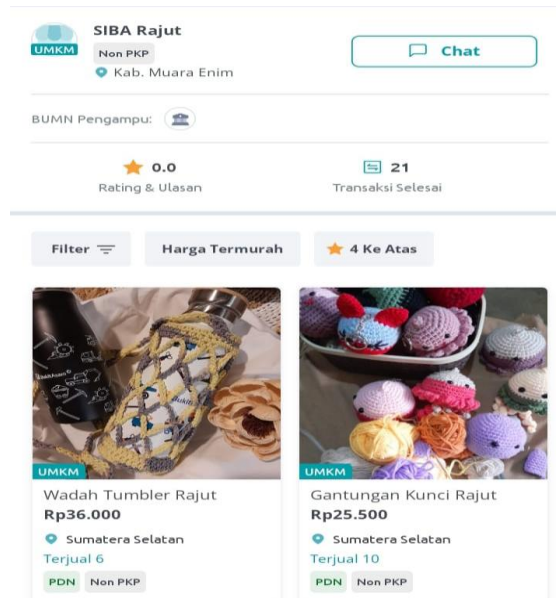


Figure 1. Display of PaDi SIBA Rajut Tanjung Enim

Source: PaDi Application Screenshot

The use of the PaDi (Digital Market) MSME application aims to expand market reach and improve the competitiveness of local products in today's digital era. The PaDi application was developed by the Ministry of State-Owned Enterprises to become a strategic platform that connects every MSME player with state-owned enterprises and consumers directly. In the creative knitting industry sector in Tanjung Enim, the use of the PaDi application provides opportunities for knitting artisans to sell their products nationally without having to rely on conventional sales. Although in reality, the use of the PaDi application in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is still managed by CSR, which acts as a mentor and facilitator for the creative knitting industry, this is due to the limited ability of knitting artisans to operate the PaDi application.

2. Stages of Creative Knitting Industry Development

Efforts to develop the creative knitting industry cannot be done instantly. In this case, several stages are needed to achieve the desired goals in the creative knitting industry. The stages carried out aim to strengthen the capacity of craftsmen, the quality of products produced, and expand market reach so that the creative knitting industry can develop independently and sustainably.

a. Preparation and Formation Stage

This stage is the initial stage in the development of the creative knitting industry. The initiation stage is the stage of formation and introduction to the creative knitting industry. The formation of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim began with housewives who did not have fixed jobs and had a lot of free time, as well as sharing the same hobby of knitting. Starting from this, they took the initiative to form a small community, namely the knitting community. Gradually, over time, this knitting community took the initiative to request to join Bukit Asam's CSR program with the aim of developing further than before.

The formation of knitting groups is part of the initial stage for the creative knitting industry to reach its current position. Before becoming part of Bukit Asam's CSR program, the creative knitting industry had already formed a small community consisting of housewives who shared a common hobby. After becoming part of Bukit Asam's CSR program, this knitting community became known as SIBA Rajut. In this initial stage, participants were introduced to and trained in the basics of knitting. However, the program did not stop there. Those involved in this activity were also given an overview of the potential of knitting as a creative economy that could boost the local economy.

b. Capacity Building and Strengthening

The next step after the formation of the creative knitting industry group is to strive to increase human resource capacity by providing guidance to the group. Capacity building is a process of improving the ability of individuals, groups, and other organizations and institutions to understand and implement sustainable development. (Mardikanto & Soebiato, 2020). At this stage, the stakeholders involved provided several technical training sessions to support the sustainability of the creative knitting industry. At this stage, the knitting group was also strengthened, a management structure for the knitting industry was formed, roles were divided, and a solid system of cooperation between knitting members was created. This was done with the aim of providing the knitting group with a strong management foundation so that it would be ready for further expansion.

Capacity building and development for the creative knitting industry in TanjungEnim is also carried out by CSR as a stakeholder involved. The guidance provided to the creative knitting industry is in the form of facilitating several training sessions to develop the skills of knitting craftsmen and holding monthly meetings to evaluate the performance of knitting group members.

CSR continues to provide guidance to strengthen the capacity of the groups it mentors, as it plays a role in encouraging the development of each of these groups, including the creative knitting industry. Strengthening and developing capacity is an important foundation for transforming the creative knitting industry from a small community that simply channels hobbies into a creative industry that is competitive and independent.



Figure 2 Regular CSR meeting with the assisted group

Source: Creative Knitting Industry Documentation, 2025

Figure 2 illustrates the activities carried out by Bukit Asam CSR during its monthly meetings with CSR-assisted groups. The purpose of these regular meetings is to evaluate the performance of the assisted groups over a one-month period. This is done to support the progress and development of each of the assisted industrial groups, including the creative knitting industry.

c. Production and Innovation

The next stage after group formation and training is the production and innovation stage. At this stage, knitters begin to increase productivity and the quality of their knitted products. They begin to enhance their creativity, come up with new ideas for knitting designs, and innovate their products in line with current market trends. Product diversification also takes place at this stage, for example, from initially only producing simple knitted products to more complex ones. Initially, they only made mask straps during the Covid pandemic in 2019, then key chains, caps, tablecloths, and now they have moved on to more complex knitted products such as scarves, knitted shoes, knitted prayer mats, bags, and others.

Knitters make knitted products that follow market trends, reading opportunities so that the knitted products they produce can attract consumers. Diversification and innovation are indeed very necessary in this case because if knitters are unable to innovate, it will be difficult for the creative knitting industry to develop and compete in a wider market. In addition to product innovation, development in this area is also carried out by improving product quality using high-quality materials so that knitted products are comfortable for consumers to use. The use of these high-quality materials includes selecting smooth knitting yarns and soft, subtle colors that are more appealing.

Labeling or branding each knitted product is considered important in the creative knitting industry. Knitted products with labels are easier for consumers to recognize, as labels or brands serve as the identity of knitted products. In addition, products with special labels are more competitive than unlabeled products and are more trusted, as labels or brands create a more valuable impression.

d. Marketing and Business Networks

The next stage is marketing and expanding the marketing network. Currently, knitters are beginning to utilize digital media such as social media and e-commerce as a platform to promote knitted products. In addition, becoming a CSR partner of Bukit Asam is an added value for the creative knitting industry, because by becoming a CSR partner, the knitting industry can receive support in knitting production activities such as product packaging, branding, and product marketing. At this stage, it can strengthen and increase the competitiveness of the creative knitting industry in the market.

Currently, knitted product marketing is conducted digitally by utilizing existing media such as social media and e-commerce, participating in exhibitions or festivals, collaborating with influential parties such as influencers, and promoting through interesting content. In the creative knitting industry, products are now also marketed through the PaDi

(Digital Market) UMKM application. This application is a digital platform launched as a digital solution for UMKM, state-owned enterprises, private companies, and the government to conduct transactions involving the sale and purchase of goods and services.

The marketing of knitted products in the creative knitting industry has now developed by utilizing digital technology, namely through various social media used as promotional media. This is done with the aim of expanding the market so that it can be accessed by anyone. From a sociological perspective, marketing and business networking activities in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim illustrate social connectedness as described by Granovetter. The marketing process in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is not only oriented towards economic value, but also depends on the social relationships between knitters, consumers, and supporting actors, namely CSR.

Through this network, trust and cooperation are established and information is exchanged, strengthening social capital within the creative knitting industry. Strong bonds between artisans are considered to maintain solidarity and the sustainability of the knitting business, while weak bonds with external parties, namely consumers or CSR, can open up opportunities to access markets.

e. Independence and Sustainability

This stage is the final stage in the development of the creative knitting industry. This independence stage is the stage where knitting artisans are able to independently carry out knitting production, management, and marketing. This stage adheres to the principle of community empowerment, which aims to empower and improve the standard of living of the community. Therefore, the direction in this independence stage is in the form of assistance to prepare the community so that they can truly manage their own activities (Mardikanto & Soebiato, 2020). This process is closely related to internal and external factors. The internal factor in this case is the artisans from the creative knitting industry, while the external factor is the supporting team, namely Bukit Asam CSR, which plays an active role at the beginning of the activity. However, as time goes by, their role will gradually decrease during the process until the knitting artisans are able to continue their activities independently.

Although the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim has shown considerable progress in terms of skills, product variety, and product marketing networks, However, when viewed as a whole, this creative knitting industry is not yet fully independent. This can be seen from the fact that the creative knitting industry still depends on the support and role of Bukit Asam's CSR as a companion, in terms of providing training, marketing, and providing production facilities and infrastructure. Knitting artisans do not yet have the full capacity to manage their knitting businesses independently, especially in expanding market access.

At the sustainability stage, the knitting industry group has established a sound organizational system and a sufficiently broad market reach with the assistance of Bukit Asam's CSR program. At this stage, the knitting industry group has also implemented the use of high-quality knitting raw materials

and created distinctive characteristics for each product produced by the artisans by giving them their own brands. The sustainability goal of this creative knitting industry is to support the creative economy in contributing to the socio-economic development of the local area.

The development efforts in the knitting industry currently being designed by the Bukit Asam CSR Advisory Team are aimed at creating new innovations and upholding the concept of sustainability. Sustainability in the knitting industry can be supported by using environmentally friendly knitting materials, such as recycled yarn and so on. The efforts made by the Bukit Asam CSR Advisory Team to support the development of a sustainable knitting industry include conducting a comparative study of a craft factory on the island of Java. This craft factory is one of the knitting factories that uses recycled raw materials and has grown rapidly to penetrate the international market.

Currently, the Bukit Asam CSR Advisory Team is working to develop the knitting groups under its guidance. Until now, the knitting group has only been operating as a hobby, so in the future, it is hoped that this knitting industry will be sustainable. For example, by using knitting raw materials from recycled plastic waste or similar materials. Thus, in addition to producing works, it also has a positive impact on the environment, namely the reduction of plastic waste.

Currently, the company's CSR team is working to develop the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. They are striving to ensure that this knitting industry is sustainable and not merely based on hobby, as is currently the case. By promoting the concept of sustainability, it is hoped that this will benefit other aspects of life, one of which is the surrounding environment. The knitting industry can have a positive impact on the environment. For example, by using knitting materials made from recycled plastic waste, it can indirectly reduce environmental impact and also raise environmental awareness.

In addition, the concept of a sustainable knitting industry can also improve the quality of life in the community. This is because if it continues to be developed and the knitting industry continues into the future, the quality of life of the local community will indirectly improve by creating jobs through the knitting industry and increasing the income of the local community. Not only does it improve the quality of life, but it also increases competitiveness. With the development of a sustainable knitting industry, it can create increased competitiveness in the global market by offering environmentally friendly and sustainable products. This also does not rule out the possibility for the knitting industry to compete in the international market.

At this stage, the knitting group also collaborated with Bukit Asam CSR to ensure the sustainability of the creative knitting industry in the future. Through a program they created together with Bukit Asam CSR, namely a knitting teaching program for all Islamic boarding schools in the Tanjung Enim area and its surroundings, it is hoped that this program can support the sustainability of the knitting industry in the future.

Based on the information provided by the informant, it is clear that the activities of this knitting group have realized efforts to support the sustainability of the knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. In addition to conducting knitting training at Islamic boarding schools in Tanjung Enim, the knitting group is also conducting knitting training at the Nurul Madaany Islamic boarding school on Panggung Island, which is the second Islamic boarding school in their program with CSR Bukit Asam, although this training was previously delayed due to several obstacles from CSR Bukit Asam itself.

The Tanjung Enim knitting industry has carried out social activities related to knitting and collaborated with Bukit Asam's CSR program. Although these activities did not run smoothly due to several obstacles, they are slowly being implemented as intended. This shows that the knitting industry supports the sustainability of knitting crafts in the future.



Figure 3 Knitting activity at Nurul Maadany Islamic Boarding School

Source: Researcher Documentation, 2025

This sustainability strategy is in line with the concept of sustainability, which is simply defined as maintaining surviving in the long term, and being self-sustaining. This concept of sustainability is not much different from sustainable development, which is used as a key term. Sustainability is a desirable state, while sustainable development can be understood as the process of achieving a desirable state. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Activities carried out today do not leave environmental damage, both social and physical, for future generations. (Agustia et al., 2022).

B. Attachment in the Creative Knitting Industry

The embeddedness that has formed within the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim illustrates how the economic activities of knitting groups are inseparable from the social networks, values, and norms that prevail in the local community. Activities within the creative knitting industry, such as production, distribution, and marketing of knitted products, are carried out based on trust, cooperation, and close social relationships.

1. Forms of Attachment in the Creative Knitting Industry

Forms of embeddedness can be divided into two aspects, namely structural embeddedness and relational embeddedness. Structural embeddedness is embeddedness related to social and economic networks formed between various actors involved in the creative knitting industry. In the theory of embeddedness proposed by Granovetter (1985), economic actions cannot stand alone; they involve social networks. Social networks are bonds between individuals, between individuals and groups, or between groups, in which there is an exchange of information due to mutual interaction and shared goals. (Chawa et al., 2024). Structural embeddedness refers to the position of individuals or groups within the social network structure, which describes how the network structure influences opportunities, access to resources, and trust in economic activities.

Meanwhile, relational embeddedness refers to the relationships that are formed within an activity due to solidarity, trust, and social and emotional ties that connect each actor involved in the creative knitting industry. Trust is the basis for establishing cooperative relationships without formal written contracts. In the context of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim, the form of attachment networks can be seen in the relationships between craftsmen and stakeholders involved, namely CSR Bukit Asam and knitting consumers. The relationships formed between artisans and several actors involved are not solely in an economic context, but also foster a sense of kinship and mutual cooperation. The relationships formed in the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim include:

a. Relationships between fellow knitters

Social relationships among knitters within the knitting industry are formed on the basis of a sense of togetherness, sharing the same profession as knitters and the same social background as housewives who share the same hobby to fill their spare time. Because of these similarities, the relationships formed among them are collective in nature and mutually supportive. The forms of networking among crafters include: (1) Cooperating in knitting production, for example, if they receive a large knitting order, the knitters share the work among themselves, (2) sharing information, for example, sharing knowledge about knitting techniques, the latest knitting designs or patterns, and sources of affordable raw materials, (3) Providing mutual support, such as motivating each other and offering assistance if one of them faces difficulties.

The relationships formed among knitting members are based on mutual cooperation, helping one another, and sharing information to jointly develop the potential and skills of knitting artisans. The relationships formed among members in the creative knitting industry are horizontal in nature, characterized by mutual support, working together in groups to produce knitted goods, sharing raw materials, and collaborating to fulfill large orders.

b. Relationship between knitters and Bukit Asam CSR

The relationship between knitting artisans and Bukit Asam's CSR, which acts as a mentor to the creative knitting industry group, forms a vertical relationship based on partnership and empowerment. Through the SIBA Center

program, CSR not only provides technical training in knitting, but also encourages business management, branding and marketing, and provides facilities and infrastructure to support the sustainability of the creative knitting industry. The relationship between knitters and CSR can be seen in several activities, such as: (1) providing training and assistance, where CSR acts as a facilitator to develop the capacity of knitters; (2) providing facilities and infrastructure, where CSR provides operational space for the knitting industry at the SIBA Center and assists with other needs to support activities; (3) promoting and marketing products, in which CSR plays a role in introducing knitting products to a wider market through company events and digital platforms.

Bukit Asam's CSR program plays an important role in the development of the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim. The relationship between the two is an economic and social relationship that forms a single entity. The company not only provides financial assistance, but also provides guidance, assistance, and empowerment to members of the creative knitting industry.

The relationship between knitting artisans and Bukit Asam's CSR program is not only beneficial for the creative knitting industry, but the relationship between the two is a mutually beneficial one.

The relationship between knitters and Bukit Asam's CSR program illustrates social connectedness, as described by Granovetter, who argues that economic actions do not stand alone but are always embedded in social networks, norms, and relationships of trust. Within the creative knitting industry, this bond is formed through frequent interaction, cooperation, and mutual trust between knitters, who play a key role in the knitting production process, and CSR as an external party that supports the creative knitting industry. The relationship between the two is not transactional but rather a collaborative relationship based on social solidarity.

c. Relationships between knitters and consumers

The relationship between knitters and consumers is an economic and social network formed on the basis of trust and interaction that occurs in the buying and selling of knitted products. Consumers are part of the social network because the relationship between them and the knitters is not limited to buying and selling transactions, but also involves trust and personal communication. This network can be seen in: (1) interactions that occur both directly and through social media, (2) ordering knitted products based on trust, where consumers place their full trust in knitters regarding the quality of the products they produce, (3) word-of-mouth promotion, where consumers who have purchased a product will recommend or offer it to those closest to them.

In addition to social networks, which play an important role in the creative knitting industry, trust is also one of the most important factors in the sustainability of the knitting industry. This trust can be built between knitters and consumers or between knitters and Bukit Asam's CSR. For example, in the sale and purchase of knitted products, which still uses a trust-based system, such as payment at the end of the transaction or a consignment system.

This trust also exists between knitters and consumers. Knitters highly prioritize the trust that consumers have placed in them, for example, when ordering knitted products. Conversely, knitters also place their trust in consumers when they order knitted products without a down payment or with payment at the end after the knitting is completed.

d. Relationship between weavers and raw material suppliers

Raw materials are essential for knitters because they are the basic materials used to produce finished products. There are several types of raw materials, including raw materials, semi-finished materials, and supporting materials. The raw materials needed to produce knitted products are, of course, knitting yarn and other supporting tools. Therefore, in the knitting production process, knitters cannot be separated from their relationship with knitting raw material suppliers. Although the relationship between the two is not conducted face-to-face because knitters usually obtain raw materials for knitting through online stores that they access through social media, or sometimes they also obtain them directly at the market. Without knitting material suppliers, knitting activities would not be optimal. Knitters usually obtain knitting materials through online shops for several reasons, including the availability of a wider variety of items and prices that are much more affordable than buying directly at the market.

The bond formed between knitters and raw material suppliers based on Granovetter's concept of bond falls under the category of relational bonds. This is classified as a relational bond because both parties need each other: knitters need raw materials to knit, while raw material suppliers need consumers to buy their knitting materials. Although the relationship between the two parties or the sales transactions that occur are not face-to-face but rather through online sales media or applications, it is still the same because there is still interaction or sales transactions between the two parties.

2. Socioeconomic Attachment in Knitting Development

The concept of social embeddedness explains that economic activities do not stand alone, but are embedded in a network of social relationships, trust, and social values that bind individuals within a community. In the context of the knitting industry, this embeddedness is an important factor that determines the sustainability, innovation, and competitiveness of artisans. In the creative knitting industry sector, such as in Tanjung Enim, social relationships between artisans, Bukit Asam's CSR, and the local government form a strong network of cooperation. Through these relationships, artisans receive support in the form of training, capital, and market access. This embeddedness is not only economic, but also social and emotional, where the values of trust, mutual cooperation, and solidarity are the main foundations.

Based on Granovetter's perspective (1985), social connectedness strengthens economic activity because relationships between individuals build mutual trust, which minimizes risk and facilitates cooperation. In the creative knitting industry, this social connectedness is evident in the habit of helping each other when there are large orders, sharing production tools, and even sharing new design ideas. The product development process does not originate from

individuals alone, but from social interactions among members of the knitting community. In addition, social cohesion also helps artisans adapt to market changes through the exchange of information and joint innovation. For example, when one artisan discovers a new design trend on social media, the information quickly spreads through the community, allowing all members to adjust their products. This shows that the development of the knitting industry is the result of social collaboration embedded in the community structure, not just individual abilities.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that the creative knitting industry in Tanjung Enim is developing as a form of creative economy that grows from social collaboration and external support, but is not yet fully independent because it still requires assistance from Bukit Asam CSR. In its development process, Bukit Asam CSR acts as an agent of social change by providing the means and infrastructure for activities, building trust, solidarity, and collaborative relationships between craftsmen through training and facilitation programs that improve production, design, and business management capabilities. This is in line with the principle of community empowerment that emphasizes independence in business management. Based on Granovetter's attachment theory, economic activities in the knitting industry cannot be separated from the social networks that have been formed, where relational attachment arises through trust, norms, and cooperation between craftsmen, while structural attachment is evident from the dependence on Bukit Asam's CSR support. Efforts to develop this industry are directed at increasing product innovation, strengthening human resource capacity, and developing social and marketing networks so that the knitting industry in Tanjung Enim can grow into an independent, competitive, and sustainable creative economy.

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