

Development Of A Competency Model For Millennial Noken Crafters To Enhance The Competitive Advantage Based On The Creative Economy In The City Of Jayapura

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Abstract

Keywords:

Competence, Noken, Millennials, Competitive Advantage, Creative Economy

This study examines the competencies of millennial noken crafters in Jayapura City to improve competitive advantages based on the creative economy. The research design uses a mixed method with an Explanatory Sequential Design approach. Quantitative data was collected through a survey of 27 noken crafters with data analysis using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and multiple regression. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies. The results show that the competence of noken craftsmen is largely determined by attitudes and values ($\beta=0.403$), while the competitive advantage of noken is determined by product differentiation ($\beta=0.430$). The most dominant aspect of the creative economy is the ability of noken crafters to access markets and marketing ($\beta=0.321$). Qualitative analysis highlights the need for technical training, strengthening cultural values, design differentiation, consistent promotion, and the role of government support. The competency model developed is the result of integrating attitudes and values, knowledge, and skills, then linking them to markets and marketing, creativity and innovation, collaboration and policy, cultural added value, quality and consistency to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of noken businesses in the creative economy era. This model is expected to serve as a practical guideline for the development of millennial noken crafters in Jayapura.

INTRODUCTION

The creative economy is now one of the main drivers of global economic growth. In Indonesia, this sector contributed around US\$ 82 million or Rp 1.1 trillion in 2021 and absorbed more than 24 million workers (Development, 2024). One of the important principles in its development is the creation of works based on cultural heritage to strengthen national identity. A concrete example of this effort is the noken, a traditional Papuan bag that represents the cultural and social values of its community and has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Intangible Cultural Heritage since December 4, 2012.

Noken is a traditional craft that is widely distributed throughout Papua, both in mountainous and coastal areas. For the Papuan people, noken is not just a storage tool, but also a

symbol of respect for diversity, social solidarity, and a symbol of the fertility and resilience of Papuan women (Ula et al., 2023). Nokens are made from natural materials such as bark fiber, pandan leaves, and orchid stems, with varying sizes and functions according to community needs. However, amid the tide of modernization and the penetration of industrial products, the interest of the younger generation, especially millennials in Jayapura City, in producing nokens has begun to wane. Young people now tend to choose factory-made bags, which are considered more practical and prestigious compared to traditional crafts, so the tradition of weaving noken is becoming increasingly rare.

This situation shows a shift in cultural values and a serious challenge to the sustainability of the creative economy based on local culture. Based on initial interviews with a number of Papuan millennials, it is known that noken weaving skills are now considered to have insufficient economic value. In fact, noken sales can actually provide additional income for the local community. From the sale of just one small noken, crafters can earn a profit of around Rp100,000 to Rp150,000. If this opportunity is managed properly, noken crafters can become an alternative source of income for the community. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2024) shows that the percentage of poor people in Jayapura City in March 2023 was still 11.39% or around 34,790 people. This means that the revitalization of the noken industry can contribute to poverty reduction as well as cultural preservation.

Previous research confirms that competency development is a strategic element in maintaining the sustainability of cultural products in the era of the fourth industrial revolution. Sitompul (2019), through his study of ulos crafters in North Sumatra, highlights the importance of adaptive competencies that include technical knowledge, attitudes, and cultural values as efforts to maintain the competitiveness of traditional products. Based on the competency theory proposed by (Spencer & Spencer, 1993), competency is understood as the fundamental characteristics possessed by individuals, including motives, traits, self-concept (attitudes and values), knowledge, and skills that collectively determine a person's performance effectiveness. However, the trait aspect is not the focus of this study because it is relatively difficult to develop in a measurable way. In the context of millennial noken crafters, competency development needs to be carried out comprehensively by integrating technical abilities, motivation, and self-concept reinforcement in order to preserve cultural values while increasing competitiveness in the creative economy ecosystem.

However, there is still a significant gap between the traditional skills of noken crafters and the demands of the modern market. Pigome et al.,(2025) identified that the low competitiveness of indigenous Papuan traders in the Timika Central Market was due to limitations in product variety and quality, display layout, pricing, and a lack of creativity and innovation in business management. These findings highlight the urgency of strengthening the competencies of creative economy actors, especially the younger generation, so that they can adapt to the dynamics of the contemporary market. Unfortunately, most previous studies have focused on cultural preservation and marketing strategies without developing measurable and applicable competency models for young crafters. Therefore, research is needed that specifically examines how millennial noken crafters can build competencies that are relevant to modern market needs, while still being grounded in Papuan cultural values as a source of local identity and excellence.

Based on this background and gap, this study aims to analyze the competencies of millennial noken crafters in Jayapura City and develop a competency development model that can

enhance competitive advantage based on the creative economy. This study is expected to not only contribute theoretically to the literature on competency development in the creative economy, but also provide practical benefits for local governments, local communities, and educational institutions in designing strategies to empower the young generation of Papua through cultural preservation and economic welfare improvement. The novelty of this research lies in its effort to integrate competency theory with a creative economy approach based on local Papuan culture, making the results an empirical model to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the noken industry in the modern era.

METHODS

This study uses a mixed method with an Explanatory Sequential Design approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative analysis sequentially to gain an in-depth understanding of the competencies of millennial noken crafters in Jayapura City.

1. Population or Research Subjects

Quantitative data was collected from all noken crafters under the guidance of the Jayapura City Industry, Trade, Cooperatives, and Small and Medium Enterprises Agency (Disperindagkop UKM) in 2024, comprising 27 millennial noken crafters. Qualitative data was obtained from informants who were purposively selected from among the millennial noken crafters under assistance of Disperindagkop UKM of Jayapura City, taking into account the representation of each district and the variety of business experiences, totaling 5 millennial noken crafters. This was to ensure that the researchers could generalize the research findings to the entire population.

2. Data collection

Quantitative data was obtained using research instruments developed in the form of structured questionnaires and compiled based on theoretical indicators of competence, competitive advantage, and creative economy. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies to gain a more contextual understanding of the quantitative findings.

3. Data Analysis

The initial stage of the research was conducted through surveys and quantitative data collected and analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify the main constructs that shape crafter competencies, as well as multiple regression analysis to determine the influence of competency factors on competitive advantage and the impact of the creative economy on crafter income. The second stage was carried out through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and meanings that emerged from the informants' narratives. The final stage of this research was the integration of quantitative and qualitative results. The integration process was carried out through triangulation of methods and interpretation of results to compare and combine findings from both approaches. The results of this integration formed the basis for the development of a competency model for millennial noken crafters, which includes the main dimensions of competency, factors that influence it, and strategies for strengthening competitive advantage in the context of the local creative economy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

The majority of respondents are in the productive age range of 31–35 years (48.1%) and 36–40 years (40.7%), with a secondary education background, mainly high school graduates (55.6%). All respondents were women, most of whom were married (85.2%), indicating that noken

weaving is a traditional skill inherent to the role of Papuan women, as well as part of cultural preservation and creative economic activity.

Most noken crafters make knitting noken their main job (77.8%) with the main motivation of increasing family income (51.9%) and preserve culture (33.3%). This knowledge and skill are generally passed on from mothers to their children (77.8%), confirming that noken is a cultural heritage that is passed on from generation to generation. The majority of crafters earn between Rp 500,000 and Rp 1,000,000 per month (63.0%), indicating the occupation is a subsistence economic activity with potential for development through marketing strategies.

The work patterns of crafters is generally independent (74.1%), but there are also those who involve family or groups (25.9%), especially for large orders, reflecting the flexible nature of home businesses and their ability to transform into collective work according to market needs. This profile describes noken crafters as productive women who play an important role in preserving cultural heritage while driving local economic activity.

Analysis of Dominant Indicator Factors

Table 1. Analysis of Dominant Indicator Factors

Variable	Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)			Multiple Regression	
	Indicators	Anti-Image Correlation Value	Communalities	β	P-value
Competence	Knowledge	0.756	0.461	0.345	0.000
	Skills	0.632	0.291	0.309	0.000
	Attitude Value	0.588	0.724	0.403	0.000
	Motives	0.571	0.558	0.341	0.000
Competitive Advantage	Valuable	0.674	0.688	0.309	0.000
	Rare	0.614	0.799	0.338	0.000
	Difficult to imitate	0.611	0.794	0.430	0.000
	Difficult to Replace	0.614	0.827	0.296	0.000
Creative Economy	Creativity	0.717	0.637	0.192	0.000
	Innovation	0.842	0.692	0.211	0.000
	Discovery	0.667	0.392	0.229	0.000
	Market Access and Marketing	0.711	0.622	0.321	0.000
	Management and Production	0.892	0.463	0.164	0.000
	Policy and Collaboration	0.683	0.543	0.214	0.000

Source: Processed Data 2025

Factor analysis shows that all indicators have anti-image correlation values above 0.5, which means they are suitable for use in the model. In the Competence variable, the dominant indicator is Attitude Values ($\beta = 0.403$), followed by Knowledge ($\beta = 0.345$), Motives ($\beta = 0.341$),

and Skills ($\beta = 0.309$). This shows that work ethic and cultural values are the main foundations for the formation of noken craftsmen's competence.

In the Competitive Advantage variable, the indicator Difficult to Imitate ($\beta = 0.430$) is the most influential, followed by Rare ($\beta = 0.338$) and Valuable ($\beta = 0.309$). These findings confirm that the uniqueness of the design and product differentiation are the keys to noken's superiority in the market.

Meanwhile, in the Creative Economy, the dominant indicator is Market Access and Marketing ($\beta = 0.321$), followed by Creativity ($\beta = 0.292$) and Discovery ($\beta = 0.229$). This indicates that the ability of crafters to expand their market networks has a greater influence than managerial factors or external policies. In general, the three variables show a positive and significant relationship ($p = 0.000$), which confirms the consistency of the research model.

Thematic Analysis

Table 2. Summary of Qualitative Analysis Results for Noken Crafters

Main Theme (Thematic Coding)	Representative Quotes (I=Informant)
Need for technical training	"We need training so that we can compete with other noken sellers." (I2)
Strengthening cultural values	"At cultural festivals, we usually exhibit our work and learn from each other as noken makers" (I4)
Differentiation through distinctive motifs	"Anyone can make knitted noken, so it is difficult to market them unless they have special motifs." (I5) "We hope there will be innovation training so that noken can develop further and be appreciated by youth people."
The importance of promotion	"The cultural festival that was held had an impact on our noken because many people get to know us." (I3) "Our hope is that noken can become a cultural heritage that is recognized even overseas." (I3) "We usually promote noken on social media so that more people know about it and there are buyers from outside the region." (I2)
Government support	"The government must support and provide assistance so that the noken business can grow." (I1) "We need attention from the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives, not just once." (I5)
Limited access to raw materials and markets	"No one sells thread in the neighborhood, so we have to travel far to buy thread." (I4) "Our difficulty is selling noken, because there are few buyers." (I1)

Source: Processed Data 2025

The interview results show that the technical skills of crafters are passed on from generation to generation, without written guidance, and most of them are self-taught. Craftsmen realize the importance of technical training to increase innovation and competitiveness. In addition, the cultural value of noken as a symbol of Papuan identity is beginning to decline among the younger generation due to the dominance of economic motivations. Product differentiation is an important strategy for maintaining the uniqueness of distinctive motifs that are difficult to imitate, while digital promotion and cultural festivals play a role in expanding the market.

Government support in the form of training and raw material assistance is considered helpful, although its implementation has not been consistent. The main challenges are limited access to raw materials and markets, which impact productivity and business continuity. Overall, the qualitative results show that the sustainability of the noken industry depends on a combination of technical competence and cultural values, as well as adequate external support from the government and broader market access.

Integration of Research Results

Table 3. Research Results Integration

Aspect	Quantitative Results	Qualitative Results	Integration
Competence	Dominant Attitudes & Values ($\beta = 0.403$)	Cultural values, pride in Papuan identity	Value-based competencies are the main pillars of success for noken crafters.
Competitive Advantage	Difficult to imitate ($\beta = 0.430$)	Differentiation through distinctive motifs	Differentiation based on local culture is the key to competitiveness.
Creative Economy	Market access & dominant marketing ($\beta = 0.321$)	The importance of consistent, creative, and culturally-based promotion	Product creativity and culture-based marketing strategies increase market access and sales potential.
External Factors	Not directly measured	Government support: raw materials, training, coaching	Government support strengthens the development of noken businesses
Challenges	Some indicators contribute little (e.g., production)	Limited access to raw materials and markets	Major obstacles in the supply chain and distribution that reduce competitiveness.
Key Integration	—	—	Value-based competencies + product differentiation + creativity and culture-based marketing strategies → noken development strategy.

Source: Processed Data 2025

From the integration of these two approaches, it is understood that the competencies of noken craftsmen are multidimensional, covering internal aspects (attitudes, knowledge, and skills), aspects of differentiation and cultural added value as the basis for competitive advantage, and external dimensions in the form of policy support, promotion, and marketing digitalization that supports the sustainability of the noken creative industry. The overall relationship between variables that describe the process of transforming individual competencies into collective excellence based on cultural values is conceptualized in an empirical logic flowchart, as follows:

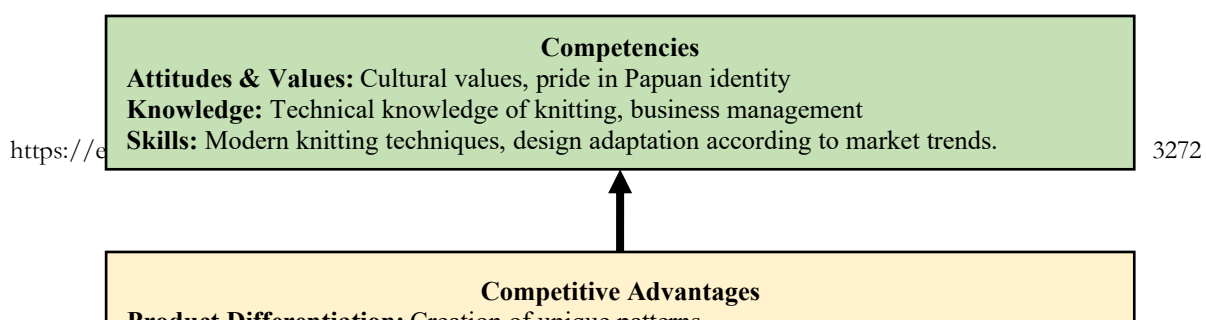


Figure 1. Empirical Logic Flow

Source. Data Processed 2025

This model framework is built on an empirical approach combined with theoretical frameworks such as *the Iceberg Competency Model* (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) , *Resource-Based View* (Barney, 1991) , and the concept of *Creative Economy* (Howkins, 2001 ; Florida, 2002)). This approach places competence as *the core capital* in creating sustainable economic, social, and cultural value.

DISCUSSION

Recommendations The competency model is developed by identifying three main characteristics that form an integrated and complementary competency system, namely:

1. Attitudes and Values

Attitudes and values are reactive motives that predict what a person will do in the short term and in situations of responsibility (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) . In this study, attitudes and values form the moral and ethical foundation of noken crafters. The crafters who are confident, open to new ideas, and responsible for their work will be able to build trust with buyers and expand their market. These attitudes are a form of social capital in developing culture-based creative businesses (Abdurachman, 2018). Additionally, the internalization of Papuan cultural values

such as pride in identity, adherence to customary norms, and respect for ancestral heritage are unique strengths that cannot be replicated by other industries. This aspect reinforces the authenticity of noken products while enhancing their symbolic and emotional value in the eyes of consumers. Thus, attitudes and values serve as cultural capital that supports sustainable competitiveness.

2. Knowledge

Knowledge is information possessed by an individual in a particular field (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). In this study, knowledge encompasses the conceptual and technical understanding required in the production and marketing processes. In the creative economy, crafters are required to have an understanding of the market and consumers, including market trends, consumer behavior, and relevant digital promotion strategies (Ruswanto, 2023). Knowledge of motif-making techniques, raw material selection, and design development is the basis for innovation that is relevant to market needs. On the other hand, cultural knowledge is a strategic differentiator. Understanding the symbols, colors, and meanings of Papuan motifs enables crafters to produce products that are aesthetically valuable and have depth of meaning. This knowledge supports the storytelling ability of noken products, so that each work is not only viewed as an economic commodity, but also as a representation of cultural meaning and philosophy.

The Meaning and Philosophy of Noken, as stated in the Noken Museum, Jayapura, Papua, are as follows:

Meaning of Noken:

- a. Social Meaning: Social identity, social bonds, markers of social status, symbols of togetherness and mutual assistance, high respect from one person to another, and strengthening social interaction among women.
- b. Cultural Meaning: Symbol of maturity in traditional ceremonies, traditional object required in tribal coronation ceremonies, balancer and harmonizer of tribal community relations.
- c. Economic Meaning: Ensuring food supplies are maintained or serving as an "early warning system" for survival, Having a high enough selling power, Serving as a medium of exchange or barter.

Philosophy of Noken:

- a. Noken as Cultural Heritage: Noken is interpreted as a symbol of the cultural diversity of the Papuan people.
- b. Noken in Harmony with Nature: The use of noken for various needs of the Papuan people is proof of their harmony with nature, which has been practiced for hundreds of years.
- c. Noken as a Symbol of Fertility: The philosophy of Noken as a symbol of fertility is synonymous with its elastic shape and nature, which can adapt to any shape it carries, just like a woman's elastic womb, which can contain a small fetus until it grows and is ready to be born.
- d. Noken as a Unifier of the Nation: All Papuans are familiar with Noken. They can also recognize Noken from each region in Papua, which has its own unique shape and material.
- e. Noken as a Way of Life: Noken is a symbol of Papuan life that reminds us to live in harmony with nature, be self-sufficient, and share with others. Noken is also an important part of symbolizing confidence and hope for a bright future.

- f. Noken as a Symbol of Spiritual Bond: When worn by a child, the noken creates a spiritual bond with the child's parents and homeland.

3. Skills

Skills are the ability to perform a specific task either physically or mentally (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). The basic skills that noken craftsmen must master include technical skills in the noken-making process, material selection, and the application of modern knitting techniques. Currently, noken has become a culture-based creative industry and an icon of Papua (Syaifuddin & Umam, 2022), where digital technology plays an important role in expanding the reach of the creative economy (Adif et al., 2024). Therefore, crafters need to be able to utilize social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook to market products, document their work, and establish communication with buyers to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the noken industry in the digital era. On the other hand, based on observations and interviews, it is known that the activity of making noken by Papuan women (mamas) is often done together in a place that can be used as a forum for developing collaborative skills, through joint business groups, division of production roles, and collective maintenance of quality consistency.

These three aspects of competency are then integrated into a conceptual framework visualized through the Millennial Noken Craftsmen Competency Model Diagram, which illustrates the functional relationship between competency characteristics and aspects of implementative development in the creation of economic and cultural value.

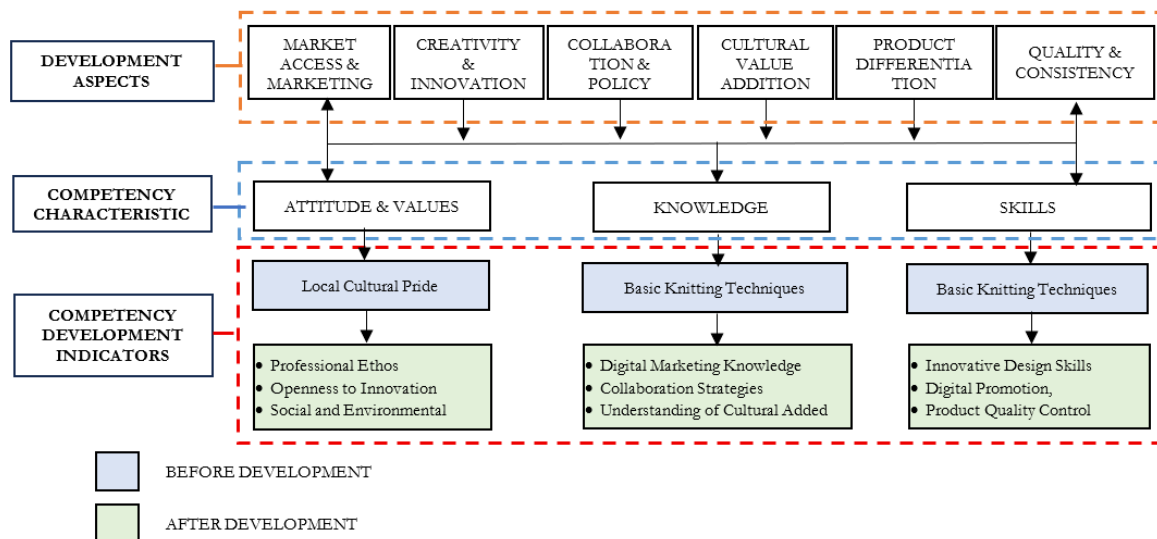


Figure 2. Competency Development Model

Source: Processed Data 2025

This model shows that each competency characteristic attitudes and values, knowledge, and skills does not work independently, but rather complements each other in producing productive, innovative, and sustainable performance. The integration of these three characteristics forms a structured competency model, which ultimately leads to six (6) key development aspects in creating the excellence of noken crafters, namely market access and marketing, creativity and innovation, collaboration and policy, cultural added value, product differentiation, and production quality and consistency.

As an operational derivative of the above model, a Noken Craftsman Competency Model was developed, consisting of a list of competency units that refer to the Indonesian National Work

Competency Standards (SKKNI) for the Processing Industry Category, Textile Industry Main Group, Weaving Field, and adjusted to the competency development indicators for noken crafters in Jayapura. The list of units is as follows:

1. Production planning
2. Production process control
3. Production target control
4. Developing designs
5. Evaluating product quality
6. Marketing products

The six competency units are further elaborated in the following description, which contains descriptions, elements, and performance criteria as a reference for the training and certification of noken crafters based on SKKNI:

1. Competency Unit : Production Planning

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and values needed to develop a production process plan.

Table 4. Production Planning

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
1.1 Developing daily work plans based on orders and personal capabilities.	• Determine the quantity and type of Noken to be produced according to time and labor capacity. • Preparing materials, tools, and the workplace before starting production. • Determine the sequence of work to make production more efficient.
1.2 Managing simple materials and equipment to support smooth production.	• Storing materials such as wood fiber or thread in a dry and clean place. • Knowing the sufficient amount of materials for one production period. • Ensuring knitting or weaving tools are in good condition before use.

2. Competency Units : Controlling the production process

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to control the production process.

Table 5. Controlling the production process

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
2.1 Maintaining precision and neatness throughout the production process.	• Each step is performed patiently to ensure the knitting is not loose or crooked. • Maintaining the pattern and color to ensure consistency from start to finish. • Storing temporary results in a safe place to prevent damage.

2.2 Maintaining working conditions and materials to ensure consistent quality.	• Scheduling breaks to avoid fatigue and ensure neat results. • Protect materials from water, dust, or excessive heat. • Avoiding pattern errors by checking the results every few rows of knitting.
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3. Competency Unit : Controlling production targets

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to control production targets.

Table 6. Controlling production targets

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
3.1 Determining completion time based on individual work capacity.	• Estimating the time required to complete one Noken. • Create a simple schedule so that the results match the buyer's request. • Do not delay work so that orders are completed on time.
3.2 Assessing work progress independently.	• Checking results daily to ensure work is proceeding according to plan. • Calculating how many products can be completed per week. • Record orders and work results to monitor personal productivity.

4. Competency Unit : Developing designs

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and values needed to develop designs.

Table 7. Developing designs

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
4.1 Creating design variations according to market demand and cultural inspiration.	• Adjusting colors, sizes, and shapes according to buyer preferences without altering cultural meaning. • Drawing inspiration from Papua's nature, traditions, or daily life for new motifs. • Keeping samples of previous designs as references for future creations.
4.2 Using creativity in selecting materials and colors.	• Combining different colored threads to create an attractive appearance. • Using natural materials available in the surrounding environment. • Adjusting the strength of materials so that products remain durable even if the design changes.

5. Competency Unit : Evaluating product quality

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and values needed to evaluate product quality.

Table 8. Evaluating product quality

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
5.1 Inspecting the final product before it is sold or delivered.	• Ensuring that the size, color, and shape are uniform and neat. • Check knots and the strength of the rope so that they do not break easily. • Replacing damaged or defective parts before sale.
5.2 Preserving the cultural value and authenticity of the work.	• The motifs and colors used continue to reflect Papuan culture. • Do not alter the basic shape of the Noken, which has symbolic meaning. • Maintain the authenticity of the patterns so that they are not exactly the same as those of other craftsmen.

6. Competency Unit : Marketing Products

Unit Description : This unit relates to the knowledge, skills, and values needed to market products.

Table 9. Marketing Products

Competency Elements	Performance Criteria (PC)
6.1 Offer products politely and confidently.	• Explain the meaning of motifs, materials, and manufacturing methods in simple language. • Demonstrate a friendly and honest attitude when dealing with buyers. • Determining prices based on materials, labor time, and product quality.
6.2 Using simple methods for promotion and sales.	• Selling products directly at markets, exhibitions, or through friends and family. • Displaying products on social media such as WhatsApp or Facebook using clear photos. • Keeping buyer contacts for future communication and offers.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the competence of millennial noken crafters in Jayapura is formed through the integration of cultural values, technical knowledge, and creative skills, which together determine competitive advantage in the creative economy ecosystem. The analysis results show that attitudes and cultural values are the dominant factors shaping the professionalism of crafters. Values such as pride in Papuan identity, work discipline, and commitment to preserving traditions are the main foundations that distinguish noken crafters from other creative economy actors in general.

In addition, product differentiation is a key distinguishing factor that emphasizes the uniqueness of noken as a cultural product that is difficult to imitate, while market access and marketing strategies demonstrate the importance of utilizing digital technology and social media in expanding market reach and increasing product added value. Thus, the results of this study

confirm that strengthening the competence of noken craftsmen must be built through a balance between preserving cultural values and adapting to the dynamics of the modern market.

Conceptually, this study has developed a culture-based competency model that links local wisdom with creative entrepreneurship. This model contributes to the development of science by expanding the application of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the concept of Creative Economy in the context of the local culture of the indigenous Papuan community.

The limitations of this study lie in the relatively small number of respondents (27 people) and the scope of the study which only focused on the Jayapura area, so the results cannot be generalized to the entire crafter community in Papua or Indonesia. Therefore, further research is needed to conduct a comparative analysis of other cultural craft sectors and to examine in greater depth the impact of digital transformation on improving the competence and competitiveness of crafters in the creative economy era.

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