

ART, IDENTITY, AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT



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PREFACE

Arts and culture are closely connected to social identity, historical memory, gender relations, and local economic development. Contemporary cultural studies increasingly examine how artistic practices both reflect social realities and contribute to processes of representation, preservation, and transformation. In this context, drama, performance traditions, urban cultural initiatives, and heritage-based creative industries offer valuable perspectives for understanding the relationship between culture and society.

The chapters in this volume explore selected themes in arts, culture, and social transformation. The first chapter presents a feminist reading of Nigerian drama, focusing on patriarchy and gendered power in the works of Ahmed Yerima. The second chapter examines Lavani as a living cultural tradition in modern Maharashtra, highlighting its continuing significance within contemporary cultural life. The third chapter discusses the implementation of Islamic development economic principles in urban arts and cultural ecosystems in Indonesia. The final chapter explores the changing economic value of batik art and its contribution to local economic practices.

By bringing together literary analysis, performance studies, cultural heritage, and creative economy perspectives, this volume reflects the interdisciplinary nature of contemporary arts and culture research. The chapters demonstrate how artistic expression can illuminate gender relations, sustain cultural traditions, and support community-based development.

It is hoped that this book will serve as a useful academic resource for researchers, students, artists, and scholars interested in cultural studies, literature, performance, gender studies, creative economies, and heritage-based development. We extend our sincere appreciation to all contributing authors for their valuable scholarly efforts.

Editorial Team
July 2026, Türkiye

CHAPTER 1
PATRIARCHY AND GENDERED POWER IN
NIGERIAN DRAMA: A FEMINIST READING OF
AHMED YERIMA'S *NO PENNIES FOR MAMA* AND
HARD GROUND

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INTRODUCTION

In most communities in Africa, oral traditions in the past have been used as potent means of passing cultural knowledge, social values and collective memory. Communities save stories and pass on narratives, through storytelling, proverbs, songs, and performance, that define the communal sense of morality, authority and identity. The significance of these oral traditions of narratives as not only means of entertainment but also of systems that societies use to make sense of social relations and enforce cultural codes has long been stressed by scholars of African oral literature (Finnegan, 2012). Nevertheless, cultural discourses found in these traditions tend to be mirrors of the social hierarchies of the societies in which they are shared, as well as gender hierarchies that entail the dominance of male voices at the expense of female voices. Consequently, oral traditions often reproduce patriarchal assumptions of gender roles and social power, determining the ways the masculinity and femininity is conceptualised in the cultural discourse.

These narrative traditions have not limited their impact to oral storytelling but also to written storytelling, especially to African dramatic literature. In building dramatic narratives that capture social realities in their societies, Nigerian playwrights often rely on the storytelling patterns, symbolic themes, and moral themes based on oral tradition to create dramatic narratives. Ahmed Yerima has a significant place in the range of the options of contemporary Nigerian dramatists who were able to intertwine cultural memory and social criticism. His plays tend to be concerned with matters of authority, morality, family relationships and political strife and access the narrative conventions that resonate with indigenous storytelling.

In most African cultures, the oral traditions have been traditionally used as the major vehicles by which cultural values, sharing histories, and social conventions are passed down through generations. Storytelling, proverbs, songs and ritual performances are not only entertainment systems but systems of social relations and moral expectations through which communities make sense of social relations. African oral literature scholars have long observed that these narrative traditions influence the communal conceptions of power, ethics and culture in societies that create them (Finnegan, 2012).

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Since oral narratives are integrated into the daily cultural practises, they tend to mirror the greater social systems and ideological presupposition of the communities within which they are spread.

Among the more important features of these cultural stories is that they are a component in building and instilling gender relations. Traditional stories replicate the patriarchal assumptions that establish male authority and place women in constraining social positions, in most situations. Folktales and proverbs often present women as subordinate, immoral, or inferior to men, which supports gender hierarchies in cultural recollection (Barber, 2018). These are some of the representations, which are contributing to what the feminist scholars refer to as the normalisation of the patriarchal ideology in culture. Cultural narratives, as noted by Amadiume (1987) in her examination of gendering in the Nigerian societies, tend to work as the processes of reaffirming and generational transmission of the gender expectations.

These traditions of narration spread not only to oral narratives, but also to written literature. African drama specifically has been closely related to oral culture, frequently using oral storytelling methods, dialogue patterns involving the community, and symbolic elements based on oral culture. It has often been stressed by theatre scholars that contemporary African drama cannot be comprehended without reference to the origins that are in the traditions of indigenous performance and narrative practise (Banham, 2004). The Nigerian playwrights tend to indulge in cultural narratives which are basically oral but at the same time redefine them amid the modern literary contexts.

Ahmed Yerima takes an important place among the modern Nigerian dramatists. The dramatic works by Yerima often deal with historical memory, cultural identity and social conflict in the Nigerian society. His plays closely relate to narrative conventions echoing the current oral storytelling traditions but touching upon burning social problems including political power, violence, family life, and gender relationships. In these stories, Yerima frequently reveals the conflicts that transpire in the reality of the collusion of traditional cultural demands and modern social reality. This chapter explores the work of patriarchal ideology in Nigeria cultural discourses through the analysis of two plays by Yerima, *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*.

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These readings present opposing yet complementary views about gender relations in the Nigerian society. *No Pennies for Mama* predicts the social and financial insecurity of women in patriarchal families, showing the way the culture controls women identity and moral sense. On the contrary, *Hard Ground* is the exploration of the stresses that are imposed on the male identity in the patriarchal structures which conflate masculinity with power, violence, and domination.

Through the application of the feminist critical perspectives into these plays, this chapter holds the view that through the dramatic accounts displayed by Yerima, the various facets of feminism in defining the marginalisation of women, as well as male identity construction, are presented. Although the plays are based on cultural storytelling that has found its roots in oral tradition, they are also revealing the immuration and contradictions that are inherent to the oral tradition. Using this discussion, the chapter would add to the larger body of academic research on gender representation, cultural memory, and the value of African drama in questioning received social forms.

The chapter is an addition to the current literature on African drama and gender studies in that it focuses on the representation and interrogation of patriarchal cultural narratives through the dramatic work of Ahmed Yerima. Although in earlier research on Nigerian theatre it has been common to examine themes of the past, political commentary, or performance culture, this chapter preempts the gender potential of cultural discourse in dramas. Offering a unified mass of feminist literary criticism, African feminist theory, and oral traditions research, the work reveals how the plays of Yerima portray and disrupt the patriarchal culture that governs gender relations in the Nigerian society. In the discussion on *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*, the chapter points at how dramatic literature can offer the critical space to explore the conflicts between cultural continuity and the need to have more inclusive social storytelling.

To put this analysis in its context within a larger cultural setting, it is worthwhile to analyse the role of oral traditions in the Nigerian societies as an instrument of social value and gender directives transmission.

The knowledge of the connexion between the traditions of storytelling and social norms gives a valuable base on the analysis of the ways of depicting gender and the authority in the modern Nigerian drama.

1. IN THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY, ORAL TRADITIONS, CULTURAL STORIES AND GENDER

In most African societies, oral traditions have been used as a focal system whereby social wisdom, and cultural values are passed through oral means. People express values of morality, authority, kinship, and social order through folktales, proverbs, songs, myths, and rituals performances. According to Ruth Finnegan (2012), the oral literature in Africa exists as an active system of culture communication where narratives do not only entertain but also form collective conceptions of the social relations and what is acceptable in societies. These narrative traditions thus are significant to shaping communal identities and memory of culture.

The oral stories in the Nigerian societies tend to indicate the wider social stratifications in the community set-ups. The traditions of storytelling often contain moral lessons that strengthen the authority of elders, the need to have harmony in the community, and the duty that is assigned to the social roles. Meanwhile, these stories can reproduce some assumptions regarding gender relations. In most Nigerian cultures, proverbs and folktales tend to place women in very limited social structures defining them as obedient, modest, and responsible wives and mothers. According to Karin Barber (2018), cultural narratives as they are spread out through oral traditions often mirror the predominant social ideologies of their societies, such as the stabilisation of patriarchal power and gender hierarchies.

African feminist critics have been strongly concerned with reproduction of patriarchal values within the cultural discourse. The groundbreaking work of Ifi Amadiume (1987) in the analysis of gender systems of the Igbo people shows that the development of gender roles in the Nigerian societies is determined by complicated historical and social processes, not by biological differences. Still, the narratives of culture tend to reproduce gender hierarchies as natural and immutable thus supporting systems of male power.

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These stories may contribute to the way people understand what is acceptable in the way men and women should behave in the society.

The African feminist thinkers have thus focused on the need to critically analyse cultural traditions that influence gender relations. According to Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997), colonial and post colonial changes brought about major changes in the gender hierarchy in most African societies, which in most cases institutionalised patriarchal orders that were not necessarily as strict as they are today. Consequently, the narratives of modern culture can carry both the traces of indigenous culture and the influence of colonisers that led to the unification of male-dominated society. Nevertheless, oral traditions are not fixed forms of culture despite these patriarchal aspects. The practises of storytelling can be said to permit inter-generational reinterpretation and adaptation. Narratives can be modified by performers and storytellers to meet the fluctuating social conditions, thus, creating the opportunities to confront the established social norms. In that regard, oral traditions can serve as the tools of social continuity and of cultural values questioned or renegotiated.

African dramatic literature is especially exhibited by the influence of oral narrative traditions. This has been long observed by the theatre scholars that contemporary African drama has a habit of relying on oral culture storytelling structures. Martin Banham (2004) believes that African theatre developed in close connexion with local performance traditions, entailing the use of narrative methods like communal dialogue, ritual symbolism and narration of stories. These effects are apparent in the plays of many Nigerian playwrights whose dramaturgical expressions respond to the rhythms and themes of oral storytelling traditions. Ahmed Yerima is one of such dramatists, who managed to combine cultural memory and social criticism in his drama. The plays by Yerima tend to be based on historical occurrences, cultural narrations and community storytelling styles to address social tensions in Nigerian society. Having placed personal conflicts in the context of the larger cultural systems, his works encourage people to confront the values and assumptions that are inherent to their cultural traditions.

A closer look at the plays of Yerima in the context of oral traditions thus offers a valuable basis of the study of presenting the representation of gender and social authority through cultural narratives.

When the texts of drama contain narrative patterns which have a basis in oral tradition, they tend to bring along with them the ideological presuppositions of those oral traditions. Meanwhile, drama can offer a platform on which these assumptions may be questioned. Literary representation allows playwrights to reveal the hypocrisy and conflicts which develop in cultural systems based on patriarchal values.

It is in this regard that the current paper analyses *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*. Both plays deal with issues that are familiar to cultural stories that are passed by word of mouth, which is authority, family relationships, and social responsibility. The chapter examines how dramatic literature can demonstrate how the patriarchal ideology is reproduced and challenged within the contexts of Nigerian cultural discourse by focusing on the ways in which these themes are connected to the questions of gender and power. Although oral traditions are significant in terms of storing cultural memory traces, their stories are not free of ideological suppositions that define social attitudes toward gender and power. To analyse the way these assumptions, work through the literary texts, the section below presents theoretical approaches, which are used to analyse gender and power in the chosen plays.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The chapter takes a feminist criticism approach to analyse the dynamics of gender, power, and cultural discourses in the Nigerian dramatic literature. This analysis is agglutinated by three related fields of scholarship: feminist literary criticism, African feminist theory, and works of oral narrative traditions. Collectively, the two points of view can offer the conceptual framework that is required to analyse how gender relations are represented and represented within the cultural narratives of the society. The initial critic of the work is feminist literary criticism. It has been a long-standing argument of feminist scholars that literature tends to replicate the gender hierarchies that are present in the societies that they are created.

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Through analysing the portrayal of women, how responsibility is divided in the story, and even the social position of men and women in relation to one another, feminist criticism aims to expose the assumptions embedded in the ideologies that perpetuate the patriarchal structures (Showalter, 1985). This analysis does not merely point out cases of female marginalisation, it also explores how the nature of narrative patterns also plays a role in determining cultural perception of gender.

These dynamics are often manifested in dramatic literature in the forms of interaction between characters, the formation of their characters, and the distribution of social power between characters. Although feminist literary criticism offers valuable interpretive resources, critics operating in African settings have highlighted the necessity of attempting to contextualise gender analysis in particular cultural and historical contexts. The second pillar in the analytical framework of this chapter is thus the African feminist theory. Instead of assuming a formal approach to gender relations, African feminist scholars explore the interplay of social structures, colonial past and cultural practises to define the experiences of women in African cultures. Individuals such as Ifi Amadiume (1987), show that the various gender roles in the Igbo society are more interpretable and less comparative with the colonial interpretations. On a similar note, Oyewumi (1997) explains that the western concept of gender is not necessarily sufficient to explain social relations in the African context, where other modalities of social stratification, including seniority or lineage, historically made communal life.

These viewpoints are especially significant when oral-based cultural narratives are under discussion. Oral storytelling has traditionally been at the centre of social formation of how people expect gender and power. Oral stories, Finnegan (2012) notes, tend to serve a similar purpose, as reservoirs of communal memory, and they serve the same role as reservoirs of the moral teachings, and even the ideological assumptions of the societies transmitting them. In cases where the male dominance is stressed in these narratives or women are described in a negative and repressive stereotypes, they may perpetuate patriarchal values in the cultural consciousness. Meanwhile, oral narratives are not written but living cultural practises that can be reinterpreted by different generations.

The oral performance scholars have pointed out that the traditions of storytelling can be varied and adapted according to the social context of performance (Bauman, 1977). This plasticity implies that cultural discourses can maintain inherited social norms and at the same time, open possibilities to challenge these social norms. Adaptations of oral traditions into literatures are thus especially useful places to study the cultural values negotiation and contestation.

In the example of Nigerian drama, the playwrights often resort to the techniques of narrative based on oral storytelling. Theatre critics have observed that communal narration, dialogue that is symbolic and moral commentary are some of the characteristics found in the African dramatic literature that are reminiscent of oral narratives (Banham, 2004). These aspects enable the playwrights to explore the cultural traditions and equally critically explore the values that are inherent in the cultural traditions. The following chapter thus unites feminist literary criticism, African feminist theory as well as oral traditions research to examine the gender relations in the plays of Ahmed Yerima. The integration of these two theoretical frames allows studying the processes of reproduction of patriarchal ideology with the help of cultural narratives and, at the same time, finding instances where the narratives in question reflect their inner contradictions and tensions. It is through placing the dramatics texts in this wider theoretical framework that the analysis attempts to shed some light on how the plays of Yerima reflect and challenge the gendered power relations that form part of the Nigerian cultural discourse.

These theoretical approaches offer the conceptual instruments that may be used in explaining the gender relations illustrated in the dramatic works that Yerima presents. The following section thus describes the methodological procedure of this chapter and how the chosen texts are analysed by means of qualitative textual analysis.

3. METHODOLOGY

The chapter has taken a qualitative methodology that relies on textual analysis to observe the representation of gender, power and cultural narratives in the selected texts of drama in Nigeria.

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Textual analysis qualitative approach is common in the study of literature as it enables the researcher to examine themes, storylines, character growths, and symbolisms in literature. Close reading and interpretive analysis can help the scholars to uncover the ideological assumptions that are implicit in the forms of narrative and to look at how these assumptions mirror larger social realities. The analysis is done on two plays by Ahmed Yerima: *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*. It was chosen to use these texts as they are rich texts of exploring the interrelation between cultural stories and gender relations in Nigeria society. Both plays deal with the themes that are highly relevant to the problem of power, family relations, and social norms and thus are quite appropriate to feminist discussion of the ideology of patriarchy in drama.

In *No Pennies for Mama*, Yerima sets the story which is focused on the life of a woman who has to be exposed to the harsh social and economic conditions of a male-dominated society. The play underlines the way that cultural expectations of morality, sexuality and responsibility of the family usually put the women in a weak situation and at the same time expose them to moral judgement. The play provides the revealing prism through which to look at the overlap of gender inequality and cultural demands because of the way it depicts female struggle in a male-dominated social structure. In contrast, *Hard Ground* moves to the theme of creating masculinity in the conditions of a social struggle and a generational conflict. The play deals with the strains imposed on male identity in a world in which authority and power are highly related to cultural ideas of masculinity. By its demonstration of violence, rebellion, and generational confrontation, the narrative shows how patriarchal structures not only formulate the oppression of women but also the demands that men should follow.

The method of analysis used in this chapter is based on the theoretical points of view presented above. The way the plays construct gender roles, reflect female and male experiences as well as reproduce or challenge patriarchal assumptions are considered with the help of feminist literary criticism. The contextual framework through which these representations can be put in the social and cultural realities of the Nigerian society is the African feminist scholarship.

Moreover, the research results of the study of oral literature contribute to the better understanding of how the practise of storytelling affects the structure of the narratives as well as thematic issues that the plays are concerned with. The analysis centres on some of the most important elements of the dramatic texts. These are the image of females' characters, the allocation of power among characters, the terms of describing gender roles, and how the social expectations influence the behaviours and identity of both male and female characters. Through these dimensions of the plays, the chapter aims to find out the way in which the patriarchal ideology functions in the plays and how the plays demonstrate the contradictions in such systems.

The textual analysis used as the basis of the study is, however, even though this method is not conducted in the fieldwork or the audience reception studies mode, which is meetable to the objectives of the chapter. It is not intended to gauge the audience reactions but to study the way dramatic literature expresses and processes the cultural narrators regarding gender and power. The chapter examines how literary narratives can shed more light on the greater social discourse on the topic of patriarchy, cultural memory, and gender relations in modern Nigerian society. With the theoretical and methodological background of the study set, it now becomes possible to discuss the actual dramatic texts. The next paragraphs examine the way in which the relationship between gender and patriarchal authority is depicted in the plays of Yerima.

4. WOMEN OPPRESSION AND PATRIARCHAL POWER IN NO PENNIES FOR MAMA

In the *No Pennies for Mama*, Ahmed Yerima offers a play plot that pre-empt the social exposures of women in a patriarchal society that is influenced by financial crisis and moral judgement. The play itself is a character of a woman whose life situation reveals the structural inequalities that tend to dominate gender relations in most African societies. In this depiction, the narrative has brought the fore the ways in which cultural dictums about morality, sexuality and family responsibility could be used as a mechanism of control in the lives of women. In *No Pennies for Mama*, the social effects of patriarchal judgement are severe as the protagonist of the story shows.

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Her plight is a manifestation of the truth that women are being pushed to morally stigmatised roles due to financial instability. Instead of getting the collective outpouring of sympathy, she ends up on the end of a mob of disparagement, which on its part indicates how patriarchal moralities tend to treat women with more acuity than the surrounding circumstances that create their susceptibility. In this characterization, Yerima reveals the two-sidedness in the way of gender relations in the society embodied in the play.

The economic dependence as well as gender inequality is one of the main issues that the play deals with. Most patriarchal social groups have most of the women access to economic assets being mediated by male figures of authority as fathers, husbands, or even community heads. When such support structures are destroyed or unavailable, women can be in a precarious social position. The girlish heroine of the play gets to be a strong illustration of this situation. Her predicament explains how economic and social constraints can narrow the range of choice of women and at the same time, subject them to the merciless moral scrutiny of the same society that dictates such restraints. The effect of the patriarchal societies on the identity of women is also manifested in the play by how the morality and respectability language tend to control the identities of women. Behaviours of females are highly monitored and judged in terms of the rigid cultural norms that focus on modesty, obedience and sexual purity. When women do not conform to these expectations either through their choice or a necessity, they can be condemned or ostracised by society. This self-questioning is the main conflict of the story because the woman protagonist is forced to question the society which tends to evaluate her behaviours without taking into consideration the social and economical factors influencing her situation.

The moral examination that faces women in such circumstances is also harsh as seen in the dramatic dialogue of Yerima. There is a scene in the play when the situation of the protagonist elicits a reaction of condemnation by members of the community who see their actions in a limited moral perspective instead of structural realities that brought about their actions.

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When one of the characters outrightly points this out, women who do not adhere to the socially accepted standards are easily labelled as being morally decadent, a fact that shows how deeply accepted the double standard of impact women have on other women in the society where the play takes place (Yerima, 2008). By these interactions, the author of the play emphasises how patriarchal moral discourse can be a tool of patrolling the actions of women.

Feministically, this relationship is an example of how patriarchal systems often perpetuate power not only via the official authority of the world but also via the cultural discourses that establish the acceptable manner in which females should act. Social institutions and cultural expectations tend to complement each other to strengthen the masculine and weaken the feminine in the context of Nigerian gendered systems as Amadiume (1987) notes in her research on the topic. In *No Pennies for Mama*, the dramatic story reveals this process describing the emotional and psychological outcomes of such limitations. The other important aspect in the play is the marginalisation of female voices in the larger social context. The male characters are usually put in a position of authority and control, and they make the decisions that dictate the fate of the female protagonist. Such unequal portrayal is a mirror of the overall gender hierarchies in many patriarchal societies, as the voices of women are often not considered during the process of making decisions that directly influence their lives.

Meanwhile, the dramatic representation of Yerima is not just the reproduction of the ideology of patriarchy. The play challenges the audiences to critically look at the society that causes such misery by foreshadowing the struggles and emotional states of the woman character. The story reveals the hypocrisy of cultural formations that necessitate female virtue, and at the same time impair women with lack of autonomy and resources with which to uphold the virtue. Thus, the play exposes the human cost of patriarchal values which put moral responsibility on women and leave the structural inequalities which restrain women mostly unaddressed.

Such display of feminine oppression in *No Pennies for Mama* can thus be discussed as a critical commentary regarding the cultural discourse of patriarchy.

As much as the story is a commentary on social realities that have taken root in cultural traditions, the story also reveals the tensions that exist in the cultural traditions. The play can promote the audience contemplating the assumptions that perpetuate gender inequality in society by portraying the actual lives of women that are in struggle against the confinement of social structures. Whereas *No Pennies for Mama* predicts the exclusion and ethical judgement of the woman in patriarchal systems, the play *Hard Ground* by Yerima reverses the narrative to focus on the stressors put on the male identity in the same social construct. By looking at this second text, one can have a wider interpretation of how the ideology of patriarchy contaminates the experiences of women and men.

5. MASCULINITY AND PATRIARCHAL POWER IN HARD GROUND

Although *No Pennies for Mama* predicts the frailty and marginalisation of women in the social system based on patriarchy, *Hard Ground* is more concerned with the pressure which is exerted on the male identity in the society built on the demands of masculine control. Ahmed Yerima in this play discusses the influence of patriarchal systems on not only the lives of women themselves but also the social positions of men. The story shows how cultural norms governing the expectation of masculinity can create a sense of social disorder and an individual dilemma through its depiction of conflict, generational strife and violence. Yerima in *Hard Ground* brings out the conflict between fatherhood and a sense of rebellion in young people by the clash between the elders and the young men attracted to militancy. The father figure tries to impose the moral authority based on the traditional requirements of obedience and respect. But the younger generation that has been influenced by the political violence and social chaos refuses to subscribe to this ideal of authority. The instability of patriarchal power can be seen in this conflict as social and economic circumstances deteriorate the traditional forms of the traditional order.

One of the themes in *Hard Ground* is the connexion between manhood and authority. In most patriarchal cultures, manliness tends to be characterised with power, power, and control over other individuals.

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Such expectations may exert a lot of pressure on men to be in line with specific models of conduct that underline dominance and the lack of feelings. In the dramatic story, male characters find it difficult to deal with these expectations when they are operating within social spaces of conflict and uncertainty. The play as well throws light on the generational conflicts which follow a challenge to the traditional ideas of authority. Aged male characters usually strive to keep it under control by referring to the cultural norms of respect, obedience, and social order. But younger characters may rebel against these expectations especially where there is a sense of economic instability and social unrest that is challenging the traditional social order. The resulting conflict shows the weakness of the patriarchal systems which are based on strict definitions of authority and masculinity.

The other important thing about the play is that it depicts the violence as a result of such social pressures. Once the concept of masculinity is associated with power and control, people might use aggression as the way to prove identity and dominance. The story is that this is not necessarily a personal decision but rather a result of a wider cultural norm that dominance equals masculinity. To this extent, the play depicts the patriarchal structures as having the ability to present the circumstances under which violence can be normalised in social relations. Despite the fact that the story revolves around the male characters, the comparative lack of women in the dramatic space itself shows the gendered relations of the patriarchal culture systems. Women are portrayed only slightly in the social environment of the play, which supports the idea that social power and politics is the male domain. The marginalisation is a reflective measure of cultural trends where women are commonly denied roles of making decisions in male-dominated social systems.

Meanwhile, the male authority is not just praised by Yerima in the way she depicts masculinity. Rather, the story shows the inner conflicts and contradictions related to the patriarchal expectations. Male characters are frequently depicted to be grappling with the weight of power, the demands of social norms and emotional impacts of violence. Through these struggles the play reveals the constraints of the cultural discourse that tends to equate masculinity to power and supremacy.

The play also explains that the demands of patriarchy force the male characters to be strong and assertive even in times of weakness. In the strained relations between the father and the son, power is strongly bound to obedience and control. At some stage the father character enforces the traditional powers of traditional authority in the family, and the need to have respect and submission in family structures (Yerima, 2003). This assertion is indicative of larger cultural norms of patriarchy whereby masculinity is inextricably connected with the power to dictate and impose social control. In a larger sense, the discussion on *Hard Ground* shows that patriarchal ideology works in various aspects of social life. Although women directly can be marginalised and controlled, men are also influenced by the demands of the culture that limits their emotional expression and forces them to adhere to very limited views of masculinity. Through this, the play reinforces the themes discussed in *No Pennies for Mama* and it exposes the way systems that are patriarchal organise the experiences of both women and men.

The two plays taken together show how gender hierarchies become complicated in terms of their working in cultural narratives. By its melodramatic presentation of masculine struggle and female repression, the work by Yerima is a call to audiences to challenge its cultural norms through which patriarchy perpetuates its power systems in the Nigerian society.

6. GENDER, POWER AND NARRATIVES OF CULTURE

In the analysis of *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*, one can see that the relations between genders in the Nigerian society are tightly connected with the overall cultural discourse conditioned by patriarchal beliefs. The two plays are based on social realities that can be related to thematic issues that are recurrent in oral traditions such as authority, moral judgement, family obligation and communal expectations. These themes allow the dramatic stories to demonstrate cultural prescriptions that have traditionally shaped the definition and enactment of gender roles in most communities. Among the most vivid trends that can be adjusted in the analysis is the various ways in which the ideology of patriarchy influences the life of women and men.

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The vulnerability of the female character in *No Pennies for Mama* demonstrates the fact that the moral rules of patriarchy tend to control the actions of women and their social status. Women are under tremendous pressure to abide by a confined social role due to the cultural demands in terms of female virtue and respectability. In case of such expectations being not met, women can be subjected to severe moral judgement, no matter what circumstances provoked such behaviour. These representations are indicators of the wider cultural accounts that place women in the custodial role of moral order and at the same time deprives them of the independence needed to manage the challenging social realities. In comparison, *Hard Ground* unveils the fact that the male identity is also restrained by the expectations of patriarchy. The concept of masculinity in the storey is closely connected with power, violence, and control. Such anticipations allow creating an environment where male characters feel obliged to show strength and power to obtain recognition or legitimacy. Nonetheless, the play is also a revelation of tensions that ensue as people are grappling to fulfil these expectations. In this respect, the storey shows how patriarchal orders are capable of creating warring circles which influence individual lives and the greater social order.

When these two plays are discussed in the same context, it is easy to note the interaction of gender structures in a patriarchal culture. Although women are marginalised by being regulated morally and being economically dependent, at the same time, men are also regulated by expectations that equate masculinity to power and aggression. Through these dynamics, a social order is maintained where power has been centralised in the male-dominated systems as the voices of women are not felt in the decision-making processes. What is of special importance is a relation between these dramatic narratives and oral traditions. According to the scholars of the African literature the vast majority of the modern dramatic texts are based on the use of storytelling methods and thematic patterns, which have the roots in the oral culture (Banham, 2004; Finnegan, 2012). These storytelling traditions tend to bear cultural suppositions of power, ethics, and sex interactions. Adaptations of these forms of narration into dramatic literature by playwrights can reproduce these assumptions as well as give prospects of critical commentary.

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This conflict between reproduction and criticism is particularly evident in the plays of Yerima. The storeys echo familiar cultural templates based on shared storytelling practises but they also indicate the social contradictions inherent within the template. Yerima helps audiences to question the cultural assumptions that reinforce patriarchal power by depicting the emotional distress and social struggles of the characters that he presents. This ability to be critical is especially significant from the feminist standpoint. Literature is one of the areas that allow inherited cultural storeys to be discussed and challenged instead of being perceived as a factual truth. The dramatical writing, pointing out the social result of gender inequality, may open up new horizons of understanding cultural traditions, not only in terms of their historical importance, but also in terms of their ideological restrictions.

In sum, the discussion of the plays shows that there is no such thing as static or uncontested cultural narratives. Although oral traditions and communal storytelling traditions could contribute to the strengthening of some social hierarchies, they can still form the basis, on which new interpretations can be created. Dramatic representations, like those by Ahmed Yerima, confront these traditions in forms that reveal the conflicts between culture and social transformation. An analysis of these plays thus shows the interplay of elements of cultural storeys, gender relations and social authority in a complex manner. The last part of this chapter will conclude the main findings of the study and comment on the general implications of these representations to the interpretation of gender in the Nigerian dramatic literature.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed how gender and cultural narratives and dramatics are interdependent using a feminist critique of two plays by Ahmed Yerima: *No Pennies for Mama* and *Hard Ground*. The chapter has also examined how cultural representations affect both female and male identities in the Nigerian dramatic literature by placing these dramatic texts in the larger context of Nigerian oral traditions and patriarchal social structure. The discussion of *No Pennies for Mama* emphasises how the patriarchal social structures control the identities of female characters with moral expectations, financial dependence, and social opinion.

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The play exposes the way the women characters are usually trapped by cultural conventions that dictate what is acceptable as a particular way of behaviour and they have little room to exercise independence. The storey reveals the hypocrisies of patriarchal moral systems that blame women to keep the social morality informed and unaware of the social inequalities that govern their lives.

By contrast, in the Hard Ground analysis, it is shown that the patriarchal ideology influences the expectations of masculinity as well. The male characters in the play are acting under social contexts in which power, dominance, and authority are directly linked to culturally established concepts of masculine power and dominance. These anticipations generate strains that can easily turn out to be conflict and violence, showing the strains put on the men in the patriarchal structures that require stern exhibitions of power. In putting the two plays side by side, one can observe the greater interactions of gender hierarchy in the cultures of Nigeria. Although women are often placed in the frameworks of moral control and social dependence, men, on the other hand, are at the same time anticipated to develop systems of authority and control that would uphold the patriarchal system. The dramatic storeys of *Yerima* thus reveal how gendered systems of power can influence the lives that people in society live.

Meanwhile, the plays also indicate that dramatic literature could be used to critically address the cultural traditions to which it belonged with an inherent degree of success. *Yerima*, however, though he uses the patterns of narratives, which are pertinent to the oral tradition of storytelling, his drama shows the tensions inherent in the latter. The plays encourage the viewers to consider the assumptions that perpetuate the patriarchal power by creating emotional conflicts and social implications of the situations his characters undergo. The chapter thus adds to the wider academic debates on gender representation in African literature by demonstrating how theatrical texts might be used as a medium of exploration of the cultural discourses that define social life. With a feminist interpretation of the plays of *Yerima*, the discussion shows the significance of questioning the cultural paradigms which were inherited, and which continue to play a vital role in the modern Nigerian society.

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CHAPTER 2
BEATS THAT STILL BREATHE: LAVANI IN
MODERN MAHARASHTRA CULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

Lavani continues to have a powerful presence and to transform due to the pulsating beat of the dholki (a type of drums primarily used for Lavani performance) as well as stage lighting/electrifying environments. Lavani was performed in various forms over centuries (on stages); performed in royal courts; adapted for use in international performance venues (non-Indian); and incorporated elements of performance in addition to the traditional Lavani (music for example) such as film. Even though Lavani has evolved into its present form over time, the character of Lavani continues to appear in many of today's performances. Maharashtra has accepted Lavani as more than an entertaining art form, but as a living art form and that Lavani will continue to exist as a living art form for many years to come, and is constantly being added to through the incorporation of other styles (cultural art forms/historical meanings) into its already very old cultural art form called Lavani. The folk art form known as Lavani, which is both dynamic and vibrant in its form, has been a part of Maharashtra's culture for decades even after the drastic effects of modernity. Grounded in rhythm, dance and storytelling, the Lavani art form has historically existed in Maharashtrian courts and battlefields during the Maratha period, acting as both entertainment and a vehicle for social and political commentary. This thesis looks at the adaptive resilience of Lavani in the currently contemporary contexts of Maharashtra and investigates how Lavani negotiates between two often conflicting poles, that of preservation and transformation, while at the same time being influenced and affected by a rapidly globalizing cultural milieu. Through contemporary performances, Lavani has moved away from traditional tamasha stages to urban theatres, cinema, television, and digital media. This movement expanded Lavani's audience; however, it also changed the aesthetic and performative attributes of Lavani. This research shows how contemporary performers have reinterpreted Lavani through a blending process of classical or traditional elements, with modern choreography, music production, and costume design, with a goal of making it accessible to younger generations. However, this process of blending raises questions regarding the authenticity of Lavani in terms of whether it will eventually become commercialised or diluted in its traditional meaning.

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In the cultural soundscape of Maharashtra, Lavani is not simply an art form; it is the pulse of a culture that will not die. With its heartbeat of rhythm, expressive movements and poetic lyrics, Lavani has evolved from being performed in royal courts and rural gatherings, to now being performed on the big screen, through digital media, or on stages worldwide. This case study will examine how Lavani, which has historical roots yet continues to be shaped by social changes, still resides within modern Maharashtra, while also finding ways to adapt to various new contexts while maintaining its original identity. Lavani today also exists in a fascinating duality: it exists as both traditional and contemporary, sacred and sensual, both marginalized and yet celebrated. In order to understand this layered existence, one must look at the history of Lavani, trace the history of its changes over time, as well as to review its current placement in cultural, social, and economic spheres. Lavani was developed as a form of singing & dancing in the 17th & 18th centuries during the Maratha Empire. At this time, Lavani blossomed under the patronage of various kings & noblemen. It is thought that the name "Lavani" comes from the word "Lavanya," which translates to "beauty". The beauty of Lavani transcends just physical beauty, but also includes beautiful language (poetry), music (composed of many different instruments), and emotions (both positive & negative).

The original audience for Lavani were members of the royal court and soldiers in the army. The rhythm of the music (provided by the dholki) helped to pump up the soldiers, so they could go into battle. Many of the Lavani songs told stories about political issues, moral or ethical issues, love, etc.

The dancers were almost exclusively women, and by performing Lavani they passed on information to future generations and provided a platform for sharing their views of the world and of the society in which they lived.

As time proceeded, Lavani became part of a very popular form of folk theatre called Tamasha. Through Tamasha, Lavani became the focal point of a performance that incorporated drama, satire and performance into one exciting experience. The combination of these forms made it possible for Lavani to continue to exist beyond the walls of a royal court and into the rural areas of society and the public domain.

1. THE EVOLUTION OF LAVANI PERFORMANCE

Currently, Lavani performances no longer take place only on the traditional tamasha stage and have been integrated into the theatre, television, and most recently into film. Marathi cinema has been instrumental in resaturating Lavani into the mainstream. Lavani rhythms fused with lyrics provide the ability for the song to gain instant popularity through traditional rhythms used with contemporary musical instruments. Bollywood films have also borrowed extensively from the rich palette of Lavani. The rotating 9-yard saree, the expressive eyes, and the signature footwork have been featured prominently in many films allowing the audience to become familiar with Lavani much further than Maharashtra. Although the enhanced exposure to Lavani in films has increased visibility for the performance, many times the art has been reduced or glamorised to an extent that it does not retain the cultural heritage of the art form. Even though the Lavani performance in film, the heartbeat of the art form is still clear, the dholki will still be the central instrument in the performance, and the performer will still tell stories using only their gaze and gestures. The popularity for folk traditions as cultural heritage has grown since independence in India. Lavani now has a new life, as there are state-sponsored cultural initiatives and greater appreciation from the general public. The arrival of Marathi cinema was the major catalyst for this developing trend. Lavani performances were featured in many films, thus introducing Lavani to new urban audiences and gaining more widespread visibility among all people. The faces associated with these performances gained fame, and songs based on Lavani were becoming national hits. In the transition from Lavani folk tradition to a more formal thing two major developments occurred:

- Lavani performances had been adapted for the aesthetics of cinema.
- Lavani choreography became formalized in its style.
- Lavani lyrics sometimes were altered to make them palatable to larger audiences.

Adaptation has created greater exposure, but it has increased the debate over the authenticity of Lavani and the commercialization of Lavani.

As Lavani developed, it became recognised like Tamasha (a kind of folk theatre originating from Maharashtra that is an extremely popular form of entertainment in India).

This was significant because it marked an important shift of Lavani out of elite spaces and into more accessible/popular ones. The travelling theatre groups known as Tamasha would travel from village to village performing to a variety of audiences and Lavani was the highlight of the show. This participation by the audience in Tamasha provided more direct engagement with the performers thus creating a vibrant and participatory experience. The result was that the evolution of Lavani was Democratized and further embedded in rural culture, making it widely popular within the villages across Maharashtra. Additionally, this allowed for the incorporation of humour, satire, and commentary about society into the compositions thus making it more relatable to the average person. The poetic and thematic rich history of Lavani continued to change and expand over the years. Initially the subject matter of Lavani compositions dealt mainly with love, valour and devotion, however over time the compositions began to expand to include broader themes such as; social issues, gender relations and daily living experiences. The language used in Lavani is primarily in Marathi but does include many everyday colloquialisms. This assisted in making Lavani more appealing and accessible to the general population. The simple yet highly evocative nature of the language used in Lavani enabled performers to communicate complex thoughts, feelings and emotions to their audience. As Lavani continues to be performed some of its most notable characteristics include; Rhythmical musical composition, representative movement through highly expressive body language and finally the use of visible props such as scarves or handkerchiefs.

2. THE MODERN LAVANI PERFORMER: BETWEEN TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION

Lavani is being practiced in two distinct worlds today, the old, with its rich history, strong discipline and cultural relevance, and the new, with its expectations from audiences, commercial aspects and changing aesthetics. Most of the people who perform Lavani today are dancers, and all of them are cultural diplomats. Many of them have received formal training and are therefore working actively to keep Lavani's authentic movements, facial expressions and poetic meanings intact.

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At the same time, there are also many who are trying out new choreography styles, fusion music, and modern themes. Traditionally, women performers have dominated Lavani performance due to their ability to portray power, sensuality, and storytelling. However, male performers and gender-nonconforming performers are becoming more common, challenging the traditional performance norms of Lavani, and pushing the limits of Lavani performance's expressiveness. Formal education over the past two decades has also changed how Lavani performers view their individuality. Many of them have received some kind of formal education, are able to articulate their performance, and are actively working on the preservation and promotion of Lavani. They are no longer limited to the traditions they were handed down; they are actively choosing Lavani as a path of conscious artistic expression. The individuals who kept Lavani alive through the years were, and still are, primarily women. They were the main performers, experts of the culture, and played a key role in passing on Lavani from generation to generation. Women performers also lived in a complicated world at the same time, where they faced many contradictions. They were admired for their artistic talents and presence on stage, yet they dealt with many stigmas for their profession and faced challenges in moving up the social ladder. These many contradictions have characterized the evolution of Lavani and impacted both how it is perceived and how it is performed. Regardless of the social obstacles they faced as Lavani performers, many of them continued to show great strength by supporting Lavani through the years.

The period after India's independence from British rule in 1947 marked the beginning of a new period of growth and change for Lavani. At this time, people started to take an interest in traditional art forms as cultural symbols and national identity. The government started giving money to support Lavani's recognition and promotion in addition to creating various platforms (cultural festivals, academics) for Lavani performers to present themselves and gain recognition as artists. As a result of these efforts, Lavani was able to regain its status as one of the most important cultural forms, although new dynamics were introduced into Lavani's presentation and audience expectations. Lavani, as it is found in Maharashtra today, comes in many different types that show how Lavani has both changed and remained the same throughout time.

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One of the most prominent places that Lavani is presented is through Tamasha performances, which still provide an important context for Lavani, especially in rural areas. Additionally, cultural festivals and state-sponsored events showcase Lavani as a traditional art form, emphasizing its historical/cultural significance. Films, television, and online media provide access to a greater audience through their use of Lavani. Social Media has changed this by helping performers to gain global audiences and connect with them through their performances. These changes have opened up more opportunities for performers to gain recognition and establish economic viability, but created new challenges regarding quality control and cultural sensitivity.

Although Lavani remains popular, it faces ongoing problems today. Continued cultural stigmas exist regarding the perception of performers, as well as concerns about economic instability for performers. The nature of the Lavani tradition, being oral, places the tradition at risk of being lost due to the lack of documentation and structured documentation of the Lavani tradition. Commercial pressures may sometimes result in the artistic and cultural dimensions of Lavani being lost as well. Policymakers, cultural organizations, and society must work collaboratively to create friendly environments for performers and to provide a broader understanding of Lavani to help meet these challenges.

One of the most important moments in the history of Lavani was its integration into Tamasha, a form of traditional folk theatre found throughout Maharashtra. Tamasha provided a popular, easily accessible stage to present Lavani in rural communities and to non-elite audiences.

Lavani became the most popular part of these performances when they were staged as part of Tamasha. The basis for these performances was the dramatic narrative of Tamasha, and the Lavani sequences added energy and emotional depth to the performance. This integration had several consequences:

- The reach of Lavani was expanded well beyond the royal courts.
- Lavani transformed into something that could be performed interactively and publicly.
- Performers could directly engage with the audience.

Due to the travelling nature of Tamasha troupes throughout villages, Lavani became fully embedded into Maharashtra's culture. This time period represents the transition of Lavani from an art form of the elite to a tradition of the people.

3. LAVANI IN URBAN SPACES: FROM FOLK TO FINE ART

Lavani is an Indian dance form that originated in rural areas with dancing troupes performing on the roadsides. Today, this dance is being performed in many different venues around the world, including auditoriums, cultural festivals, higher education institutions and international stages. Several dance schools and workshop centers located in large urban centers (Mumbai and Pune) are providing training to students from all backgrounds to learn how to perform Lavani. Along with other Indian classical forms of dance, Lavani will continue to gain respectability as a folk art form. However, the transition of Lavani from being outside to inside the polished venues of a city presents unique challenges. When Lavani is brought into a polished urban venue, does it lose its raw/impromptu quality? The answer is complex. While the location may change, the true essence can continue if the performers have a connection to the emotional/cultural foundation of the dance. Lavani is performed in a more polished manner when presented in an urban venue. Generally speaking, the costumes are more stylized than when performed in a rural venue and the choreography is generally more technical with an emphasis on the visual. Nonetheless, underneath this polished surface there exists the real spirit of Lavani, including its boldness, humour and intense emotion.

4. DIGITAL AGE LAVANI: VIRAL RHYTHMS AND GLOBAL REACH

Lavani has found a new platform in the digital era. Many Lavani performances can be found on social media sites where they are shared, celebrated, and transformed into totally new interpretations of Lavani. Short videos often go viral with Lavani dancing worldwide.

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Young dancers have begun to take Lavani choreography and add their own twist, incorporating elements from hip-hop, contemporary, or freestyle dance into Lavani choreography. The younger generation will experience Lavani for the first time thanks to these creative reinterpretations of traditional tamasha. Digital platforms also provide exposure for lesser-known artists to present their skills without the restrictions of traditional performance venues. The democratization of exposure has been critical to maintaining relevance for Lavani. The challenges of digital performance include oversimplifying Lavani with short, visually appealing videos focused on glamour rather than storytelling and lyrical depth. Finding a balance between accessibility and authenticity will be crucial to ensuring that Lavani does not become a spectacle. Lavani has been a lively form of dance artistry throughout the state's culture and heritage; full of passion and a great level of skill. Traditionally performed with the beat of the dholki drums while telling a story through expressive movement of the body and feet with an abundance of energy, Lavani was developed and performed in tamasha theatre settings as well as at local rural gatherings. The dancers performed not only for entertainment but to express themes such as love, politics, social issues and the range of emotions which people experience through life. The new Digital Age has now also introduced Lavani to the world, providing many new layers of opportunity for these dancers.

The new Digital Age, defined with advancements in technology such as smart phones, social media, and digital/online platforms, allows for artists to create, distribute, and have their works viewed in ways that previously were not possible. An example in this transformation, is how Lavani is now presented to the world, particularly through YouTube, Instagram, and short video apps. So while Lavani performances used to take place only on stage and relied on local audiences for exposure, now, through digital platforms, there is no longer a geographic barrier to placing Lavani in front of new and potential audiences across the globe. Digital exposure is significantly contributing to a revival of interest in Lavani within the younger demographic.

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Many young performers of Lavani are learning and performing Lavani from viral videos, which provide inspiration to many dancers, and incorporating those elements into their performances, thus combining the traditional roots of the dance form with more contemporary influences. Online tutorials, classes and performances are allowing aspiring Lavani dancers the opportunity to receive training from outside Maharashtra and thus become engaged in learning the dance form. The result is that Lavani has gone beyond the borders of Maharashtra and is now developing into an international cultural expression.

Also, the use of digital platforms is changing how Lavani is being presented and performed. Dancers often structure their performances to appeal to a diverse range of viewers by incorporating short but catchy "hook steps," which are designed to create viral trends, in addition to including elements from Bollywood and contemporary dance within their costumes, music and choreography. This fusion of styles broadens the appeal of Lavani to a larger audience; however, critics have raised concerns regarding the potential loss of authenticity due to the changes made to the traditional Lavani style. Critics contend that the significant modernization of the Lavani style compromises its status as a traditional cultural practice, while also reducing Lavani to pure entertainment.

The digital transformation of Lavani has also created a new way of assessing success. Previously, an artist's reputation was established by live performances and audience praise as well as their artistic talent. However, with the rise of social media, how followers, likes, shares, views etc., are counted have changed the way people determine an artist's popularity, putting greater pressure on artists to produce trendy content rather than original works of art that reflect the depth and craft of their art, resulting in many artists' offerings suffering due to algorithms.

The digital age has enabled many gifted Lavani performers, particularly female artists from underprivileged backgrounds, to demonstrate their talents to a wider audience than they ever could before- leading to public recognition and appreciation they may not otherwise have received. Many Lavani performers use social media to share their experiences, educate others about the cultural history of Lavani and provide an alternative perspective to the stereotypes that exist about the art form.

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In recent years, the fusion of technology and tradition has produced several exciting collaborative projects. Lavani is being incorporated into movies, web series and other experimental productions that utilize both classical and contemporary elements. Musicians are blending traditional songs with electronic beats, creating a new genre appealing to modern audiences. Although this new genre does not often conform to the former definitions of what Lavani is, it does exemplify the flexibility and resilience of Lavani as an art form. While it is great to see creative growth and innovation happening, there are still challenges in this regard – namely, the commercialization of Lavani within the digital world can sometimes lead to it being misrepresented and/or objectified. When presented in a short-form format, Lavani may lack narrative depth or cultural significance and may be perceived as superficial. This means that regardless of whether someone is an artist, creator, or audience member, they must continually be conscious of these issues when trying to find a balance between entertainment and respecting Lavani's traditions.

In Maharashtra, there are many organisations working to retain Lavani's authentic identity while taking advantage of digital possibilities. There are cultural organisations, government-sponsored programmes and educational institutions that are promoting traditional Lavani by producing festivals, workshops and online programmes. Through these programmes and events, the aim is to help preserve the true essence of Lavani (narrative, musical, and emotional) as it transitions into the digital realm. The journey of Lavani in the Digital Era tells the story of a wider cultural evolution. The challenge lies in making sure Lavani can preserve its heritage while embracing change. The dholki beats of every Lavani performance can be thought of as the rhythm that guides the dance, and similarly, Lavani's success depends on discovering its rhythm with the new technologies in today's world without losing its essence.

The Digital Era provides both opportunity and challenge for Lavani in Maharashtra. The Digital Era has increased Lavani's visibility, has sparked interest among young people to partake in this tradition, and has encouraged experimentation and innovation. However, there are also inherent pressures of commercialization and losing authenticity. The future of Lavani is based on a continuation of this balance; that as Lavani changes over time, it continues to draw from its substantial historical and cultural roots.

As long as the performers respect the tradition while inventing new ways to express it, Lavani will not just survive, but will continue to flourish within an ever-changing digital landscape.

5. LAVANI AS IDENTITY: A CULTURAL PULSE

Lavani represents much more than a musical or dance form in Maharashtra: it is also the pulse of the culture, a manifestation of the area's collective history, feeling, and social structure. In contemporary society, Lavani continues to enhance and develop people's sense of cultural identity; through celebrations, contests, and community events, it enables individuals (wherever they may find themselves) to connect with their heritage, even in such a fast-paced, changing environment. Within the diaspora, Lavani is an important means of culture bridging the gap back to the traditional roots of the homeland. Through local and international festivals and cultural programs, Lavani continues to travel, to represent and carry along with it the spirit of Maharashtra. Lavani also moves forward through both memory and imagination. For every voice that has shaped Lavani, Lavani has remembered the land from which it has grown; likewise, it carries stories with it as it continues to evolve and grow into new forms. And yet, it will continue to welcome new possibilities in expression, through new audiences around the globe. Future manifestations of Lavani will likely include elements of both continuity and change; the traditional forms will exist alongside experimental interpretations of the form, with both contributing to the richness of the other. The continued preservation of the dialogue between past and present may be critical to ensure that future innovations do not erase Lavani's cultural identity. The efforts to both preserve and promote Lavani have grown in recent years, with numerous government programs, academic studies and classes aimed at documenting and passing on the tradition to future generations. Additionally, workshops and educational programs bring awareness of Lavani to a young audience and inspire them to connect to their cultural heritage. The recognition of artists through grants and awards has also helped to validate their contributions. All of these efforts and activities play an important role in keeping Lavani alive, and allowing it to continue to grow as a tradition.

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In Maharashtra, Lavani is not simply a dance form; it is a living manifestation of cultural identity, bursting at the seams with emotion, history, and community spirit. Since its inception as part of the tradition of folk performance, Lavani has always been a reflection of society, depicting the humor, excitement, struggle, and conflict of life. Through its strong rhythms, expressive hand gestures, and rich lyrics, Lavani serves as a voice for the experiences of daily life, particularly those of women, thus making it an artistic form of both individual expression and collective representation.

Lavani represents the liveliness and confidence of the heritage of Maharashtrians, and the quick pace of the dholki (drum) beats combined with the delicate forcefulness of the dancer's movements create a unique form of communication that goes beyond words. Lavani provides a connection between generations, a way to link and preserve the past and present, and to remind society of stories that may otherwise have been lost. The cultural significance of Lavani continues to be an integral part of people's lives today despite the many changes in context and audience. For many of today's performers, Lavani is a means to express themselves creatively while providing a continual sense of pride and empowerment as they celebrate all that is associated with their roots. Although Lavani will continue to change with the times, it will remain a strong and steady heartbeat of culture, serving as a reminder of who each person is and from where they hail.

CONCLUSION

Despite the ever-increasing trend toward modernization, Lavani (a dynamic and vibrant folk art form from the state of Maharashtra, India) is still very much alive as a living cultural art form. Lavani has been known for its strong rhythms, storytelling with emotion, and its unique dance styles and techniques. Historically, Lavani was not only a source of entertainment but also a way to make a statement about social issues. Today, Lavani exists in an era where tradition and innovation come together in very interesting ways. Urbanization and the development of digital media have changed how people consume culture; however, Lavani has adapted to this change and found new life on contemporary stages, in films, and on social networking sites.

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Modern-day artists are reinterpreting Lavani through the blend of its traditional elements, contemporary music, choreography, and visual elements. The evolution of Lavani has attracted a younger generation while still holding true its traditional roots. It also serves as a reflection of the cultural memory and artistic spirit of the state of Maharashtra, while still providing audiences the opportunity to learn about and experience themes related to love, politics, gender, and society. Therefore, Lavani not only remains relevant to and within the framework of today's art forms but also continues to be able to reflect the cultural spirit of Maharashtra. Despite facing challenges with respect to commercialization and the ever-changing view of the public regarding what they want from the arts, Lavani continues to demonstrate its timeless appeal by being an art form that can evolve and remain true to itself. Lavani continues not just to exist but to constantly reinvent itself, proving that traditional art forms can continue to thrive in our rapidly evolving modern world. Lavani is not some old thing stuck in a case; it's a rhythm that is alive and must soon be alive inside people. Its life is supported by the fast drumbeat of the dholki, the quick turn of a dancer's foot, the playful curve of a lyric, and the powerful look of the person performing. Lavani remains a living entity in modern-day Maharashtra; continually changing, but equally breathing. It's been dancing in time, bringing with it the sound of the past, while creating new poetry for the future. Lavani burns brightly like a flame that has no plans of extinguishing; it is lighting up the cultural landscape with all of its rhythm and passion, plus the gracefulness of being alive today.

To sum-up, the history of Lavani throughout Maharashtra displays its resilience and ability to adapt over time from its beginnings in the Maratha Empire to today. Lavani has dealt with differing levels of support, marginalization, resurgence; but through each of these stages it has remained true to its roots as well as have modern representations. Lavani represents the diversity and richness of the culture in Maharashtra and can be used as a medium for conveying cultural context to varying audiences. Lavani is a culture both as an inherit culture and as a constantly changing culture, which is indicative of how tradition can change with time while still providing insight into the cultural history of an area.

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Preserving Lavani is significant not only because it preserves a tradition, but also because it honors the creativity and spirit that create the cultural identity of the state of Maharashtra.

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CHAPTER 3
IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT
ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES IN URBAN ARTS AND
CULTURE ECOSYSTEMS IN INDONESIA

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INTRODUCTION

The development of major cities in Indonesia in the last two decades has undergone a profound structural transformation, both in terms of physical, demographic, and socio-economic aspects. Massive urbanization, accompanied by accelerating digitalization and market globalization, has transformed the urban economic landscape from one that was previously based on traditional sectors to an economy that is increasingly driven by the service, creativity, and knowledge sectors. In this context, art and culture are no longer seen as mere ancestral heritage or aesthetic expressions, but have been transformed into economic commodities that have strategic value in encouraging urban growth. The creative industry, which includes fine arts, music, design, film, culinary, and cultural tourism, has contributed a significant portion to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and absorbed millions of workers. However, behind these encouraging dynamics, there are a number of paradoxes that require serious attention. Excessive cultural commodification, inequality in the distribution of economic benefits, marginalization of grassroots arts actors, environmental degradation due to the exploitation of urban space, and loss of local identity amid the current wave of global homogenization are real challenges that threaten the sustainability of the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia.

The conventional economic system that dominates current urban development practices, especially the capitalistic paradigm, tends to measure development success solely through macroeconomic growth indicators such as GDP, foreign investment, or the city's competitiveness index. This approach often ignores the dimensions of distributive justice, ecological sustainability, and the moral and spiritual values that are the foundation of social cohesion. As a result, the economic benefits of the development of creative cities and cultural industries often accumulate in a handful of large business actors, investors, or urban elites, while communities of artists, traditional artisans, and urban indigenous peoples are marginalized from the economic value chain. This inequality is exacerbated by the lack of effective wealth redistribution mechanisms, weak protection of cultural intellectual property rights, and lack of fair access to financing for micro and small-scale creative economy actors (Rahmiyati & Achiria, 2018).

In such a situation, an alternative economic framework is needed that is not only oriented towards profit accumulation but also emphasizes social justice, environmental sustainability, community empowerment, and a strong moral orientation.

Islamic economics exists as a paradigm that offers holistic solutions to these challenges. Based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the Islamic economic system does not separate the material and spiritual dimensions, but rather places the two in a complementary unit. Fundamental principles such as monotheism (oneness of Allah), justice ('adl), caliphate (leadership/safeguarding), al-mas'uliyah (accountability), and nubuwwah (moral exemplar) form the ethical foundation that governs every economic activity, including in the management of urban art and cultural ecosystems (Rayyahun et al., 2025). In contrast to capitalist systems that emphasize market freedom without ethical limits, or socialist systems that emphasize rigid state ownership, Islamic economics offers a balance between individual rights and collective interests, between growth and equity, and between innovation and sustainability. In the context of urban development, the principles of sharia maqashid which aims to protect religion, soul, intellect, property, and posterity can be operationalized through policies that ensure that the development of the creative economy does not sacrifice noble cultural values, does not damage the environment, and does not leave future generations in worse conditions (Dzil Hijjah & Jaharuddin, 2024). The implementation of Islamic economic principles in the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia is still in the stage of exploration and adaptation. Several initiatives have shown promising potential, such as the development of halal tourism villages, the use of zakat and waqf funds for the empowerment of the artist community, the application of green and circular economy concepts in cultural festivals, and the integration of digital technology in the marketing of sharia value-based artworks (Azwar et al. 2025). However, the implementation is still partial, fragmented, and has not been integrated into a comprehensive urban policy framework.

Structural challenges such as low Islamic economic literacy among cultural actors, limited supporting infrastructure, regulations that are not fully accommodating, and a lack of systematic multi-stakeholder collaboration are the main obstacles to realizing a cultural arts ecosystem that is truly based on Islamic principles (Aisyah et al., 2024). Therefore, an in-depth study is needed to formulate an integration strategy that is applicable, contextual, and sustainable.

This chapter aims to comprehensively analyze how the economic principles of Islamic development can be implemented in the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia. The significance of this chapter lies in its contribution to the development of Islamic economic discourse that is contextual with contemporary urban dynamics, while enriching the literature on the management of art and cultural ecosystems based on Islamic values. Practically, the results of this study can be considered for the formulation of more inclusive public policies, the development of creative financial instruments that are compliant with sharia, and the strengthening of the capacity of cultural communities in facing the challenges of globalization and digitalization. This chapter uses a qualitative literature study method with a conceptual analysis approach and thematic synthesis against a variety of relevant academic sources, policy reports, and empirical case studies. The structure of the discussion will be divided into three main subchapters: first, the theoretical foundation of Islamic economic principles in urban cultural development; second, the integration of cultural capital, creative economy, and local wisdom in the Islamic economic paradigm; Third, the mechanism of implementation and instrumentation of Islamic finance in the urban arts and culture ecosystem. Through this approach, it is hoped that a deep understanding and recommendations can be produced that are applicable to the development of the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia based on the economic principles of Islamic development.

1. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAMIC ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES IN URBAN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable urban development cannot be separated from the cultural dimension, because culture is the spirit that animates urban spaces, forms collective identities, and becomes a source of inspiration for social and economic innovation. However, in urban development practices that are often dominated by market logic and technical efficiency, the cultural dimension is often reduced to a traded commodity, loses its spiritual meaning, and is vulnerable to commercial exploitation. This is where the principles of Islamic economics offer an alternative framework that places culture not just as an economic asset, but as a mandate that must be managed with responsibility, justice, and blessing. The theoretical foundation of Islamic economics in the context of urban cultural development is rooted in five fundamental pillars: monotheism, justice ('adl), caliphate, al-mas'uliyah, and nubuwwah, which together form a value system that is holistic, integrative, and oriented towards the benefit of the ummah (Rayyahun et al., 2025).

The principle of monotheism is the ontological and epistemological foundation of the entire Islamic economic system. Tauhid affirms that Allah SWT is the absolute owner of everything in the universe, including wealth, resources, and cultural products. Humans, in this perspective, do not have absolute property rights, but have the status of a caliph who is entrusted with managing, developing, and distributing these resources wisely and in accordance with the will of the Creator. In the context of urban art and cultural ecosystems, the principle of monotheism teaches that works of art, cultural heritage, and creative expression are not private property that can be exploited arbitrarily, but rather a trust that must be maintained in its authenticity, preserved in meaning, and channeled for the common good (Rohaini et al., 2024). Creative economic activities based on monotheism not only pursue material profits, but also instill dimensions of worship, blessings, and moral responsibility in every process of creation, production, distribution, and consumption of works of art.

This principle rejects the logic of wealth accumulation that ignores spiritual values and encourages artists to view creativity as a form of gratitude and devotion to God, not merely an instrument of profit. Thus, monotheism becomes a moral compass that directs the development of urban culture so as not to be trapped in materialism, consumerism, or cultural homogenization that eliminates local identity. (Rayyahun , Amiruddin, & Rifqi, 2025).

The second and no less important principle is justice ('adl), which in Islamic economics includes distributive justice, transactional justice, and intergenerational justice. Distributive justice emphasizes that the economic benefits of urban cultural and artistic development should be enjoyed equally by all levels of society, not just accumulated in a handful of elites or large corporations (Rahmiyanti & Achiria, 2018). In practice, this can be realized through wealth redistribution mechanisms such as zakat, infaq, alms, and waqf, which are allocated specifically for the empowerment of the artist community, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the provision of access to education and art training for marginalized communities. Transactional justice demands that every process of value exchange in the cultural ecosystem, from the sale of artworks to the organization of festivals, to the use of cultural spaces, is carried out transparently, without fraud (gharar), excessive speculation (maysir), or exploitative usury practices. Meanwhile, intergenerational justice reminds stakeholders not to sacrifice the future for short-term gains, but rather to ensure that cultural heritage, creative spaces, and urban art ecosystems can be enjoyed and developed by future generations. This principle of justice emphatically rejects the widening economic inequality in big cities, where the growth of the creative industry is often not followed by the improvement of the welfare of grassroots arts actors (Dzil Hijjah & Jaharuddin, 2024). By prioritizing justice, urban cultural development can be a tool of equity that strengthens social cohesion and reduces structural gaps.

The principle of caliphate or responsible leadership is the third pillar that regulates the relationship between people, culture, and the urban environment. The Caliphate affirms that humans are entrusted to be wise stewards of the earth, who not only utilize resources for personal gain but also maintain the balance of ecosystems, preserve cultural diversity, and prevent environmental damage (Rayyahun et al., 2025).

In the context of urban art and culture, the caliphate demands that the development of creative spaces, the development of cultural infrastructure, and the organization of art events do not sacrifice environmental sustainability, do not displace local communities, and do not eliminate the original character of urban areas. This principle also emphasizes the importance of community participation in decision-making related to cultural policies, so that development is not top-down, which marginalizes the community's voice, but bottom-up, which respects local wisdom and people's rights to their cultural space. The implementation of the caliphate in urban cultural governance can be seen from efforts to preserve cultural heritage areas, develop inclusive public spaces, and apply green and circular economy principles in the implementation of art festivals that are minimal waste and environmentally friendly (Aisyah et al., 2024). Thus, the caliphate becomes a bridge that connects the economic, ecological, and social dimensions in the development of urban culture.

The fourth principle, *al-mas'uliyah* or accountability, strengthens the ethical dimension and accountability in every cultural economic activity. In the Islamic perspective, every individual, institution, or government will be held accountable before Allah for how they manage the trust, including in the use of cultural resources and the distribution of creative economic benefits. This principle requires transparency in the management of art development funds, accountability in the implementation of cultural empowerment programs, and integrity in creative industry business practices. *Al-mas'uliyah* also includes sharia-based corporate social responsibility (CSR), where arts and culture business actors are not only profit-oriented, but also make a real contribution to community empowerment, arts education, and the preservation of cultural heritage. In the context of public policy, this principle encourages governments to implement open governance, involve the community in supervision, and ensure that cultural development budgets are used efficiently and on target (Hanifah et al., 2025). Without strong accountability, the development of urban cultural arts ecosystems is vulnerable to corruption, misuse of funds, and cultural exploitation that harms indigenous peoples. The fifth principle, *nubuwwah* or prophetic example, adds a dimension of moral character in the practice of cultural economy. The Prophet Muhammad, PBUH, is known as an honest, trustworthy, fair, and empathetic merchant to others.

These prophetic values must be the main ethics in the art business and urban culture, where honesty in the promotion of works, fairness in the distribution of royalties, respect for copyright, and concern for the welfare of art workers become operational standards. Nubuwwah also teaches that success is not measured solely by popularity or material wealth, but by the positive impact it has on society and the environment. In the urban art ecosystem, this principle encourages the creation of mutually respectful collaboration, rejection of the practice of plagiarism, and the development of a business model that is oriented towards the common good (Rayyahun et al., 2025). By emulating prophetic values, creative economy actors can build an ecosystem that is not only economically productive but also morally dignified.

In addition to these five fundamental principles, Islamic economics also integrates the concept of sharia maqashid as a strategic framework in the development of urban culture. The sharia maqashid which includes the protection of religion (hifzh ad-din), soul (hifzh an-nafs), intellect (hifzh al-'aql), property (hifzh al-mal), and heredity (hifzh an-nasl) provides a comprehensive guide to ensure that the development of art and culture does not deviate from the noble goals of Islam. Religious protection is realized through the preservation of arts that contain spiritual values, the development of halal tourism that respects the sharia, and the rejection of cultural exploitation that is contrary to Islamic values. The protection of the soul and intellect is achieved through the creation of safe art spaces, enlightening creativity education, and rejection of artistic content that damages morals or triggers social conflict. Wealth protection is implemented through a fair financial system, inclusive access to finance, and wealth redistribution mechanisms that prevent extreme accumulation. Meanwhile, the protection of descendants is realized through the inheritance of cultural values to the younger generation, the development of an art curriculum based on local wisdom, and the creation of an urban environment that is conducive to the growth and development of children and families (Aisyah et al., 2024). By integrating sharia maqashid, the development of urban culture becomes more directed, measurable, and in harmony with the purpose of creating humans as caliphs on earth.

ART, IDENTITY, AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

A sharp contrast can be seen when comparing the Islamic economic approach with the conventional economic system in managing the urban art and cultural ecosystem. Capitalism tends to treat culture as a commodity whose value is determined by market mechanisms, so that works of art that do not have a high selling value are often overlooked, while art that is commercially popular is massively exploited to the point of losing its original meaning. The system also tends to ignore the dimension of distributive justice, where independent artists often receive disproportionate royalties compared to distributors or digital platforms. Socialism, on the other hand, despite its emphasis on equality, often encounters obstacles in efficiency, innovation, and freedom of expression, due to the state's overly strict control over cultural production. Islamic economics offers a middle ground that combines social justice, responsible business freedom, and a strong moral orientation. In this system, culture is not marketed freely without ethics, but it is also not rigidly controlled by the state. On the contrary, culture is managed as a collective mandate that is distributed fairly, sustainably preserved, and developed in an inclusive manner by involving all stakeholders (Dzil Huijjah & Jaharuddin, 2024). This approach ensures that the growth of the creative industry does not sacrifice local identity, does not damage the environment, and does not leave marginalized communities in the suburbs.

The implementation of these theoretical principles in the urban context of Indonesia requires contextual and strategic adaptation. Major cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, and Makassar have different cultural, economic, and social characteristics, so the approach to cultural development cannot be standardized. However, the principles of monotheism, justice, caliphate, al-mas'uliyah, and nubuwwah remain relevant as universal foundations that can be operationalized according to local needs. The main challenge lies in how to transform these normative values into operational policies, applicable financial instruments, and participatory governance models. Collaboration is needed between local governments as regulators, academics as knowledge producers, creative industry players as economic drivers, cultural communities as identity guards, and Islamic financial institutions as capital providers.

Only through multi-stakeholder synergy based on Islamic principles can the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia develop into a just, sustainable, and dignified space of civilization.

2. INTEGRATION OF CULTURAL CAPITAL, CREATIVE ECONOMY, AND LOCAL WISDOM IN THE ISLAMIC ECONOMIC PARADIGM

The urban art and cultural ecosystem cannot be separated from the concept of cultural capital, which refers to knowledge, values, traditions, skills, and symbols that are inherited from generation to generation and become the collective identity of a society. In Pierre Bourdieu's perspective, cultural capital is not just a symbolic asset, but a resource that can be converted into economic, social, and political capital. In Indonesia's major cities, cultural capital is often marginalized by the currents of modernization, gentrification, and global cultural homogenization. However, when integrated with Islamic economic principles, cultural capital can actually become a strategic foundation to build a creative economy that is inclusive, sustainable, and rooted in local wisdom (Adi, 2025). This integration not only strengthens cultural resilience, but also creates economic added value that is distributed equitably to communities of cultural owners.

A case study of the Laskaru community in Cipedak Village, South Jakarta, provides a concrete example of how Betawi cultural capital can be actualized within the framework of a green, circular, and digital economy that is in harmony with Islamic principles. This community revives traditional practices such as "nyambat" (mutual cooperation to clear land) and "ngubek empang" (fish harvesting together), which not only preserve local wisdom, but also become the basis for environmental management and productive economy. Through maggot cultivation from household organic waste, a biofloc system for fish farming, and the use of traditional agricultural tools, the Laskaru community shows that cultural capital is not a static heritage of the past, but rather dynamic and adaptive to modern challenges. This practice is in line with the principles of caliphate and al-mas'uliyah in Islamic economics, where nature is seen as a mandate that must be managed responsibly, not greedily.

The mutual cooperation that is characteristic of the Betawi community also reflects the principles of solidarity and partnership in Islam, which emphasizes togetherness, mutual help, and equitable distribution of benefits (Adi, 2025). By integrating cultural capital into creative economy activities, these communities not only maintain cultural identity, but also create jobs, increase food security, and reduce environmental impact through circular economy principles.

The concept of creative cities, promoted by UNESCO and adopted by various cities in Indonesia such as Ambon, Bandung, Jakarta, and Pekalongan, also shows great potential in integrating Islamic economic principles. Creative cities do not rely solely on physical infrastructure or foreign investment, but rely on community participation, the use of local potential, and the creation of an ecosystem that supports sustainable innovation. From an Islamic perspective, the development of creative cities can be framed through the concept of *mashlahah mursalah*, which is the principle of the public benefit that is the basis for the determination of laws and policies. *Mashlahah mursalah* demands that every creative city development initiative not only benefits a handful of business actors, but also improves the welfare of the wider community, preserves local culture, and maintains environmental sustainability. Cities that have successfully developed themselves as creative cities in Indonesia show that the use of local potential—such as music in Ambon, design in Bandung, literature in Jakarta, and crafts in Pekalongan—can create an inclusive and sustainable economic ecosystem. The active participation of the community in festivals, exhibitions, workshops, and other creative activities strengthens social cohesion and ensures that economic benefits do not accumulate on the urban elite alone (Aulia et al., 2025). The principle of distributive justice in Islamic economics finds its relevance here, where the development of creative cities must guarantee equal access for all walks of life, including marginalized artists, traditional artisans, and urban indigenous communities.

The Pentahelix or Quadruple Helix collaboration model is an effective operational framework in integrating cultural capital with the Islamic economic paradigm.

The model involves five main components: government, communities, academics, business actors, and the media, who share roles and responsibilities in fostering creativity and innovation synergistically. In the Islamic context, this model can be enriched by the role of mosques as socio-economic centers that not only function as places of worship, but also as creative business incubators, sharia financial literacy centers, and zakat and waqf distribution networks. The government plays an enabler that creates conducive regulations, provides fiscal incentives, and ensures transparency in the management of cultural budgets. Academics contribute through policy research, the development of an art curriculum based on local wisdom, and digital technology assistance for creative MSMEs. Business actors provide capital, market access, and product innovations in accordance with halal standards and Islamic ethics. Cultural communities are the main subjects that maintain the authenticity of works, preserve traditions, and ensure that noble cultural values are not eroded by commercialization. Meanwhile, the media plays a role in promoting artworks, educating the public about the importance of cultural preservation, and building a positive narrative about the Islamic-based creative economy (Azwar et al., 2025). The synergy of these five helices creates a holistic ecosystem, where creative economy growth goes hand in hand with cultural preservation, social justice, and environmental sustainability.

Digitalization and the Society 5.0 paradigm open up new opportunities in integrating cultural capital with Islamic economics in urban spaces. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, and Blockchain can be used to map cultural potential, analyze creative consumer demand trends, ensure the authenticity of artwork certifications, and expand market access for urban art actors. For example, halal marketplace platforms can connect traditional artisans with global consumers who value ethical and spiritual values in cultural products. Blockchain systems can be used to record the supply chain of artworks, prevent plagiarism, and ensure fair royalties for creators. Big data can help local governments formulate evidence-based cultural policies, while AI can predict creative consumption trends so that artists can innovate according to market demand without losing their local identity (Azwar et al., 2025).

However, this digital transformation must be balanced with strengthening digital literacy among cultural communities, providing equitable infrastructure, and policies that protect data and intellectual property rights of artists. Without an inclusive approach, digitalization can actually widen the gap between technologically literate art actors and those who are digitally marginalized.

Islamic tourism or halal tourism is also a strategic sector that can integrate cultural capital with the economic principles of Islamic development. Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has great potential in developing tourist destinations that not only offer natural beauty, but also allow Muslim tourists to carry out worship and respect sharia values. The development of facilities such as halal hotels, certified restaurants, adequate worship spaces, and educational tour packages based on cultural heritage, can create a wide multiplier effect on the economy of the local community. The hospitality, culinary, transportation, handicrafts, and tour guide services sectors directly benefited from the increase in Muslim tourist visits. More than that, halal tourism also serves as an intercultural bridge, where tourists not only enjoy the beauty of the destination, but also learn about Islamic values that are peaceful, tolerant, and blessing-oriented. Through sustainable management, halal tourism can encourage the preservation of Islamic historical sites, the revitalization of cultural areas, and the economic empowerment of urban indigenous peoples (Zahud, 2024). The challenges faced include a lack of public awareness of halal standards, limited infrastructure in remote areas, and suboptimal coordination between the government and industry players. However, with a collaborative approach and strengthening the capacity of human resources, halal tourism can be the driving force of an inclusive and sustainable creative economy.

The integration of cultural capital with an Islamic-based creative economy also demands an emphasis on green and circular economy principles in the organization of urban arts and culture events. Music festivals, art exhibitions, theater performances, or creative markets often generate large waste, drain energy, and leave a significant carbon footprint. The application of the principles of the caliphate and al-mas'uliyah requires that art event organizers be responsible for the environmental impact of their activities.

Innovations such as the use of renewable energy in the performance stage, recycling-based waste management, the use of environmentally friendly materials in art installations, and the implementation of green logistics systems in the distribution of works, can reduce negative impacts on the environment. The eco-mosque concept that has been initiated by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and the Indonesian Mosque Council (DMI) shows how places of worship can be pioneers in environmentally friendly practices, such as the installation of solar panels, water recycling systems, and organic waste management. This practice can be adopted by urban cultural spaces such as art galleries, community theaters, or cultural centers, so that the art ecosystem is not only economically productive but also ecologically responsible (Rohaini et al., 2024). By integrating the principles of the green economy, the development of urban arts and culture becomes in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda and the principles of sustainability in Islam.

However, the integration of cultural capital, creative economy, and local wisdom in the Islamic economic paradigm cannot be separated from structural challenges. First, there is still a low understanding of art actors and cultural communities about the principles of Islamic economics, so many initiatives run without a clear ethical framework. Second, policy fragmentation between the cultural, tourism, creative economy, and Islamic finance sectors, which hinders the creation of an integrated ecosystem. Third, limited access to financing for creative MSMEs, because conventional financial institutions often require guarantees that are difficult for artists or craftsmen to fulfill. Fourth, the risk of cultural commodification that actually erodes the original meaning of works of art when forced to follow the tastes of the global market. To overcome these challenges, it is necessary to strengthen Islamic economic literacy among cultural actors, harmonize cross-sector regulations, develop sharia-based creative financing instruments, and protect cultural intellectual property rights through customary mechanisms and positive laws. In addition, it is important to create an inclusive space for dialogue between governments, academics, industry players, cultural communities, and financial institutions, so that the policies formulated are truly responsive to local needs and aligned with Islamic values.

The integration of cultural capital with the Islamic economic paradigm in the urban art and culture ecosystem proves that urban development does not have to sacrifice identity, justice, or the environment for the sake of economic growth. Instead, by placing culture as a foundation, justice as a principle, and sustainability as a goal, cities in Indonesia can develop into a humane, inclusive, and blessing-oriented space of civilization. Local models such as the Laskaru community, mashlahah-based creative cities, halal tourism, and eco-mosque practices show that Islamic values can be operationally applied in a contemporary urban context. The challenge ahead is how to scale these initiatives to a broader level, strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration, and ensure that the benefits of the creative economy are enjoyed equitably by all levels of society. Only through a holistic, contextual, and based approach based on the principles of monotheism, justice, caliphate, al-mas'uliyah, and nubuwwah can the urban art and culture ecosystem in Indonesia become a driving force for sustainable and dignified development.

3. MECHANISM OF IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTRUMENTATION OF SHARIA FINANCE IN THE URBAN CULTURAL ARTS ECOSYSTEM

The theoretical foundation and conceptual integration between Islamic economic principles and the urban cultural arts ecosystem will not have a real impact without an applicative implementation mechanism and supporting financial instrumentation. In the context of urban development, the arts and culture sector is often considered a non-priority area in public budget allocation, while creative economy actors face difficulties in accessing business capital, certifications, markets, and supporting infrastructure. Conventional financial systems that are interest-based (riba) and demand rigid asset guarantees are often incompatible with the characteristics of art ventures that are volatile, project-based, or rely on intangible assets such as copyright and reputation. This is where Islamic finance instrumentation comes in as an alternative solution that not only provides equitable access to financing but also integrates social, ethical, and sustainability dimensions in every creative economy transaction (Hanifah et al., 2025).

Through digital zakat mechanisms, productive waqf, sharia microfinance, cultural sukuk, and technology-based collaboration platforms, the urban art and culture ecosystem can be transformed into an inclusive, sustainable, and globally competitive sector.

Zakat, as one of the pillars of Islamic economics, has extraordinary potential in supporting the empowerment of urban arts and culture communities. Traditionally, zakat is often understood solely as an instrument of consumptive assistance for the poor, but from a development perspective, productive zakat can be allocated for business capital, skills training, halal certification, and the development of cultural infrastructure. The digitization of zakat through online platforms, mobile applications, and blockchain systems has increased collection efficiency, distribution transparency, and accountability in fund management. Amil zakat institutions such as BAZNAS and LAZ have developed empowerment programs relevant to the arts and culture ecosystem, such as creative entrepreneurship training, the provision of business capital through mudharabah and musyarakah contracts, and business assistance for marginalized artists and artisans. Programs such as Z Mart (mustahik independent stall), Micro Zakat Bank, and Santripreneur show how zakat funds can be converted into a tool for sustainable economic empowerment (Ajustina & Nisa, 2024). In the context of urban cultural arts, digital zakat can be allocated specifically to support community festivals, the preservation of creative spaces, subsidies for art certification, and the provision of art education scholarships for the younger generation. With a transparent and data-based mechanism, zakat is no longer just a tool for wealth redistribution, but a strategic instrument in building a creative ecosystem that is inclusive and oriented towards the benefit of the people.

Productive waqf also offers strategic opportunities in the development of infrastructure and urban cultural arts ecosystems. In contrast to traditional waqf that is silent in nature (such as land for mosques or tombs), productive waqf is professionally managed to generate a sustainable surplus, which is then allocated for social, educational, health, or cultural preservation purposes. In an urban context, waqf assets can be used to build art buildings, creativity training centers, community art galleries, or independently managed artist collaboration spaces.

The Waqf Forest Program that has been initiated in various regions shows how waqf funds can be allocated for environmental conservation, which is in line with the principles of the caliphate and al-mas'uliyah in Islam (Rohaini et al., 2024). In the cultural arts ecosystem, productive waqf can be developed through cash waqf schemes that are invested in creative projects, or digital asset waqf, such as artwork copyrights, whose royalties are channeled to the empowerment of budding artists. The advantage of waqf lies in its enduring and non-transferable nature, thus ensuring the sustainability of funding for the arts sector, which is often vulnerable to market fluctuations. However, optimizing productive waqf requires clear regulations, professional management, and collaboration between nazhir (waqf managers), local governments, and the arts community to ensure that waqf assets truly provide maximum benefits to the urban cultural ecosystem.

In addition to zakat and waqf, Islamic financial institutions such as Islamic banks, BMT (Baitul Maal wat Tamwil), Islamic cooperatives, and Islamic fintech play a crucial role in providing equitable access to financing for urban creative economy actors. The profit-sharing-based financing system (mudharabah and musyarakah) is more in accordance with the characteristics of art businesses that have fluctuating risks, because the financial burden is not borne by the business actors themselves, but is shared proportionally with the financial institution according to the profits generated. This approach encourages equal, transparent, and mutually beneficial partnerships, in contrast to conventional systems that charge fixed interest without considering the real conditions of the business. Sharia fintech has also developed a halal crowdfunding platform that allows people to invest in creative projects based on Islamic values, such as Islamic film production, cultural festival organizing, or digital art application development. By utilizing digital technology, creative financing becomes more inclusive, fast, and affordable for art MSMEs that previously had difficulty accessing traditional banking (Hanifah et al., 2025). However, challenges such as low Sharia financial literacy, complexity of Sharia contracts, and limited credit data for art actors without formal financial history are still obstacles.

More adaptive product innovation, intensive business mentoring, and the integration of alternative credit scoring systems that take into account the portfolio of works, the reputation of the artist, and the potential of the creative market are needed.

The idea of the Halal Urban Economy Dashboard, developed within the framework of Society 5.0, offers a managerial breakthrough in integrating all Islamic financial instrumentation into the urban arts and culture ecosystem. This dashboard is not just a static data set, but an intelligent digital platform that serves as a center for mapping, integration, analytics, and transparency for all stakeholders. The halal ecosystem mapping component allows spatial identification of the location of creative MSMEs, art galleries, cultural spaces, and Islamic financial institutions operating in a city. The integration function connects artists with investors, regulators, consumers, and academics in one virtual collaboration space, reducing fragmentation and speeding up the decision-making process. The AI- and Big Data-based analytics function can predict the trend of demand for artworks, recommend potential creative products, and analyze the consumption patterns of urban people, so that art actors can innovate strategically. Meanwhile, the Blockchain-based transparency function ensures the authenticity of artwork certification, records the distribution supply chain, and prevents plagiarism or data manipulation (Azwar et al., 2025). In the context of the arts and culture ecosystem, this dashboard can be integrated with the digital zakat system, productive waqf management, and creative financing platforms, so as to create an integrated, accountable, and responsive financial ecosystem to market dynamics. The implementation of the dashboard requires the commitment of local governments in providing open data, the readiness of art actors in portfolio digitization, and collaboration with academics and the private sector in the development of supporting technologies.

Creative MSMEs as the backbone of the urban arts and culture ecosystem also require systematic support in terms of halal certification, digital market access, and sustainable supply chains. Halal certification does not only apply to food and beverage products, but can also be extended to handicraft products, Muslim fashion, halal cosmetics, and digital art content that is in accordance with Islamic values.

The certification process, which has been considered complicated and expensive, can be simplified through integration with digital platforms, technical assistance from amil institutions, and subsidies for certification fees from zakat or waqf funds. The digitization of creative MSMEs through local marketplaces, halal e-commerce, and social media platforms allows urban artists to reach a wider market, both domestic and global. However, global market penetration requires an understanding of international halal standards, Muslim consumer preferences, as well as marketing strategies that respect local cultural values. Green Halal Supply Chain is a relevant concept in ensuring that the production, distribution, and consumption process of artworks meets halal standards and is environmentally friendly. The use of recycled materials, environmentally friendly packaging, low-carbon logistics, and the application of circular economy principles in the production of artworks can increase the competitiveness of Indonesian creative products in a global market that is increasingly aware of data sustainability (Azwar et al., 2025).

Multi-stakeholder collaboration through the Quadruple Helix model is the key to the successful implementation of Islamic finance instrumentation in the urban arts and culture ecosystem. The government plays a role as a regulator that creates a conducive climate through supportive regulations, fiscal incentives, and the provision of digital and physical infrastructure. The private sector and investors provide capital, technology, and market access that connects urban art actors with a global network. Academics contribute through policy research, development of success indicators, and capacity training of creative human resources. Meanwhile, society and cultural communities are the main subjects that maintain the authenticity of works, ensure that Islamic values are integrated in creative practices, and oversee the equitable distribution of economic benefits. Mosques as socio-economic centers can function as mosque cooperatives that provide micro capital, sharia financial literacy centers, and collaboration spaces for local artists and artisans (Azwar et al., 2025). The synergy of these four helices creates an ecosystem that is not only economically productive, but also ethical, inclusive, and sustainable. However, challenges such as sectoral egos, lack of coordination across ministries, and weak institutional capacity at the regional level are still obstacles.

It is necessary to establish a special task force for the development of the halal creative economy, strengthen the capacity of BAPPEDA in data-based planning, and incentives for cities that successfully implement collaborative models effectively.

Other implementation challenges include low Islamic economic literacy among art actors, limited digital infrastructure in suburban areas, and policy fragmentation between the cultural, tourism, and Islamic finance sectors. Many artists and craftsmen do not understand the concept of productive zakat, waqf, or sharia financing, so they remain dependent on conventional systems that are not in accordance with Islamic principles. On the other hand, regulations that have not fully accommodated the specific needs of the creative sector, such as cultural copyright protection, certification flexibility, or tax incentives for arts ventures, hinder the growth of healthy ecosystems. The solutions needed include a massive and contextual Islamic economic literacy campaign, simplification of regulations responsive to the characteristics of creative ventures, the development of an arts education curriculum that integrates Islamic values and entrepreneurship, and the strengthening of a network of arts communities that support each other. The government also needs to implement an evidence-based policy by utilizing an integrated data dashboard, so that budget allocations, empowerment programs, and fiscal incentives can be channeled in a targeted and measurable manner.

The mechanism of implementation and instrumentation of Islamic finance in the urban arts and culture ecosystem proves that Islamic values can be operationalized in an applicative manner in the context of contemporary urbanism. Through digital zakat, productive waqf, sharia financing, halal urban economy dashboards, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, the arts and culture sector is not only the driving force of the creative economy, but also a space for identity preservation, distributive justice, and ecological responsibility. The challenge ahead is how to ensure that these instruments truly reach grassroots artists, are not trapped in bureaucratic formalism, and are able to adapt to changing technologies and global market preferences.

With a holistic, adaptive, and based approach based on the principles of monotheism, justice, caliphate, al-mas'uliyah, and nubuwwah, the urban art and culture ecosystem in Indonesia can become a model of development that is inclusive, sustainable, and oriented towards blessings for all people.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the economic principles of Islamic development in the urban art and cultural ecosystem in Indonesia is not just a normative discourse, but a strategic need to answer the challenges of modernization, economic inequality, and the degradation of local cultural values. The principles of monotheism, justice ('adl), caliphate, al-mas'uliyah, and nubuwwah provide an ethical foundation that places culture as a collective mandate, not an exploited commodity. Through the integration of cultural capital, creative economy, and local wisdom, cities in Indonesia have great potential to build an inclusive arts ecosystem, empower grassroots actors, and preserve identity amid globalization.

Islamic financial instrumentation such as digital zakat, productive waqf, profit-sharing-based microfinancing, and the concept of the Halal Urban Economy Dashboard offer a measurable, transparent, and collaborative implementation mechanism. These tools not only provide equitable access to capital for creative arts and MSMEs, but also ensure an equitable distribution of economic benefits as well as ecological responsibility in the cultural value chain. The success of this model relies heavily on multistakeholder synergy through a Quadruple Helix approach that involves governments, academics, business actors, cultural communities, and mosques as socio-economic centers.

Challenges such as low Islamic economic literacy, regulatory fragmentation, limited digital infrastructure, and the risk of cultural commodification still require serious attention. The solutions needed include harmonizing policies across sectors, accelerating inclusive digital transformation, strengthening the capacity of creative human resources, and protecting cultural values so that they are not eroded by market logic. Policy implications emphasize the need to integrate Islamic values into creative city planning, the development of fiscal incentives for sharia-based arts ventures, and the strengthening of data-driven governance.

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With the joint commitment of all stakeholders, the urban arts and culture ecosystem in Indonesia can transform into a just, innovative, sustainable, and blessing-oriented civilization space for current and future generations.

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CHAPTER 4
TRANSFORMATION OF THE ECONOMIC VALUE
OF ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT ON THE PRACTICE
OF BATIK ART AS A LOCAL ECONOMY

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INTRODUCTION

Economic development is a process that aims to improve people's welfare through increasing productivity, income equity, and strengthening economic capacity in a sustainable manner (Mon, 1999). In practice, economic development is not only oriented towards economic growth, but must also be able to answer various social problems such as poverty, inequality, and limited public access to economic resources. Development approaches that focus too much on macroeconomic growth are often not able to have a significant impact on the welfare of the community equally, so an alternative approach that is more inclusive and based on the potential of the community itself is needed.

One of the increasingly relevant approaches in economic development is strengthening the local economy. Local economics emphasizes the utilization of the potential possessed by a region, both in the form of natural resources, human resources, and cultural wealth as the main basis for economic activities. This approach not only aims to increase regional economic growth, but also to encourage community economic independence and strengthen community-based economic structures. Through the development of the local economy, the community is no longer positioned as an object of development, but as the main subject who plays an active role in managing and developing the economic potential in its environment (Mahri et al., 2021).

In this context, the cultural sector is one of the strategic potentials that can be developed as part of the local economy. Art and culture not only have aesthetic and identity value, but also have economic value that can be utilized to improve people's welfare. One concrete form of integration between culture and economy is the practice of batik art as part of a locally-based creative industry. Batik as Indonesia's cultural heritage has developed not only as a symbol of cultural identity, but also as an economic commodity that has high added value and competitiveness in the national and international markets (Mawardi & Amanulloh, 2024).

The batik industry has distinctive characteristics as a labor-intensive and community-based economic sector. Batik production activities involve various levels of society, ranging from artisans, business actors, to distributors, so that they are able to create jobs and increase people's income directly.

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In various regions, especially in the city of Pekalongan which is known as the city of batik, this industry has become the backbone of the local economy. The existence of batik not only contributes to the economy, but also strengthens cultural identity and becomes a medium for the preservation of local values that are inherited from generation to generation (Rinaldi, 2025).

However, the development of the batik industry in the modern era is also faced with various challenges that are quite complex. Globalization and technological developments have encouraged the emergence of increasingly fierce competition, both from mass batik products and other textile products that are cheaper and faster to produce. In addition, limited innovation, low digital literacy among business actors, and limited access to markets and capital are obstacles to the development of the local batik industry. These challenges show that strengthening the batik industry requires not only an economic strategy, but also an approach that is able to integrate values, ethics, and sustainability in the community's economic practices (Mawardi et al., 2025).

In this case, the perspective of Islamic economics becomes relevant to be used as a foundation in analyzing and developing cultural-based economic practices, including in the batik industry. Islamic economics is an economic system based on sharia values that emphasizes the principles of justice (al-'adl), balance (tawazun), social responsibility, and sustainability in economic activities. In contrast to conventional economic systems that tend to be oriented towards material gains, Islamic economics places the welfare of the community as a whole (falah) as the main goal in economic activities.

The application of Islamic economic values in the practice of the batik industry can be seen through various aspects, such as honesty in transactions, justice in employment relations, and social responsibility towards the environment and society. Batik production activities involving local communities also reflect the principle of economic empowerment that is in line with Islamic values. Thus, the batik industry not only functions as an economic activity, but also as a means of implementing ethical and spiritual values in people's lives.

Based on this description, it is important to examine how the transformation of the economic value of Islamic development can be integrated in the practice of batik art as part of strengthening the local economy.

This study aims to analyze the role of local economy in supporting community economic development, examine the contribution of batik art as part of the creative economy, and understand the relevance of Islamic economic values in the practice of the batik industry. In addition, this study also aims to identify various challenges faced by the local batik industry and analyze how the transformation of Islamic economic values can be the foundation for creating a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable economic system.

Thus, the focus of the discussion in this study is directed at the relationship between the practice of batik art as a local economy and the economic values of Islamic development. The discussion not only highlighted the economic aspects of the batik industry, but also examined how the values of ethics, justice, and sustainability in the Islamic economy can be implemented in the practices of production, distribution, and management of batik businesses at the community level. This approach is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of batik as a local economic force that is not only economically valuable, but also has social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions in community development.

In examining this phenomenon, this study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical type of research. The qualitative approach was chosen because it was able to provide a deep understanding of the social and economic phenomena that occur in the practice of the batik industry, especially related to the integration of Islamic economic values in the community's economic activities. Through this approach, the author seeks to explore the meanings, values, and practices that develop contextually in the lives of batik business actors as part of the local economy.

In addition, the approach used is also normative and contextual, namely by examining the economic concepts of Islamic development as a theoretical foundation, then connecting them with empirical practices in the batik industry. Thus, the discussion in this study is not only theoretical, but also provides a real picture of the implementation of Islamic economic values in culture-based economic practices. The data collection method in this study is carried out through library research by examining various library sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, and documents relevant to the topics of Islamic development economics, local economy, and the batik industry.

In addition, documentation techniques are also used to collect various data and information related to the practices of the batik industry, both in the form of reports, publications, and other written sources. The data obtained is then analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques, namely by interpreting and associating the data with relevant concepts to produce a systematic and comprehensive understanding.

Through these approaches and methods, it is hoped that this research will be able to contribute to the development of Islamic development economics studies, especially in the context of culture-based local economy. In addition, the results of the discussion are also expected to be a reference for business actors, academics, and policymakers in formulating a batik industry development strategy that is not only oriented to economic growth, but also to the values of justice, sustainability, and the welfare of the community as a whole.

1. THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS IN AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Development economics from an Islamic perspective is a development concept that is not only oriented towards economic growth, but also emphasizes the creation of the welfare of the community as a whole, both in material and spiritual dimensions (Latif et al., n.d.). In contrast to conventional economic approaches that often focus on increasing output, income, and capital accumulation, Islamic development economics comes with a more comprehensive approach, which integrates moral, ethical, and spiritual values in every economic activity. Thus, development in an Islamic perspective is not only measured from a quantitative aspect, but also from the quality of human life which includes social justice, equity, and sustainability.

In the framework of Islamic economics, the main goal of development is to achieve al-falah, which is the welfare of life that includes happiness in this world and the hereafter. This concept emphasizes that economic activity cannot be separated from the values of faith and human responsibility as a caliph on earth. Therefore, every economic development process must be directed to create a balance between the interests of the individual and the community, as well as between material and spiritual aspects.

In other words, economic development in Islam aims not only to increase income, but also to create a just, harmonious, and meaningful life for all levels of society (Mawardi et al., 2025).

In line with this, Islamic development economics is built on a number of basic principles that serve as guidelines in the implementation of economic activities. One of the main principles is justice (*al-'adl*), which emphasizes the importance of equitable distribution of wealth and the avoidance of exploitative practices. In Islam, wealth should not be concentrated in a particular group, but should be distributed fairly in order to provide benefits to the entire community. This principle is manifested through various Islamic economic instruments such as *zakat*, *infaq*, and *alms*, which function as a mechanism for wealth redistribution and social inequality reduction.

In addition to justice, the principle of balance (*tawazun*) is also an important foundation in Islamic economics. Balance reflects the harmony between various aspects of life, including between individual and social interests, as well as between economic needs and environmental sustainability. In the context of development, this principle requires that the development process not only focus on economic growth, but also pay attention to its impact on society and the environment. Thus, the development carried out does not cause damage or inequality, but is able to create sustainability in the long term.

The next principle is blessing, which emphasizes that economic activities must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of *sharia* in order to produce benefits that are not only material, but also bring spiritual goodness. In Islamic economics, blessings are an important aspect that distinguishes between mere profit and true well-being. Therefore, economic practices that contain elements of *riba*, *gharar* (uncertainty), and *maysir* (speculation) are prohibited because they can harm others and eliminate the value of blessings in economic activities.

Furthermore, the principle of benefit (*maslahah*) is the main goal in every economic activity in Islam. Benefit means that every economic policy and activity must provide benefits to the wider community and avoid harm. This principle places the welfare of the community as the top priority in economic development, so that every policy taken must consider its impact on social life and the welfare of the community as a whole (Algifari & Andrini, 2024).

In order to strengthen this normative foundation, Islamic development economics is also based on the concept of *maqasid sharia*, which is the main goal of Islamic sharia which aims to maintain and protect basic human interests. *Maqasid sharia* includes five main aspects, namely the protection of religion (*hifz al-din*), soul (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), heredity (*hifz al-nasl*), and property (*hifz al-mal*). These five aspects are the basis for formulating economic policies and activities so that they are not only profit-oriented, but also pay attention to humanitarian, moral, and sustainability aspects.

In the context of economic development, *maqasid sharia* serves as a framework that directs every economic activity to achieve a balance between growth and equity. For example, the protection of property (*hifz al-mal*) does not only mean maintaining individual ownership, but also ensuring that the wealth is used productively and does not harm others. Similarly, the protection of the soul and intellect means that economic development must be able to improve the quality of life of the community, including in the aspects of health and education (Karjadi & Soleh, 1997).

Furthermore, the basic values in Islamic economics are the foundation in creating a just and sustainable development system. One of the main values is justice (*al-'adl*), which emphasizes the importance of fair treatment in every aspect of the economy, both in production, distribution, and consumption. Justice also includes the protection of people's rights as well as the avoidance of monopolistic and exploitative practices.

The next value is balance (*tawazun*), which demands that there be harmony between economic growth and social welfare. In this case, development is not only oriented towards increasing economic output, but must also pay attention to the distribution of development results so that it can be felt equally by the entire community.

In addition, the concept of welfare (*falah*) is the ultimate goal of development in the Islamic economy. *Falah* is not only interpreted as material well-being, but also includes spiritual and social happiness. Thus, the success of development is not only measured by economic indicators such as per capita income, but also by the level of social justice, quality of life, and harmony in society.

Finally, the value of sustainability (*istidamah*) is an important aspect in Islamic economic development. Sustainability emphasizes that the use of resources must be done wisely and responsibly so that they can be enjoyed by future generations. In this context, economic development must not damage the environment or sacrifice long-term interests for momentary gains (Latif et al., n.d.).

Thus, the concept of development economics from an Islamic perspective is a holistic and integrated system, which combines economic, social, and spiritual aspects in a single unit. This approach emphasizes not only economic growth, but also on fairness, balance, and sustainability in development. Through the integration of Islamic economic principles, the concept of *sharia maqasid*, and basic values such as justice, welfare, and sustainability, Islamic development economics offers a more humane and common benefit-oriented development paradigm.

In the context of the development of a cultural-based local economy, such as the batik industry, this concept is very relevant because it is able to provide an ethical and normative foundation in carrying out economic activities. By integrating Islamic economic values in people's economic practices, it is hoped that an economic system can be created that is not only economically productive, but also fair, sustainable, and provides benefits to all levels of society.

2. CREATIVE ECONOMY AND THE ROLE OF THE BATIK INDUSTRY IN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The creative economy is a concept of economic development that places creativity, innovation, and human skills as the main factors in the production process (Iskandar, 2022). In this approach, economic growth no longer depends only on the availability of natural resources, but rather on the ability of human resources to process ideas, knowledge, and local potential into value-added products or services. The creative economy is understood as an economic activity that relies on creative ideas and creativity to create economic benefits while improving people's welfare. Thus, the creative economy is able to open up new business opportunities, create jobs, and strengthen the economic structure of local communities.

In the context of regional development, the creative economy has a strategic role because it is closely related to the management of local potential. The development of the creative economy encourages people to explore the resources around them and process them innovatively so that they have economic value. This approach is particularly relevant to be applied in regions with strong cultural and cultural richness, such as Indonesia. One of the tangible forms of the implementation of a culture-based creative economy is the batik industry, which not only functions as a cultural product, but also as an economic commodity that has high competitiveness.

Batik is an Indonesian cultural heritage that has deep historical, philosophical, and aesthetic value. Each batik motif contains a symbolic meaning that reflects the history, beliefs, and local wisdom of the people in their home area. In fact, batik has been recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO, which shows that batik has universal value as the nation's cultural identity (Setiawati et al., 2016). The uniqueness of batik lies in the diversity of motifs in each region, which reflect the characteristics of the environment, culture, and traditions of the local community.

Along with the times, batik has undergone a transformation from just a cultural product to a high-value economic commodity. This transformation shows that batik is able to adapt to the dynamics of the modern economy without losing its cultural identity. In this case, batik has a dual position, namely as a cultural heritage as well as an economic product that contributes to improving people's welfare. In fact, in the study of creative economy, batik is seen as a cultural asset that is able to create entrepreneurial opportunities and strengthen the local economy (Damayanti & Zakik, 2023).

In the community economy, batik's position is very strategic because it is able to become a community-based economic driver. The batik industry not only produces products, but also creates an economic ecosystem that involves many parties, ranging from artisans, traders, to other creative business actors. This makes batik one of the sectors that is able to encourage sustainable local economic growth. The contribution of the batik industry to job creation is very significant. The labor-intensive batik production process involves various stages, such as motif design, embroidery, dyeing, and finishing process (Silvianingsih & Wijaya, 2024).

Each of these stages requires a large amount of labor, so that the batik industry is able to absorb local labor, especially in batik center areas. Research shows that the batik industry can open up job opportunities for the community, including women's groups and housewives, so that it becomes a stable source of income. Thus, the existence of the batik industry plays a role in reducing the unemployment rate and improving people's welfare.

In addition to creating jobs, the batik industry also plays a role in community empowerment. The involvement of the community in the batik production process encourages the improvement of skills, creativity, and knowledge about entrepreneurship. Through training and mentoring, people not only become workers, but also have the opportunity to become independent business actors. This is in line with the concept of local economic empowerment which emphasizes the active participation of the community in economic activities. In fact, the development of batik business is often able to create new business opportunities, both as producers and as distribution and marketing actors (Nengsih et al., 2025).

The contribution of the batik industry is also seen in improving the regional economy. Batik production and trade activities encourage local economic turnover and increase people's income. The batik industry is often a regional superior product that is able to increase the competitiveness of the local economy. In addition, the development of the batik industry also has a multiplier effect on other sectors, such as trade, tourism, and services. For example, the development of batik educational tourism and handicraft exhibitions can attract tourists and increase regional income. This shows that batik not only provides direct economic benefits, but also contributes to overall economic development (Wijaya et al., 2026).

Furthermore, batik has an important role as a cultural identity as well as a local economic product. The existence of batik strengthens the identity of the community and becomes a symbol of regional pride. Each batik motif reflects cultural, historical, and philosophical values that have been passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, batik not only has economic value, but also high social and cultural value. The use of batik in various activities, both formal and informal, helps strengthen cultural identity and increase public awareness of the importance of cultural preservation.

As a local economic product, batik has a high selling value because of the uniqueness of the motifs, production techniques, and cultural meanings inherent in it. The integration between cultural values and economic values makes batik a real example of a creative economy based on local wisdom. The success of batik development is highly dependent on the ability of business actors to maintain quality, innovate design, and utilize modern marketing technology. Innovations in marketing motifs and strategies, such as the use of social media and digital platforms, can expand the batik market share to the national and international levels(Widiastuti et al., 2024) .

In the perspective of sustainable development, the development of the batik industry is not only oriented towards economic gain, but also on cultural preservation and community empowerment. The batik industry is able to be a means to maintain cultural heritage while improving the welfare of the community in a fair manner. Thus, batik is not only a symbol of cultural identity, but also an important pillar in the development of the local economy based on creativity and local wisdom.

3. STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING BATIK AS A LOCAL ECONOMY BASED ON ISLAMIC VALUES

The strategy of strengthening batik as the motor of the local economy in Indonesia requires an approach that not only touches on technical and commercial aspects, but must also be able to transform the economic values of Islamic development into real practice. From an Islamic perspective, economic development is not just the growth of the gross domestic product, but a process aimed at achieving *falah* (well-being in this world and the hereafter). Strengthening the batik sector through Islamic values is relevant considering that batik is a cultural identity that is very attached to the Muslim community in Indonesia. This strategy begins with the repositioning of spiritual values in the process of production to distribution, where every economic activity is seen as part of the mandate and worship to increase the benefit of the *ummah*(Chatra, 2024). Strengthening sharia-based batik Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is the main pillar in this strategy. Based on the review of sharia economics, MSMEs are not just business units, but instruments to create social justice through empowerment.

One form of very strong implementation is the empowerment of vulnerable groups, as seen in the practice of Batik Ciprat MSMEs for people with disabilities. From an Islamic economic perspective, providing employment opportunities for those with physical limitations is a tangible manifestation of the values of justice ('adl) and humanity. This practice proves that Islamic economics is able to change the paradigm from just providing assistance (charity) to sustainable empowerment. In addition, strengthening sharia-based MSMEs includes the implementation of honest work ethics, transparency in transactions, and avoidance of usury elements in capital financing. By adopting sharia principles, batik MSMEs can build higher consumer trust and create a more stable business ecosystem because it is based on blessings, not just exploitative price competition.

The aspect of innovation and development of batik products is the next strategy to ensure the sustainability of the local economy in the midst of globalization (Prajogi et al., 2023). Innovation does not mean eliminating traditional values, but adapting them to remain relevant to the needs of the times. Many batik artisans face challenges where their products are considered old-fashioned or only suitable for the elderly. Therefore, it is necessary to diversify products targeting the millennial generation through visual adjustments, motifs, and product functions. Innovation can be done by creating a more modern "second brand" or derivative brand with more flexible clothing designs, such as the use of batik accents in streetwear or casual fashion styles. Product development must also pay attention to the selection of high-quality materials but still pay attention to the principle of *halalan thayyiban*. Innovation in motifs can also include abstract and geometric elements of Islamic symbolism, which are in harmony with local wisdom, thus giving birth to unique products that have a high selling value in the international market (Agustin & Purbasari, 2025).

The role of local governments and Islamic economic institutions is a very crucial accelerator factor. The government has the authority to create regulations that support the strengthening of local culture, such as through the Department of Industry and Trade which facilitates capital through Islamic banking or the People's Credit Bank (BPR) with a non-burdensome scheme.

In addition, the government can play a role in building integrated batik centers, providing marketing management training, and assisting artisans in registering intellectual property rights for their regional batik motifs so that they are not claimed by outsiders (Wulandary et al., 2015). On the other hand, Islamic economic institutions such as the National Committee for Sharia Economics and Finance (KNEKS) can integrate the batik industry into the national halal industry supply chain. This synergy ensures that batik is not only seen as a cultural art product, but also as a leading commodity in the global sharia economic ecosystem that is able to increase local income and the welfare of artisans directly.

Marketing digitalization is an absolute strategy that must be adopted by local batik industry players to break the distribution chain that is too long and often detrimental to small artisans. The era of digitalization requires batik entrepreneurs to be responsive to technology through the use of e-commerce, social media, and professional web-based company profiling (Suranto et al., 2023). Digitalization is not only about selling products, but also about conveying a narrative or story behind a piece of batik fabric. With technology, craftsmen can communicate the Islamic values contained in the manufacturing process, such as the use of environmentally friendly natural dyes as a form of protecting nature (*hifdzul bi'ah*). Digital marketing allows batik from remote villages to reach global markets without time and distance limits. Training and mentoring for artisans in terms of digital branding and product photography are key so that local batik products are able to compete in the highly competitive online market. It also helps to minimize fraudulent practices in trading, as a good digital system provides data transparency and honest reviews from consumers.

Finally, collaboration between culture, economics, and Islamic values is the key to all of these strengthening strategies. Batik is a bridge that connects local identity with the universal principles of Islam. This collaboration is reflected in the spirit of mutual cooperation or communal cooperation that is often found in batik artisan villages. In Islamic economics, this spirit is in line with the principle of *ta'awun* (mutual aid), where big entrepreneurs embrace small artisans in a mutually beneficial partnership.

The collaboration of these values also creates harmony and religious tolerance, especially in areas with a multicultural community background. Local economic practices based on local wisdom and Islamic values will create social stability because the resulting economic growth is inclusive and does not create wide gaps (Umah, n.d.). Thus, the transformation of the economic value of Islamic development in the practice of batik art not only succeeds in strengthening the local economy materially, but is also able to maintain cultural preservation and increase the spirituality of the community in every canting stroke produced.

Overall, this strengthening strategy requires a collective commitment from all stakeholders. Artisans must be open to innovation and technology, while government institutions and Islamic financial institutions must provide a supportive infrastructure and ecosystem. If Islamic values such as justice, honesty, and goodwill are fully integrated into the batik industry, then the local economy will not only be resilient in the face of crises, but will also become a model of sustainable economic development that is sustainable, ethical, and proud for the Indonesian nation in the eyes of the world. Batik, as a great heritage, will continue to live and sustain its people in ways that are full of blessings and cultural glory.

4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The transformation of the economic value of Islamic development in the practice of batik art as a local economy has profound and multidimensional implications, which touch on the material and spiritual aspects of society. From the perspective of Islamic economics, economic activity is not just an effort to accumulate wealth, but an instrument to achieve physical and mental well-being based on the benefit of the ummah. The first and most crucial impact of the application of these values is the comprehensive improvement of people's welfare. Based on studies on batik businesses in various regions, the creative economy based on local culture has been proven to have a positive and significant influence on increasing the income of artisans. This transformation occurs when sharia principles such as fairness in wages and transaction transparency are integrated into business management.

This increase in income is not only a nominal figure, but a means to fulfill the maqashid sharia (sharia goals), namely maintaining the soul, intellect, descendants, and property. With a decent income from batik making, artisans are able to send their children to a higher level and gain access to better health. This creates a circle of virtue where economic independence achieved halal provides peace of mind and social stability at the household level to the village community. Welfare in this context also includes aspects of empowering marginalized communities, such as people with disabilities involved in the production of Cicrat Batik. This practice shows that Islamic values are able to transform limitations into dignified economic potential, where every individual is given equal rights and opportunities to contribute, so that the welfare of society grows inclusively and leaves no one group behind (Devotion et al., 2025).

The next very fundamental implication is the strengthening of local cultural identity as a fortress of national identity defense in the midst of globalization. The economic value of Islamic development views the preservation of a culture that contains goodness as part of maintaining God's mandate. Batik is not just a decorative fabric, but a cultural artifact that holds the philosophical, ethical, and spiritual values of the people of the archipelago. Through the revitalization of local motifs that are full of meaning, such as the Paksinagaliman motif in Cirebon which symbolizes multiethnic harmony, the local batik industry plays a role as the glue of national identity. The integration of Islamic values in the motives and production processes strengthens the collective awareness of the community on the importance of caring for ancestral heritage. In the era of globalization that tends to homogenize cultures, the success of the local economy of batik based on religious values provides pride for people to continue to wear their original identity. This identity strengthening has a social impact in the form of increasing public confidence in domestic products. Batik is a visual communication medium that conveys messages about beauty, politeness, and religiosity. Economic success coupled with the preservation of identity ensures that material progress does not make society lose its cultural roots, but rather strengthens the foundation of a civilized nation's character and respects history (National et al., 2021).

Community-based economic empowerment is the next socio-economic implication that reflects the principle of ta'awun (help-help) in Islamic economics. The local batik industry generally grows through artisan communities that synergize with each other in the procurement of raw materials, production processes, and marketing. This empowerment strategy prioritizes collective independence over the interests of selfish individuals. Through batik associations or cooperatives, artisans have a stronger bargaining position in dealing with market dynamics. The social implications of this community-based model are the emergence of strong social solidarity; More established batik entrepreneurs act as mentors for budding artisans, creating a business ecosystem that is mutually nurturing, loving, and nurturing. This empowerment also involves managerial coaching gradually and continuously, so that people are not only technically skilled in batik, but also smart in managing finances and business strategies. With active community involvement, economic risks can be borne together, and new innovations can be born out of communal discussions. The strength of this community ensures that local economic growth remains people-centered development, where economic benefits are evenly distributed along the value chain, from material preparations, batik makers, wall builders, to marketers, thus preventing the occurrence of property monopolies in just a few people.

Furthermore, the transformation of Islamic values in the batik industry makes a strategic contribution to sustainable economic development (Sustainable Development Goals). In the principle of Islamic development, humans are prohibited from doing damage to the earth, which in the context of the batik industry is realized through a commitment to environmental sustainability. The use of natural dyes derived from local plants not only produces unique and high-value batik colors, but also minimizes water and soil pollution by harmful chemicals. This green economy practice is a tangible form of human responsibility as a caliph on earth to maintain the ecosystem for future generations. The contribution to sustainability is also reflected in the adaptation of digital technologies to expand market access without undermining traditional values. The digitalization of the local economy, such as the implementation of e-commerce and digital marketing in batik villages, allows for the creation of resource efficiency and the reduction of carbon footprint.

The development of this digital-based local economy encourages the creation of independent Smart Villages, where technology is used to improve the quality of life of the community without eliminating existing religious and cultural values. The sustainable batik economy ensures that this business remains competitive in the global market that increasingly demands ethical and environmentally friendly products (ethical fashion)(Westermann, K., Woud, M. L., Cwik, J. C., Graz, C., Nyhuis, P., Margraf, J., & Blackwell, 2021).

The integration of local wisdom, Islamic values, and technological innovation in the batik industry creates a model of economic development that is resilient and fair. The economic implications are not only seen in the increase in the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GDP), but also in the creation of village economic independence that is able to survive in the midst of national and global crises. The existence of a strong batik industry in terms of values and management reduces people's dependence on limited formal sector employment and encourages the creation of new entrepreneurs at the local level. Socially, the harmony created by honest and fair economic practices strengthens social cohesion and reduces the potential for conflict caused by economic inequality. When every level of society feels the real benefits of the batik industry from employment for people with disabilities to a vast digital market for small entrepreneurs then the main goal of Islamic development, namely *falah* (plenary welfare), can begin to be felt collectively. This transformation proves that Islamic values are very relevant and applicable in strengthening the local economy, making batik a creative economic force that not only supports the community materially, but also enriches the soul with divine and humanitarian values(Brata Ida Bagus, 2016). All of these implications confirm that Indonesia's sustainable economic future lies in the ability of communities to rediscover their local potential and synergize it with the universal ethical principles embodied in Islamic development values, create equitable prosperity, be firmly rooted in culture, and always maintain the balance of nature.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that the creative economy has a strategic role in encouraging local economic development through the use of creativity, innovation, and the cultural potential of the community. The batik industry as part of the creative economy based on local wisdom not only functions as a cultural heritage, but also as an economic commodity that is able to make a real contribution to the welfare of the community.

The batik industry has proven to have a significant role in creating jobs because of its labor-intensive characteristics, so that it is able to absorb local labor widely, including community groups that have limited access to formal work. In addition, the batik industry also plays a role in empowering the community through increasing skills, creativity, and entrepreneurial opportunities that encourage community-based economic independence. In terms of regional economy, batik production and distribution activities are able to increase people's income and create a multiplier effect on other sectors such as trade, services, and tourism.

Furthermore, batik has an important position as a cultural identity as well as a high-value local economic product. The uniqueness of the motifs, philosophical values, and production techniques make batik a symbol of community identity that remains relevant in the midst of globalization. The integration between cultural values and economic values makes batik a real representation of a sustainable creative economy.

From the perspective of the economic perspective of Islamic development, the development of the batik industry is not only oriented to material aspects, but also prioritizes the values of justice (*al-'adl*), balance (*tawazun*), welfare, and sustainability. The application of these values in the practice of the batik industry is able to create a more inclusive, ethical, and socially just economic system. Thus, the transformation of Islamic economic values in the batik industry not only strengthens the local economy, but also contributes to the development of a more prosperous society as a whole, both from economic, social, and cultural aspects.

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