

## Digitalization in Promoting Women's Empowerment and a Post-Pandemi Creative Economy

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to find out what kind of strategy was implemented by the Provincial Government of Lampung in encouraging women to increase MSMEs to the realm of the creative economy during the pandemic and how women from various business sectors are utilizing digital media as digital economic opportunities with their roles as wives and mothers. To examine this focus, the author uses the theory of women agency which will help explore aspects including resources, agency and achievement. The results of the study found that the efforts of the Lampung Provincial Government to encourage women to become empowered agencies in the creative economy sector bore fruit. Seeing the opportunities for digitalization and the dominance of women in the use of social media, Lampung Province has successfully won the 2020 Kemen-PPPA Parahita Ekapraya Award (APE) because it is considered successful in implementing Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) in women's empowerment programs. In addition, the creative economy helps women to be able to carry out their activities as entrepreneurs without neglecting their role as wives/mothers. However, they must also be able to negotiate domestic and public roles. This research found that successful negotiation rests on an agreement with the husband in managing time, still placing the family as a priority, and positioning the husband as a work partner. The creative economy helps women to be able to carry out their activities as entrepreneurs without neglecting their role as wives/mothers. However, they must also be able to negotiate domestic and public roles. This research found that successful negotiation rests on an agreement with the husband in managing time, still placing the family as a priority, and positioning the husband as a work partner. The creative economy helps women to be able to carry out their activities as entrepreneurs without neglecting their role as wives/mothers. However, they must also be able to negotiate domestic and public roles. This research found that successful negotiation rests on an agreement with the husband in managing time, still placing the family as a priority, and positioning the husband as a work partner.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Digital developments have made major changes in all aspects of life [1], Indonesia is no exception, especially in the economic sector [2]. Changing the conventional economy into a creative economy [3] that come into contact with digitalization are policies in increasing economic development in Indonesia [4], [5]. Through the implementation of the industrial revolution 4.0 [6], the development of the financial sector through financial technology (Fintech) and expanding digital-based trade (e-commerce) is encouraged to use e-money transactions so that a cashless payment transaction system occurs [7]. The use of the digital economy has great potential because of Indonesia's potential both in terms of human capital and infrastructure that supports the expansion of access to the digital economy in an inclusive manner [8].

The growth of the digital economy in Indonesia continues to grow rapidly, especially in the midst of a pandemic, data [9] shows that 88.1% of internet users in Indonesia carry out online shopping activities through e-commerce. In 2030, it is predicted that the transaction value of Indonesia's digital economy will grow 8 times and be dominated by the e-commerce sector (social media, websites and applications). This figure is higher than the global average of e-commerce adoption, which is 78.6%. This shows that many people choose online shopping (e-commerce) because it is flexible, easy to access, diverse, and has many programs that provide benefits for customers [10]. By understanding more about consumer behavior, you can offer your product or business more precisely and relevantly.

As a new economic system, the digital economy is defined as a model of digitizing information, communication and infrastructure [11]. This system produces changes in contrast to the conventional economic order which emphasizes face-to-face interactions and transactions [12]. One of the digital media that is being massively used

for digital economy business is Instagram [13], [14].

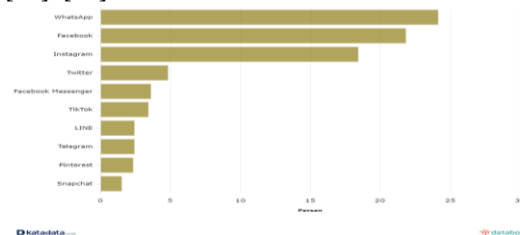


Figure 1. Most Favorite Social Media Research by Internet Users in Indonesia (2021)

Source: [15]

The interest of users to access Instagram as a place to pour inspiration or as a business opportunity, has several sales/ads and analytics features that help business owners to promote their goods. This platform also supports user branding through personal viewing of posts through photo or video content [16], [17]. In Indonesia, Instagram is a social media that is quite popular, it can be seen in the image above that Instagram is in third place as the most accessed social media with a total of 91 million accounts. While the most dominant Instagram users ranged in age between 18-34 years [15], [18]. The following is the diagram:

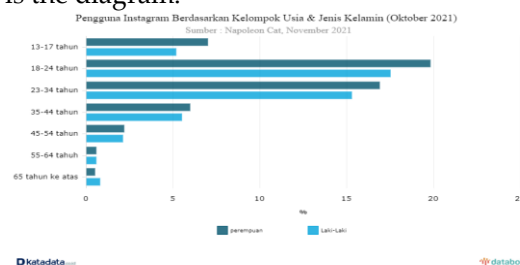


Figure 2. Research on Instagram Users Based on Age and Gender 2021

Source: Katadata [18]

Based on the above research as a whole, the majority or 53.2% of users of the photo and video sharing application in Indonesia are women. Meanwhile, 46.8% of other Instagram users are male. This involvement reflects that women can take advantage of digital economic opportunities by increasing the use of technology as independent empowered businesses in the economic sector [14], [19], [20]. This is confirmed by data [21]. Menparekraf said that

65 million MSMEs and the creative economy contributed 61% to the national economy with 64% of actors being women. Of course, the digital economic opportunities utilized by women cannot be separated from the use of digital media as promotional media [22].

Meanwhile, considering the challenges for women who enter the world of entrepreneurship are of course limited by various cultural contexts and religious norms that are adhered to [23]. For example, the conservative group that opposes women working outside the home with mahrams and neglecting their main responsibilities in carrying out their main duties as wives and mothers for their children. Some studies assume that even though they have higher education, at the undergraduate level, women only act as the second income earner in the household. In contrast to male entrepreneurs, they become entrepreneurs because of an image of dignity and prestige. But now a new phenomenon is emerging, namely women who are entrepreneurs because they are part of lifestyle trends and needs [14], [24].

This article aims to find out what kind of strategy is being carried out by the Provincial Government of Lampung in encouraging women in increasing MSMEs to the realm of the creative economy during the pandemic and how women from various business sectors take advantage of digital media as a digital economic opportunity with their roles as wives and Mother. To examine this focus, the authors use the theory of women agency [25] which will help explore aspects including resources, agency and achievement. Where in this context, 1) resources examine human resources internally and externally for women entrepreneurs and their workers and the technology used as promotional media. 2) agency in this case discusses the responsibilities of women in time management in carrying out their roles as wives and mothers as well as entrepreneurs. 3) Meanwhile, achievement explores the achievements of women entrepreneurs for the synergy and support they get from their families in developing their businesses.

## 2. METHODS

This study obtained data focused on the Bandar Lampung region, while the significance is that Lampung is a city with the highest economic growth in Sumatra [26], [27]. Where the economy in quarter II-2021 grew to 5.03% which was measured on the basis of prices reaching 95.09 trillion. This is of course based on the contribution of the number of creative economy business units which continues to be boosted by the local government as much as 20.23% or 36,113 out of a total of 178,511 creative economy business units, with creative economy actors 58.05% or 447 out of a total of 770 and will even continue to grow. This study uses online observation techniques considering the condition is still a pandemic with the phenomenological method [28], namely research that prioritizes observation and investigation of several Instagram social media accounts of creative economy entrepreneurs sheltered by women who also act as mothers and wives with an age range of 18-34 years. The author also explores several informants as a result of observations with interview techniques as data reinforcement.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *3.1 Government Strategy in Making Women Empowered Agencies in the Digital Creative Economy*

Seeing digital economic opportunities that are utilized by women as a form of creative economy, the regions do not want to be outdone. Lampung Province which is the gateway to the island of Sumatra which has various economic potentials ranging from tourism, culinary, fashion and others adopts various forms of technological transformation in order to increase economic growth and regional development through various empowerment. Various kinds of breakthroughs, ranging from one-stop service, access to open data through online pages to the convenience of digital-based community services. In line with this transformation, the regions have built a lot of supporting infrastructure to expand their

network to remote rural areas, so that people can enjoy modern technology.

In line with this, the Provincial Government of Lampung is also intensifying digital transformation through the "Smart Village" program which is the embodiment of the vision and mission of the Governor and Deputy Governor for Lampung to prosper. This program is a new breakthrough in the era of data openness that can be accessed by the public in order to increase public confidence to actively participate in regional development. With this program the Provincial Government of Lampung can increase the productivity of creative businesses in rural areas, increase added value, open a global marketing network for MSMEs and for Village Governments to provide optimal instant services for citizens based on digital services. In addition, the Government can choose the best policy alternative based on big data analysis (evidence-based policy) that is integrated between Regencies/Cities and Provinces. This is an example of how technological transformation can reach the realm of public policy and involve the community as a party that can actively participate in any evidence-based policy making [29].

In addition to the "Smart Village" program, the Lampung Provincial Government also supports government policies with the Cashless Society program (utilization of digital technology capable of supporting a non-cash society), namely the launch of QRIS (QR Code Indonesia Standard) by Bank Indonesia in August 2019. In line with the vision of the Indonesian payment system 2025, where one of the points is to support the integration of the national digital economy-finance through open-banking and a cashless society to provide convenience in transactions by scanning barcodes at registered merchants to make payments easily and quickly.

All innovations that have been implemented are here to make it easy for the public to transact safely and easily and reduce the risk of loss due to administrative costs, theft or transmission of the Covid-19 virus

because all transactions are carried out online and payments are made by simply scanning barcodes at selected merchants. Thus avoiding physical contact. Various innovations that have been carried out provide an opportunity to implement society 5.0 to support the industrial revolution 4.0. Given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic that hit Indonesia, changing people's behavior is more consumptive through digitalization. Based on research [30] stated that approximately 49.6% of Indonesian people prioritize looking for product information online before making a purchase. Of course, this is an opportunity for MSMEs to expand the creative economy market network so they can survive in the digitalization era.

Seeing the benefits brought about by digitalization which is an economic tool in developing ideas, innovation and creativity of business people, especially women [31], [32] in Lampung Province. Of course, this is the idea of the local government to continue to encourage women as creative economic power agencies. Various policies have actually been carried out by local governments to increase the achievement of gender equality and reduce discrimination against women through the digital creative economy, including through empowering women. This is done by maximizing 3 sub-sectors which are the mainstay of 17 sub-sectors, namely: culinary, fashion and craft [33].

The concept of women's empowerment proclaimed by the government is intended so that women become more qualified [34], [35] stated that the aim of empowering women is to increase the income of women who are still at the lower level so as to reduce the number of people who are below the poverty line. Furthermore, increasing the capacity of women to be able to increase productive socio-economic activities and also to increase the ability and capacity of women in community and government institutions. This is of course in accordance with what was conveyed by Menparekraf Sandiaga Uno in the women's empowerment entrepreneurship webinar, where the role of

women is very important in supporting national development, namely increasing highly competitive human resources [21]. Empowering women in the economy is a process so that women have the power to become "bread winners" so they are able to eliminate economic dependence and escape poverty.[36], which also must always be under supervision, control and guidance [37].

Seeing the strategy carried out by the government in an effort to restore the wheels of the economy by making women as agents with creative economic power. Lampung Province received the 2020 Parahita Ekapraya Award (APE) from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) because Lampung is considered successful in implementing Gender Mainstreaming (PUG) in its programs and activities [38]. This is also supported by various women entrepreneurs who take advantage of entrepreneurship opportunities in the digital creative economy.

The author found that entrepreneurial women took advantage of Instagram social media to become business opportunities through online marketing by sharpening their creative product improvisation and economic transformation [39]. Digital marketing is carried out using various digital media [40]. With digital technology, especially the Instagram platform, women entrepreneurs are inspired to expand their business. Instagram is used because it has a variety of features that can support cultural promotion activities as a strategy in carrying out social media marketing activities, namely live features, Instagram stories, instashopping, posting photos and videos, Instagram ads, and insights [41] so it is very supportive as a media campaign.

Based on the results of online observations, there are several SMEs and the creative economy of Lampung Province who use Instagram as a promotional medium including in the fashion sector Aisyah as owner @griyaaisyah tapis who sells various Lampung tapis crafts in the form of fashion. Some research [42]–[44] stated that, the

tendency of these women entrepreneurs would certainly expand if coupled with their ability to seize business opportunities. These business opportunities are exploited because entrepreneurs are able to seize opportunities that arise against trends and maybe even the needs of these entrepreneurs.

For example, some of the most used by women who act as wives and mothers are opportunities in the culinary sector, for example Indah Putri Rachmanda who is the owner of @camilan.ebot who sells snacks to accommodate MSMEs in Lampung and even now she has caught business opportunity by opening @grosirfruit. indah by selling fresh fruit that is obtained directly from farmers, so the price sold is much cheaper and fresher. In addition to culinary delights in the form of light snacks, of course, women are getting more creative by creating food innovations in the form of frozen food, for example @panganankoe, which is under the auspices of owner Esti Oktavia, who sells a mainstay menu, namely risoles. There are also those who also take advantage of Instagram by selling across sectors ranging from culinary, beauty, fashion to kitchen needs, for example Winda Agustina as owner @dzakiraalvienawinda. Beauty Andhita Mega Puspita owner @andhitairianto.salondayspa and @after.beaute.

"...I don't work outside, meaning I'm not a private employee, but I continue to take advantage of the opportunities that exist. We as women are limited to outside activities. But that doesn't mean you have to be silent, many businesses now can be run without leaving the house. On the one hand, I want to increase my income, because children also need funds for school, so I can help a little without having to leave my obligations as a wife and mother for my children." (WA interview, 20 January 2021)

Based on this explanation, women entrepreneurs create new entrepreneurial opportunities by utilizing Instagram as an online marketing tool [45]. The innovations of women entrepreneurs so that they continue to exist in the world of entrepreneurship are manifested in many achievements in the field

of business, including by taking advantage of new business opportunities. They also articulate these innovations by honing creativity in producing products, representing content, and applying online marketing strategies. These women entrepreneurs also focus on targeting their target market segmentation by understanding the character of uploads and the intensity of their tendency to see trends on social media [14].

### 3.2 Negotiation of Domestic and Public Roles of Muslim Women Entrepreneurs

Based on the previous explanation, women's empowerment in the economic aspect is a process so that women certainly have the ability to become "bread winners" so that they are able to eliminate economic dependence and can help the economy and escape poverty [46]. Thus, in the previous analysis it was stated that women entrepreneurs occupy decision-making positions in the economic field both as entrepreneurs and in the managerial part. Empowering women is also beneficial for developing the capacity of women themselves so that they can compete in facing globalization. In Islam it is stated that empowering women is an effort to educate Muslim women so that they are able to play a role in completing all the obligations of Allah SWT. In this context, equality in gender empowerment is aimed at achieving equal access for men and women in decision-making and involvement in various aspects of life, both in the public and domestic spheres.

In this regard, women's empowerment is based on the vision of a superior woman as *ummun warobbatul bait* (male partner) in order to give birth to a generation of intelligent, pious, sharia warriors, caravans and family security. While its mission is to strengthen the resilience of the Muslim family, to give birth to a generation of fighters, to build Muslim women with strong character in the context of good deeds and good deeds, to give birth to women as male partners in the household and fighters in

society. In accordance with the word of Allah SWT which means in QS. An Nahl verse 97:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً  
وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Meaning: "Whoever does good deeds, both men and women in a state of faith, we will give him a good life and indeed we will reward them with a reward that is better than what they have done".

If basically it is men who have a role in supporting life as Allah SWT says in, QS. An-Nisa' verse 34:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا  
أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۗ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَنِيئَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا  
حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي  
الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَإِن أَطَعْتِكُمْ فَلَا تَجُنُّوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۚ إِنَّ  
اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا

Meaning: "Men are leaders for women, because Allah has exaggerated some of them (men) over others (women), and because they (men) have spent some of their wealth. Therefore, a pious woman is one who obeys Allah and takes care of herself when her husband is not around, because Allah has taken care of (them)...".

Muslim women (Islamic women) always pay attention to Islamic religious norms. Where women adhere to religious teachings which are the implementation of the recommended Shari'a despite the positive and negative views about women, there are many different understandings, especially in family matters. This negative view of women becomes justification for the structure of male domination in the family. However, this era of digitalization makes it easier for women to be more active and creative in the economic field through Instagram social media as previously explained.

Women in this case play a role in two quite challenging domains, 1) as entrepreneurs who have high productivity and busyness in the public (digital) sphere which of course will deal with external parties (both networks, customers and communities). 2) women's role in the domestic sphere as a wife and mother whose managerial time is divided to care for children, family and other household life. Based on this they use the time to play a role in these two domains, so they must be able to manage how they have to interact, behave and position themselves.

Empowering women in this study required role negotiation. Where women entrepreneurs must synchronize the demands of work professionalism in the public sphere and their position as wives and mothers in the domestic sphere. This role negotiation is not sacred, and must strictly separate the public and domestic spheres so that they can accurately represent the person amidst cultural imperatives and religious norms in the domestic realm [47]. In this research, the authors found that informants were able to negotiate positions and articulate their roles in the public and domestic spheres, especially as Muslim women in empowering the digital creative economy through a number of ways that the authors have analyzed.

First, informants are required to be accurate in time management. The informants, in this case, are professional businesswomen in various matters ranging from administration, digital marketing to technical issues in the public sphere, which must be continuously pursued. In addition, the informants also managed their time in such a way as not to leave their domestic role as wives and mothers for their children. The empowerment of women in the digital creative economy in terms of time management was considered a success for the informants.

Second, The informants thought that they could still divide their roles as entrepreneurs, wives and mothers in the public and domestic spheres. This is because they still place family as their top priority. The WA informant said that with a creative economy, women can still be productive without having to travel all the time. So that time can be allocated to the family very well. In addition, the informants also tried to put the brakes on all ambitions at work if it could completely interfere with their responsibilities as wives and mothers. Third, for this reason there are several efforts that are also made if their role as entrepreneurs is quite draining, namely by delegating household chores and using daycare services and prioritizing children's education and accommodating their needs.

Fourth, What can certainly support the role of women in driving the creative economy, especially during the current pandemic, is to make their husbands a work partner. The informants thought that including their husbands to contribute in their business was the right thing to do in seeking support. Because after all the informants thought that their role as wives was to obey their husbands. Thus, the full support of husbands really helps them in the success of the growing economic sector in which they are involved. Thus, it can combine capital and collaborate to produce a product, for example by opening new branches or supporting in terms of product ideas and innovation.

## CONCLUSION

Digital developments have made big changes in all aspects of life, including in Indonesia, especially in the economic sector, especially in the midst of a pandemic. Currently, the government is intensively encouraging the creative economy to become more international. Various efforts have been made by both the central and regional governments to realize this, one of which is through empowering women in encouraging the digital creative economy. This is not without reason, research states that women are more dominant in digitalization. This involvement reflects that women can take advantage of digital economic opportunities by increasing the use of technology as an independent empowered business in the economic sector, especially in the leading sub-sectors of Lampung province, namely: culinary, fashion and crafts. Although the challenges for women who enter the world of entrepreneurship are of course limited by various cultural contexts and adhered to religious norms. This does not discourage women entrepreneurs from being more productive in the economic sector. The local government continues to support this through empowering women, where they will continue to be encouraged to be able to negotiate in the public and domestic spheres. Of course, by paying attention to their role as entrepreneurs, wives and mothers for their

children. where they will continue to be encouraged to be able to negotiate in the public and domestic spheres. Of course, by paying attention to their role as entrepreneurs, wives and mothers for their children. where they will continue to be encouraged to be able to negotiate in the public and domestic spheres. Of course, by paying attention to their role as entrepreneurs, wives and mothers for their children.



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