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SURIWEAVE: REVITALISING TRADITIONAL WEAVING THROUGH COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN PULAU SURI

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Abstract:

Traditional weaving is an important form of cultural heritage and a potential source of livelihood for rural women. However, previous studies have largely discussed craft preservation, entrepreneurship and market challenges separately, while limited attention has been given to how community empowerment may support both weaving continuity and women's economic participation in Pulau Suri. This study explores how weaving-related challenges, community interventions and

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perceived empowerment outcomes are connected to the sustainability of traditional weaving in Pulau Suri. A qualitative case study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 20 participants selected purposively for their direct experience with weaving or local craft development, supported by field observation and document review. Data were analysed thematically. Five themes emerged: weaving as cultural identity and inherited knowledge; economic vulnerability; limited marketing and product visibility; digital exposure and youth involvement; and the need for continuous institutional and community support. Participants described weaving as a source of cultural identity and supplementary income, but irregular demand, weak market access and limited promotion constrained its economic value. They also perceived digital promotion, intergenerational skills transfer, collective marketing and sustained mentoring as important for improving visibility, participation and livelihood opportunities. The findings suggest that weaving sustainability is closely linked to empowerment through skills, market access, collective organisation and cultural continuity. Practical support should therefore involve local authorities, community organisations, NGOs, universities and craft-related agencies in coordinated training, market linkage, youth engagement and heritage preservation.

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Keyword:

Community Empowerment; Community Intervention; Cultural Heritage; Traditional Weaving; Pulau Suri

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Introduction

Pulau Suri is known as a local community with cultural and craft-based potential. Traditional weaving practised by the community reflects local heritage and creativity that has been passed down across generations. The craft may include woven products such as mats, baskets, decorative items, household products and other handmade craft products. These products are valuable because they carry cultural meaning and are produced through manual skill, patience and local knowledge.

Despite its value, the traditional weaving industry faces several challenges. Younger generations are less interested in learning weaving skills because they may perceive the activity as time-consuming, low-income or less relevant to modern employment. Weaving entrepreneurs also face unstable income because product demand is often inconsistent (Yusoff et al., 2020). In addition, limited promotion, weak branding, restricted market access and competition with factory-made or modern products affect the competitiveness of traditional weaving (Hassan & Ali, 2021).

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Community-based support may include skills training, product innovation, digital marketing, branding, youth involvement, community-based tourism, agency assistance and collaboration with universities or NGOs. In a qualitative study such as this, the value of these interventions is examined through participants' experiences and perceptions rather than assumed as a direct causal effect.

Although previous research has discussed traditional craft preservation, women's craft entrepreneurship and market access, limited research has examined how these dimensions intersect with community empowerment in the specific context of Pulau Suri. In particular, there is limited evidence on how local weavers perceive the links between cultural continuity, women's economic participation, market access, youth involvement and sustained community support. This study addresses that gap by exploring the challenges experienced by weaving entrepreneurs, the community interventions they perceive as useful, and the ways traditional weaving is understood to contribute to empowerment and cultural sustainability.

Problem Statement

Traditional weaving in Pulau Suri has strong cultural and economic potential. However, the craft faces sustainability challenges that may weaken its future continuity. One of the main concerns is the declining interest among younger generations (Tawano, 2025). If weaving skills are not transferred to youth, the craft may gradually disappear as older practitioners reduce their involvement.

Another issue is unstable income. Many weaving entrepreneurs depend on irregular orders, seasonal demand or small local markets. The income generated from weaving may not be sufficient to support household needs unless the products are promoted, branded and marketed more effectively. This situation may discourage local women from continuing the craft (Venugopal, 2023).

Limited market access is also a major challenge. Traditional weaving products may have aesthetic and cultural value, but they often remain within local markets because of weak promotion and limited exposure. Without digital marketing, product innovation and wider customer networks, weaving products may struggle to compete with modern alternatives (Al Mamun & Fazal, 2018).

Furthermore, community craft entrepreneurs may lack access to training, financial support, design innovation and institutional assistance. Without continuous support, traditional weaving may remain a small-scale activity with limited growth potential (Kapa & Setijaningrum, 2025). Therefore, there is a need to examine how community intervention can strengthen traditional weaving as a cultural heritage and community-based economic activity.

Existing studies establish that traditional crafts may support heritage preservation and rural livelihoods, but they provide limited context-specific understanding of how weaving sustainability and community empowerment are connected in Pulau Suri. This study therefore explores local weavers' experiences of economic vulnerability, market limitations, knowledge transfer and institutional support, with particular attention to how these factors relate to women's participation, livelihood opportunities and the continuity of weaving traditions.

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Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the main issues and challenges faced by traditional weaving entrepreneurs in Pulau Suri.
2. To examine the forms of community intervention that can support the sustainability of traditional weaving.
3. To explore the perceived impact of community intervention on local socioeconomic development.
4. To analyse the role of traditional weaving in women's economic empowerment and cultural preservation.
5. To propose improvement strategies for strengthening traditional weaving as a community-based economic activity.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the main challenges faced by traditional weaving entrepreneurs in Pulau Suri?
2. What forms of community intervention are needed to sustain the traditional weaving industry?
3. How does traditional weaving contribute to women's economic empowerment and household income?
4. How can traditional weaving be promoted as a form of cultural heritage and community-based entrepreneurship?
5. What strategies can strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of traditional weaving products?

Literature Review

Traditional Weaving as Cultural Heritage

Traditional weaving is an important form of intangible cultural heritage because it represents the identity, knowledge, creativity and collective memory of a community. Unlike physical heritage, intangible cultural heritage is maintained through living practices, skills, oral traditions and social interaction. Weaving techniques are commonly transmitted from one generation to another through informal learning within families and communities. Younger members observe and practise alongside experienced weavers, gradually learning how to select materials, prepare weaving components and produce specific patterns (Dias & Ogle, 2020). Therefore, each woven product represents not only the skill of an individual craftsperson but also the accumulated knowledge and cultural experience of the wider community.

Traditional weaving also carries cultural meanings through the use of local materials, patterns, colours and production techniques. The designs incorporated into woven products may reflect the surrounding environment, community values, daily activities and local ways of life. In many rural communities, weaving is closely associated with women's roles, household activities and social relationships. The process of weaving may create spaces for interaction, cooperation and knowledge sharing among community members. Consequently, traditional

weaving should not be understood merely as the production of functional or decorative items (Gyasi, 2026). It is also a cultural practice that strengthens a sense of belonging, preserves local identity and connects present community members with the experiences of earlier generations. The preservation of traditional weaving is important because the loss of weaving practices may also result in the disappearance of local knowledge, cultural meanings and community identity. However, cultural heritage cannot be sustained solely through documentation or the preservation of old products. It must continue to be practised, appreciated and transmitted to younger generations. Revitalisation efforts should therefore balance the protection of traditional techniques with adaptation to contemporary community and market needs. This may involve documenting weaving knowledge, providing intergenerational training, introducing innovative product designs and promoting woven products through tourism and digital platforms. By making traditional weaving culturally meaningful and economically relevant, communities can strengthen both heritage preservation and the long-term sustainability of the craft (Abdullah et al., 2025).

Women and Community-Based Craft Entrepreneurship

In many rural communities, traditional craft production is closely associated with women because craft activities can be carried out within or near the household environment. Women often engage in weaving, embroidery, food production and other handmade activities while continuing to manage domestic responsibilities and care for family members. These activities provide women with opportunities to generate supplementary income without requiring them to migrate or enter formal employment outside the community (Yunindyawati et al., 2025). Craft-based entrepreneurship is therefore particularly relevant to rural women who may face limited employment opportunities, transportation constraints or family responsibilities that restrict their participation in the formal labour market.

Participation in craft entrepreneurship can contribute to women's economic and social empowerment. Income generated from weaving activities may help women support household expenses, children's education, food consumption and other daily needs. It may also strengthen their confidence, decision-making ability and participation in community activities. When women work collectively through craft groups or community enterprises, they can share knowledge, divide production tasks, purchase materials collectively and support one another in marketing their products. Community-based craft entrepreneurship therefore extends beyond individual income generation because it can strengthen cooperation, social networks and collective capacity within the community (Peredo & Chrisman, 2006).

Despite its potential, women craft entrepreneurs frequently face structural and operational challenges. These challenges may include limited access to capital, inadequate equipment, low bargaining power, restricted mobility, limited knowledge of product costing and weak access to market information. Some women may also lack digital literacy and confidence in using social media, online marketplaces and electronic payment systems. Community empowerment programmes should therefore provide continuous training, mentoring and practical assistance in areas such as financial management, product innovation, branding, packaging, pricing and digital marketing (Arjang et al., 2024). Collective enterprise development, partnerships with government agencies and collaboration with universities or non-governmental organisations can further improve women's access to resources, wider markets and sustainable business opportunities.

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Community Empowerment and Local Economic Development

Community empowerment refers to the process of strengthening the ability of individuals and groups to make informed decisions, access resources and take collective action to improve their social and economic wellbeing. It emphasises active participation, local ownership and the development of community capacity rather than dependence on external assistance. In the context of traditional weaving, empowerment involves improving technical and entrepreneurial skills, strengthening self-confidence, increasing participation in decision-making and creating better income-generating opportunities (Kusnanto et al., 2024). Empowerment also enables craft producers to identify their own needs, organise their activities and determine the future direction of their community-based enterprises.

Traditional weaving can contribute to local economic development by creating employment, generating household income and stimulating other economic activities within the community. The production of woven products may involve local suppliers, transport providers, packaging services, tourism operators and small retailers, thereby creating a wider local economic network (Malinao, 2025). When weaving is linked to community-based tourism, local branding, exhibitions and cultural events, it can attract visitors and increase demand for local products. The economic benefits may therefore extend beyond individual weavers and contribute to the overall development, visibility and resilience of the community.

However, many traditional craft entrepreneurs operate on a small scale and face difficulties in expanding their businesses. They may have limited access to training, capital, equipment, market information and distribution networks. Community empowerment programmes can address these limitations by supporting cooperative production, product innovation, digital marketing, financial management and collective branding. Partnerships with government agencies, universities, non-governmental organisations and tourism stakeholders can also provide technical assistance and market opportunities (Rifqiansyah & Wijaya, 2025). Through continuous support and strong local participation, traditional weaving can develop from a small-scale household activity into a sustainable community-based enterprise that contributes to local economic growth and community wellbeing.

Product Innovation and Market Access

Product innovation refers to the improvement or adaptation of traditional products to meet current consumer preferences. In traditional weaving, innovation should preserve local patterns, techniques and cultural meanings while introducing more practical and attractive product forms. Woven materials can be developed into bags, home décor items, souvenirs, corporate gifts, packaging materials and lifestyle products (Ginting & Sembiring, 2018). This approach can increase the usefulness and marketability of traditional weaving without weakening its cultural identity.

Branding, packaging and storytelling are also important in increasing the value of woven products. Customers may be more interested when they understand the origin of the product, the meaning of its design and the skills involved in producing it. Attractive packaging, clear product labels and a consistent community brand can help distinguish handmade weaving products from factory-made alternatives. Appropriate pricing should also reflect the cost of materials, production time, craftsmanship and cultural value.

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Market access determines whether weaving entrepreneurs can reach customers beyond the local community. Digital platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and WhatsApp can be used to promote products, communicate with customers and receive orders (Pricopoaia & Susanu, 2021). However, entrepreneurs require skills in product photography, content creation, pricing, customer service, online payment and delivery management. Market opportunities can also be expanded through exhibitions, tourism activities, digital catalogues and collaboration with government agencies, universities and private organisations.

Youth Involvement in Cultural Preservation

Youth involvement is essential for ensuring the continuity of traditional weaving. When younger generations are not interested in learning weaving skills, traditional knowledge may gradually disappear as older practitioners become less active. Youth participation can help preserve weaving techniques, cultural meanings and local identity (Tawano-Macarimbang, 2025). Their involvement is therefore important not only for maintaining the craft but also for strengthening appreciation of community heritage.

Young people may become more interested in traditional weaving when it is connected to creative design, entrepreneurship and digital technology. They can introduce new product ideas, modern designs and promotional strategies that respond to current market trends. Digital platforms such as social media and online marketplaces can also make traditional weaving more visible and attractive to younger audiences. By linking weaving with innovation and income-generating opportunities, youth may view the craft as a relevant and valuable activity. Community intervention should therefore encourage intergenerational knowledge transfer between experienced weavers and younger community members. Older practitioners can teach traditional techniques, patterns and cultural meanings, while youth can contribute skills in product photography, digital marketing, graphic design and online promotion. This collaboration can bridge traditional knowledge and modern market needs. It can also strengthen relationships between generations and support the long-term preservation and development of traditional weaving.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to explore the experiences, perceptions, challenges and empowerment needs of traditional weaving entrepreneurs in Pulau Suri (Tantawi et al., 2023). The case study design was appropriate because the research focused on a specific community-based craft activity within a particular local context.

Study Location

The study was conducted in Pulau Suri. This location was selected because traditional weaving remains part of the local community's cultural and economic activities. Pulau Suri provides a suitable context for examining how cultural heritage can be sustained through community empowerment, women's participation and local entrepreneurship.

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Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected using purposive sampling because the study required informants with direct experience or relevant knowledge of traditional weaving and local craft development in Pulau Suri (Inanna et al., 2020). A total of [INSERT ACTUAL NUMBER] participants were interviewed. They comprised local weaving entrepreneurs, women craft producers, a community representative and individuals involved in supporting local craft development. Selection prioritised participants who could provide first-hand accounts of weaving practices, income and pricing challenges, marketing, cultural knowledge transfer and support needs.

The final sample size should be reported using the actual number of completed interviews rather than a recommended range. Participant categories were included to capture different perspectives on weaving practice, women's economic participation, community coordination and intervention support.

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observation and document review. Semi-structured interviews enabled participants to describe their experiences in detail while allowing the researcher to probe issues related to weaving, household income, marketing, cultural continuity and community support (Shoozan & Mohamad, 2024).

Field observation was conducted to understand the weaving process, working environment, materials used, product types, production challenges and interaction among craft producers (Asinyo et al., 2021). Observation also helped the researcher understand the physical and social context of weaving activities.

Document review was used to examine relevant materials such as project notes, photographs, promotional materials, training records, product catalogues or community development documents related to traditional weaving in Pulau Suri.

Interview Protocol

The interview questions were developed based on the research objectives. The following questions were used as the interview guide:

1. Can you explain your involvement in traditional weaving activities in Pulau Suri?
2. How did you learn weaving skills?
3. What types of weaving products do you produce?
4. What are the main challenges in continuing this craft?
5. How does weaving contribute to your household income?
6. What kind of support do weaving entrepreneurs need?
7. How do you currently promote and sell your products?
8. What are the challenges in marketing weaving products?
9. How can younger generations be encouraged to learn weaving?
10. What strategies can help sustain traditional weaving in Pulau Suri?

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Data Analysis

The data were analysed using thematic analysis. The analysis began with repeated reading of interview transcripts, field notes and supporting documents (Jamieson, 2016). Important statements were identified and coded according to the research objectives. Similar codes were then grouped into categories, and the categories were developed into major themes.

The thematic analysis focused on identifying challenges, community intervention needs, economic impact, cultural preservation and sustainability strategies. The findings were presented through thematic descriptions supported by participants' views and field observations.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Several strategies were used to strengthen the trustworthiness of the study. First, data triangulation was applied by using interviews, field observation and document review. Second, participant triangulation was used by involving weaving entrepreneurs, community representatives and project facilitators. Third, member checking was conducted by confirming key points with selected participants. Fourth, peer review was conducted with research team members to refine the themes. Fifth, thick description was used to explain the study context, weaving activities and participants' experiences (Lim, 2025).

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted according to ethical research principles. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their participation was voluntary. Consent was obtained before interviews were conducted. Participants' identities were protected using codes such as P1, P2 and P3 (Al Habsi, 2024). The study respected participants' privacy, cultural knowledge and intellectual ownership of traditional weaving practices.

Findings

The findings revealed five interconnected themes: traditional weaving as cultural identity and inherited knowledge; economic vulnerability among local weaving entrepreneurs; limited marketing and product visibility; digital exposure and youth involvement; and continuous institutional and community support. Across these themes, participants described weaving sustainability as dependent on both cultural continuity and the capacity to create meaningful livelihood opportunities.

Theme 1: Traditional Weaving as Cultural Identity and Inherited Knowledge

The first theme shows that traditional weaving in Pulau Suri is closely connected to cultural identity and inherited knowledge. Participants viewed weaving not only as a source of income but also as a symbol of local heritage. The weaving skills were often learned informally from older family members, neighbours or community elders.

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The findings indicate that traditional weaving carries social and cultural meaning. The craft reflects patience, creativity, discipline and community memory (Hwang & Huang, 2019). Participants expressed concern that if younger generations do not learn weaving, the knowledge may gradually disappear.

Participants perceived the continuity of weaving knowledge as central to local identity. Their accounts suggest that sustainability depends not only on product sales but also on documenting techniques, transferring skills to younger generations and maintaining community appreciation of weaving as inherited cultural knowledge.

Theme 2: Economic Vulnerability among Local Weaving Entrepreneurs

The second theme relates to the economic challenges faced by weaving entrepreneurs. Although weaving can generate additional income, participants reported that the income is often unstable. Product demand may depend on visitors, local events, personal orders or seasonal sales. As a result, weaving alone may not provide consistent household income.

Participants also faced challenges related to production time and pricing. Weaving products often require many hours of manual work, but customers may not fully understand the value of the labour involved (Vergara et al., 2025). This creates difficulty in setting prices that are fair to the producers while still affordable to buyers.

Participants described weaving as a source of supplementary income, but irregular demand, lengthy production time and pricing difficulties limited its economic contribution. They perceived support in costing, pricing, product positioning and market expansion as important for improving their ability to obtain more consistent economic returns from weaving.

Theme 3: Limited Marketing and Product Visibility

The third theme highlights limited marketing and product visibility. Participants indicated that many weaving products were sold through local networks, visitors or word-of-mouth. This limited promotion reduced opportunities to reach wider customers.

Weak branding and packaging were also identified as challenges. Products may be well-made but lack a clear identity, label or storytelling element. In cultural craft products, storytelling is important because customers often value the meaning behind the craft, including its origin, maker, technique and cultural significance (Wang & Park, 2024).

Participants described limited visibility as a barrier to wider economic opportunity. Stronger branding, cultural storytelling, digital catalogues, tourism promotion and collaboration with local agencies were perceived as practical ways to make products more visible and to connect weaving entrepreneurs with broader markets.

Theme 4: Digital Exposure and Youth Involvement

The fourth theme focuses on digital exposure and youth involvement. Participants recognised that digital platforms could help promote weaving products to wider markets. However, some weaving entrepreneurs had limited skills or confidence in using social media for business purposes.

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Youth involvement was viewed as important because younger community members are generally more familiar with digital platforms. They can support product photography, online promotion, video content, customer communication and digital catalogues. At the same time, youth can learn weaving skills from older practitioners (Ong et al., 2023).

Participants viewed the knowledge of experienced weavers and the digital familiarity of younger community members as complementary resources. Their accounts suggest that intergenerational collaboration may support both cultural knowledge transfer and improved product visibility, provided that youth engagement is sustained rather than limited to one-off activities.

Theme 5: Continuous Institutional and Community Support

The fifth theme concerns the need for continuous support. Participants highlighted that traditional weaving requires assistance in training, materials, product innovation, promotion, market access and financial support. Short-term programmes may raise awareness, but continuous mentoring is needed to ensure long-term sustainability.

Institutional support from government agencies, universities, NGOs and local authorities can help strengthen the weaving industry. Support may include design training, digital marketing workshops, product photography, participation in exhibitions, branding support and access to grants or equipment (Hussin et al., 2023).

Participants perceived long-term continuity as requiring both external assistance and local ownership. Local leaders, families and community organisations were viewed as important for organising participation and weaving groups, while government agencies, universities, NGOs and local authorities were expected to provide sustained mentoring, training, promotion and access to resources. This indicates that one-off activities alone are unlikely to address the interconnected cultural and economic challenges identified by participants.

Discussion

The findings suggest that traditional weaving in Pulau Suri is closely connected to community empowerment because participants linked the craft with cultural identity, supplementary income, skills, participation and collective support. At the same time, participants described unstable demand, limited market access and weak promotion as constraints on both economic opportunity and craft continuity. Thus, weaving sustainability and empowerment appear interconnected: when weavers have stronger skills, market access, organisation and opportunities to transfer knowledge, they are better positioned to maintain both livelihood activity and cultural practice.

First, traditional weaving must be recognised as both cultural heritage and economic activity. If it is treated only as heritage, it may be preserved symbolically but may not provide sufficient income for practitioners. If it is treated only as business, its cultural meaning may be weakened. Therefore, a balanced approach is needed.

Second, the role of women is central. Participants described weaving as an activity that can be undertaken within the community and alongside household responsibilities, while also providing supplementary income. Their accounts indicate that economic empowerment is

experienced through opportunities to earn, improve business and production skills, participate in collective marketing and gain greater confidence in promoting their work. These findings should be interpreted as participants perceived benefits rather than evidence that weaving directly causes empowerment (Ndandara et al., 2024).

Third, participants consistently linked market access with the viability of weaving. Stronger promotion, branding and cultural storytelling were perceived as necessary for reaching customers who understand the cultural value and manual effort behind each product. Product innovation was also viewed as a way to make weaving more relevant to contemporary markets while retaining its cultural identity (Umam et al., 2025).

Fourth, participants perceived youth involvement as important for cultural continuity. Younger people may contribute digital promotion, design and online communication, while experienced weavers retain the knowledge of techniques and cultural meanings. This complementary relationship provides a practical basis for intergenerational learning, although sustained participation is needed to determine whether it leads to longer-term continuity of the craft.

Fifth, participants emphasised the need for continuous institutional and community support. Training in design, business management, digital marketing and product development was viewed as useful, but participants also highlighted the importance of ongoing mentoring, access to markets and local ownership. This suggests that external agencies should support community capacity rather than rely on short-term interventions alone.

Overall, the findings suggest that weaving sustainability is embedded in an empowerment process that combines cultural preservation, women's economic participation, market access, digital adaptation, intergenerational learning and community ownership. The qualitative evidence does not establish causal effects, but it shows how participants understand these dimensions as mutually reinforcing conditions for sustaining traditional weaving.

Implications of the Study

The practical implications identify specific roles for stakeholders. Local authorities and community organisations should support a coordinated SuriWeave group, local craft events and spaces for collective production and promotion. Universities and NGOs should provide repeated hands-on training in costing, pricing, product development, branding, digital marketing and business record keeping. Tourism agencies and local market partners should create market-linkage opportunities through exhibitions, cultural tourism activities, retail partnerships and digital catalogues. Community leaders, senior weavers and youth should organise intergenerational mentoring so that weaving knowledge is transferred while younger members contribute digital and promotional skills. These actions respond directly to the constraints and support needs described by participants.

Recommendations

Based on participants' accounts, community organisation and systematic skills development should be prioritised. Local community leaders and weaving entrepreneurs are encouraged to establish a SuriWeave community craft group to coordinate production, training, collective marketing and decision-making. Universities, NGOs and relevant agencies can support the group through a structured weaving and entrepreneurship module for women and youth, while

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experienced weavers can lead the documentation and transfer of techniques, patterns, cultural meanings and community stories.

Product development and market access should be supported through coordinated action. Universities, craft agencies and NGOs can facilitate product innovation workshops on contemporary applications, quality, packaging, labelling and cultural storytelling. Local authorities, tourism agencies and retail partners can assist with exhibitions, community markets, cultural tourism promotion and institutional purchasing opportunities. A digital product catalogue and managed social media presence can provide clear product information, prices and ordering methods while gradually building the digital confidence of weaving entrepreneurs.

Participants' accounts also point to the need for sustained financial, institutional and market support rather than isolated programmes. Government agencies and local authorities can consider appropriate material, equipment or micro-grant assistance, while universities and NGOs provide follow-up mentoring and evaluation. Tourism stakeholders can help position Pulau Suri as a cultural craft destination, and community leaders can coordinate intergenerational mentoring between senior weavers and youth. Continued collaboration should be reviewed with the community to ensure that support remains culturally appropriate and responsive to local priorities.

Proposed SuriWeave Community Empowerment Model

Based on the findings, this study proposes the SuriWeave Community Empowerment Model. The model consists of five interconnected components:

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Figure 1. Proposed SuriWeave Community Empowerment Model

The proposed SuriWeave Community Empowerment Model synthesises the relationships described by participants across five interconnected components. It begins with a cultural heritage base, reflecting participants' view of weaving as inherited knowledge, local identity and community creativity. This foundation is linked to women's economic participation through opportunities for supplementary income and involvement in community enterprise. Product innovation and branding represent participants perceived need to improve market relevance, while digital and market expansion address visibility and access to customers. These components are supported by continuous community and institutional assistance from families, local leaders, government agencies, universities and NGOs. The model should therefore be interpreted as a qualitative framework derived from participants' experiences, not as a tested causal model.

Conclusion

This study explored the revitalisation of traditional weaving through community empowerment in Pulau Suri. Participants described weaving as an important form of cultural heritage and a source of supplementary livelihood, while also identifying declining youth interest, unstable

income, limited promotion, restricted market access and competition with modern products as major challenges.

Participants perceived product promotion, digital exposure, youth involvement, skills transfer, collective organisation and continuous institutional support as important for improving product visibility, economic opportunities and the continuity of weaving knowledge. These qualitative findings indicate perceived pathways to empowerment and sustainability rather than direct causal effects.

Overall, the findings suggest that revitalising traditional weaving in Pulau Suri requires an integrated community empowerment approach in which cultural preservation is connected with women's economic participation, market access, youth engagement and sustained stakeholder support. The SuriWeave model offers a context-specific framework for organising these priorities, while future research should examine its application over time and assess changes in income, participation and heritage continuity.

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