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Gender-Based Entrepreneurship Education as a Strategy for Inclusive and Sustainable Women's Creative Economy Development in Jember Regency

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Abstract: This study aims to examine how gender-based entrepreneurship education (GBEE) can support the inclusive and sustainable development of women's creative economy in Jember Regency, East Java. The study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis involving 12 participants, including women entrepreneurs, educators, policymakers, and academics. The data were analyzed thematically through data immersion, open coding, category development, and theme construction. The findings identify four main themes: (1) persistent gender barriers in entrepreneurship education, including sociocultural restrictions, gender-insensitive curricula, and limited access to resources; (2) adaptive pedagogical strategies integrating situated learning, peer mentoring, and digital literacy; (3) the use of local creative economy sectors—such as batik, coffee agro-tourism, culinary arts, and fashion—as culturally relevant learning platforms; and (4) empowerment outcomes, including increased economic autonomy, stronger social capital, and improved negotiation capacity. The study concludes that GBEE not only strengthens women's entrepreneurial skills but also contributes to shifts in household and community power relations. Collaboration among universities, government, and civil society is essential to implement gender-responsive entrepreneurship education aligned with SDG 5 and SDG 8.

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Introduction

The global creative economy has been recognized as one of the most dynamic engines of sustainable development, particularly in developing nations where cultural heritage, artisanal production, and community-based enterprises constitute significant livelihood sources (UNCTAD, 2022). In Indonesia, the creative economy contributes approximately 7.8% of the national gross domestic product (GDP) and employs more than 17 million workers, with women representing a substantial yet underrepresented segment of this workforce (Kreatif, 2019). Despite women's central role in culturally embedded economic activities such as batik weaving, food processing, and traditional craft production, they continue to face systemic barriers that limit their entrepreneurial potential and restrict their access to formal economic opportunities.

Jember Regency, located in East Java Province, presents a particularly compelling case for examining these dynamics. As one of the regency's most prominent economic identifiers, Jember's Tembakau (tobacco) agro-industry, batik art, and coffee-based creative enterprises have historically depended on women's labor, yet women entrepreneurs in this region remain largely excluded from formal entrepreneurship training programs (BPS Jember, 2023). National data indicate that women-owned micro, small, and medium

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enterprises (MSMEs) account for 64.5% of Indonesia's total MSME population, yet female entrepreneurs receive only 38% of total business development service coverage (Kemenkop, 2022). This paradox underscores a fundamental gap between women's economic participation and the educational infrastructure designed to support it.

Entrepreneurship education has emerged as a critical lever for bridging this gap. Globally, there is growing scholarly consensus that entrepreneurship education not only develops technical business competencies but also fosters entrepreneurial mindsets, risk-taking orientations, and innovation capacities (Fayolle & Liñán, 2014; Krueger, 2017). However, conventional entrepreneurship education programs have been criticized for their gender-blind approaches that fail to account for the distinctive challenges women face, including restricted mobility, caregiving responsibilities, limited access to capital, and entrenched social norms that devalue women's entrepreneurial agency (Brush et al., 2017; Henry et al., 2017).

Gender-based entrepreneurship education (GBEE) addresses these limitations by deliberately incorporating gender-responsive pedagogical principles, culturally situated learning content, and structural supports that enable women to translate knowledge into sustainable entrepreneurial action (Jennings & Brush, 2013; Naguib & Jamali, 2015). GBEE recognizes that women's entrepreneurial learning occurs within complex intersections of gender, class, culture, and geography, and therefore necessitates approaches that are simultaneously adaptive to local contexts and aligned with broader frameworks of inclusive development. Conceptually, this study positions GBEE at the intersection of two analytical lenses that have so far remained underutilized in Indonesian entrepreneurship scholarship: social capital theory (Lindvert et al., 2017; Putnam, 2000) and the concept of agency in women's economic empowerment (Kabeer, 2012; Sen, 1999). Whereas conventional entrepreneurship education tends to adopt a masculine orientation focused on large-scale growth, individual competition, and venture scaling, the GBEE approach proposed in this study privileges collaborative learning, community sustainability, and the cultivation of relational agency through which women re-author their entrepreneurial identities within rather than against their sociocultural environments. This reframing constitutes the study's primary conceptual novelty.

In the Indonesian context, gender-based approaches to entrepreneurship education have been integrated into national policies such as the Pengarusutamaan Gender (PUG) framework (Protection, 2021), yet implementation at the regional level remains uneven. Studies focusing on Java-based communities highlight that sociocultural factors, particularly gendered household roles and community expectations regarding women's mobility and economic participation significantly mediate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training interventions (Anggraeni & Thoyib, 2013; Tambunan, 2009). Furthermore, research from Indonesia's batik industry by Putri and Haryanto (2021) and Sari et al. (2022) documents how women artisans simultaneously reproduce cultural heritage and generate household income, yet remain largely excluded from decisions regarding product pricing, market access, and business scaling.

Theoretically, women's entrepreneurship in the creative economy can be understood through the lens of Bourdieu's concept of capital conversion (Bourdieu, 1986), whereby women's cultural capital, embodied in traditional knowledge, craft skills, and community social networks can be strategically converted into economic capital through entrepreneurially enabling educational interventions. Complementing this, the pedagogical principles of andragogy (Knowles, 1984), situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and feminist pedagogy (Brush et al., 2009) provide foundational grounding for understanding

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why experiential, community-anchored, and consciousness-raising learning approaches are particularly effective for adult women learners. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted specifically SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth).

Despite the growing body of literature on women's entrepreneurship, substantial gaps remain in understanding how GBEE is operationalized within specific regional and cultural contexts in Indonesia, and what pedagogical models prove most effective in fostering both entrepreneurial competencies and sustainable economic outcomes. Accordingly, this study has three concrete objectives: (1) to identify the gender-specific barriers that characterize women's engagement with entrepreneurship education in the semi-rural creative economy context of Jember; (2) to formulate a contextually grounded model of gender-based entrepreneurship education that integrates situated learning, peer-mentoring, and digital literacy; and (3) to generate evidence-based policy recommendations for replicating gender-responsive entrepreneurship curricula in comparable rural and semi-urban regions of Indonesia and other developing countries. The study makes a concrete contribution by producing an analytical framework that links pedagogical design, institutional synergy, and women's creative-economy outcomes—a framework intended to be directly usable by curriculum developers, non-formal educators, and policymakers.

Research Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method to explore the lived experiences of women entrepreneurs and the educators, policymakers, and community stakeholders who support their development in Jember Regency. Phenomenology is particularly appropriate for this inquiry because it enables rich, detailed examination of subjective meanings, perceptions, and experiences associated with gender-based entrepreneurship education, rather than seeking to quantify outcomes or establish causal relationships (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Van Manen, 1990).

The phenomenological orientation of this study draws on Moustakas's (1994) transcendental phenomenology, which emphasizes researcher reflexivity, intentional bracketing of presuppositions, and systematic description of the essential structures of participants' lived experiences. This approach is consistent with the feminist epistemological stance informing the research, which privileges the centring of women's voices and experiences as legitimate sources of knowledge production (Harding, 1987).

The study was conducted in Jember Regency, East Java, Indonesia—a region characterized by its significant batik, tobacco agro-industrial, coffee, and culinary creative economy sectors. Jember was selected as the research site because it represents a context in which women's entrepreneurial activities are culturally significant but systematically underresourced in terms of educational support infrastructure. Participants were selected through purposive sampling guided by the criterion of information richness (Patton, 2015). A total of 12 participants were recruited, comprising women entrepreneurs active in Jember's creative economy, non-formal educators facilitating entrepreneurship training programs, local government officials responsible for women's empowerment and MSME development, and academic experts in entrepreneurship and gender studies. This heterogeneous participant composition was designed to capture diverse perspectives on GBEE from multiple institutional vantage points.

Data were collected through three complementary methods: semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and document analysis. Individual interviews lasting 60–90 minutes explored participants' experiences with entrepreneurship education, gender-related barriers, pedagogical effectiveness, and institutional support for GBEE. The

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interview protocol was reviewed by experts in gender studies and entrepreneurship education to ensure content validity. In addition, two FGDs involving women entrepreneurs and community educators were conducted to generate collective reflections and validate emerging themes through peer interaction (Kitzinger, 1995). Documentary analysis of curricula, attendance records, government policies, and NGO reports provided contextual triangulation of the findings (Bowen, 2009).

All interviews and FGDs were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, audio-recorded with informed consent, and transcribed verbatim. The study received ethical approval from the Institutional Research Ethics Board of Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember. Data were analyzed thematically following the phenomenological framework of John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth (2018), including data immersion, open coding, category development, and theme construction. NVivo 14 was used to support coding and data organization, while inter-rater reliability testing through cross-coding produced a Cohen’s kappa coefficient of 0.81, indicating strong agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Table 2. Thematic Analysis: Themes, Sub-themes, and Supporting Evidence

Main Theme	Sub-theme / Category	Supporting Evidence (Participant Codes)	Frequency of Emergence
Gender Barriers in Entrepreneurship Education	Socio-cultural norms limiting women's mobility	P-01, P-03, P-06, P-10	High
Gender Barriers in Entrepreneurship Education	Absence of gender-responsive curriculum content	P-05, P-06, P-09, P-12	High
Gender Barriers in Entrepreneurship Education	Lack of female role models in training programs	P-02, P-04, P-07, P-11	Moderate
Gender-Based Pedagogical Strategies	Contextual learning aligned with women's daily practices	P-01, P-02, P-03, P-05, P-12	Very High
Gender-Based Pedagogical Strategies	Peer-learning and collective mentoring circles	P-03, P-06, P-09, P-10	High
Gender-Based Pedagogical Strategies	Integration of digital literacy into entrepreneurship curriculum	P-04, P-07, P-08, P-09	Moderate
Creative Economy & Inclusive Growth	Local cultural assets as business development foundation	P-01, P-03, P-11	Moderate
Creative Economy & Inclusive Growth	Sustainable livelihood through community-based enterprises	P-02, P-06, P-10, P-12	High
Creative Economy & Inclusive Growth	Policy synergy between education institutions and local government	P-07, P-08, P-09	Moderate
Women's Empowerment Outcomes	Increased economic autonomy and self-efficacy	P-01, P-02, P-04, P-11	High
Women's Empowerment Outcomes	Strengthened social capital and community leadership	P-03, P-06, P-10	Moderate
Women's Empowerment Outcomes	Enhanced negotiating capacity in household and market spheres	P-01, P-05, P-08, P-12	High

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To ensure the trustworthiness of findings, this study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) Four criteria of qualitative rigour: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through member checking, whereby preliminary findings were shared with five participants who validated the representativeness of the thematic interpretations. Transferability was supported through thick description of the research context, enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to comparable settings. Dependability was ensured through maintenance of a detailed audit trail documenting methodological decisions at each stage of the study. Confirmability was achieved through researcher reflexivity journaling throughout the data collection and analysis phases, and through the triangulation of multiple data sources and collection methods.

Results and Discussion

Conceptual Framework: Gender-Based Entrepreneurship Education and Creative Economy

Before presenting empirical findings, it is useful to position them within the conceptual framework developed for this study (Figure 1). The framework articulates the relationships among gender barriers, pedagogical strategies, enabling institutional conditions, and empowerment outcomes within the context of women's creative economy development.

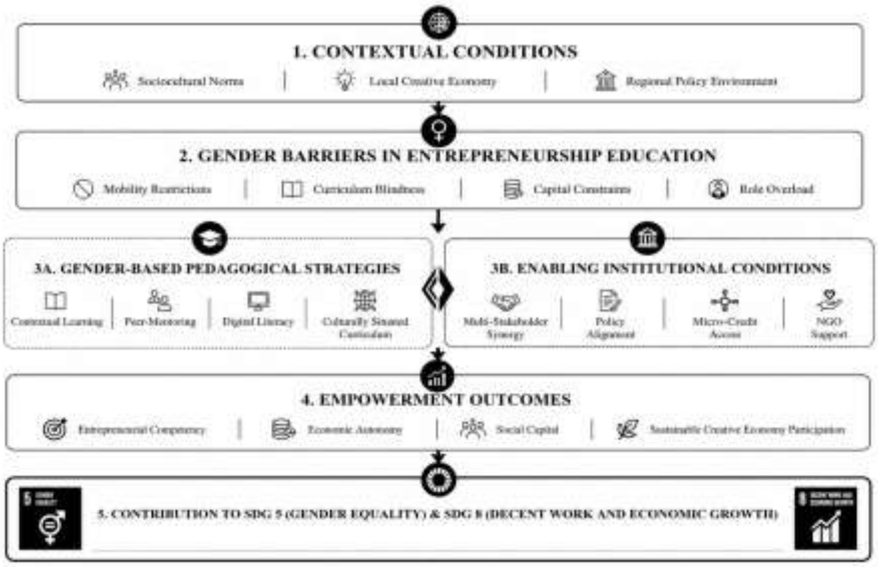

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Gender-Based Entrepreneurship Education in the Creative Economy

Theme 1: Gender Barriers in Conventional Entrepreneurship Education

The first major theme to emerge from the analysis concerned the pervasive nature of gender barriers that constrain women's meaningful participation in entrepreneurship education programs in Jember. Participants identified three interlocking categories of barriers: socio-cultural norms, curriculum blindness, and structural resource constraints.

Socio-cultural norms emerged as the most consistently cited barrier. Multiple women entrepreneur participants described how prevailing expectations regarding women's domestic roles including caregiving responsibilities, restrictions on evening mobility, and community norms requiring spousal permission for educational participation functioned as effective gatekeeping mechanisms against women's engagement in formal training programs. As participant P-01 stated: 'I want to join the training sessions, but they are held in the evening. My husband does not allow me to leave the house after Maghrib. This is a big obstacle.'

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This finding resonates with Tambunan's (2009)documentation of similar mobility constraints affecting women entrepreneurs in Java, and with Hoque et al.'s (2022) analysis of gendered time-poverty as a structural barrier to women's human capital development across Southeast Asia. The intersection of time constraints from caregiving responsibilities and social norms regarding women's public mobility creates what Brush et al. (2017) term a 'double bind' of entrepreneurial exclusion. Interpreted in the context of the research questions, this barrier directly answers RQ(a): the structural feature most determinative of women's exclusion from entrepreneurship education in Jember is not the absence of programs but rather the scheduling, location, and permission architecture that surrounds them. This insight reframes mobility constraints from a static cultural limitation into a designable pedagogical variable—setting up the responsive strategies discussed in Theme 2.

Curriculum blindness—the failure of entrepreneurship training programs to incorporate gender-specific content or to address the particular challenges faced by women entrepreneurs—was identified by all educator and policymaker participants as a systemic problem. Participant P-06 noted: 'Our training modules are designed for a generic entrepreneur. There is nothing about balancing business and family, nothing about how women can build trust with customers in communities where women's authority is questioned.' Similarly, participant P-09 observed that existing entrepreneurship curricula in Jember's BLK system were originally developed for male-dominated sectors such as construction and automotive repair, and had been applied without meaningful adaptation to women-dominated creative economy sectors. Analytically, these accounts illustrate that curriculum design itself operates as a gendered institutional artefact: by treating 'the entrepreneur' as a default-masculine subject, the existing BLK curriculum systematically misrecognizes the daily decision contexts of women working in batik, food processing, and agro-tourism. This finding directly connects RQ(a) to RQ(b) by demonstrating that addressing gender exclusion requires not merely adding women to existing programs but redesigning curricular logic itself.

Structural resource constraints, including limited access to business development services, micro-credit, and digital infrastructure, were cited as compounding the effects of cultural and curriculum barriers. These findings align with World Bank (2019)data indicating that women-owned SMEs in Indonesia face a credit gap of approximately USD 5 billion annually, and with OECD (2017) analyses demonstrating that gender gaps in digital access constitute a significant constraint on women's entrepreneurial capacity in middle-income countries.

Taken together, the three barriers identified above are not isolated obstacles but a tightly coupled system. Responding to them therefore requires an equally integrated pedagogical reply. The GBEE model emerging from this study addresses these barriers through three concrete adjustments that map directly onto the structural problems documented above: (i) rescheduling training sessions to morning blocks (08.00–11.00 WIB) when caregiving demands are lighter and evening mobility restrictions do not apply; (ii) deploying a blended learning architecture that combines short in-person community sessions held at PKK posyandu venues with asynchronous WhatsApp-based micro-learning modules, allowing women to participate without leaving their household contexts; and (iii) co-designing curriculum content with women practitioners in each creative economy sector, replacing the male-default 'generic entrepreneur' template with women-led case material drawn from batik, coffee agro-tourism, and culinary enterprises. These pedagogical responses are examined in detail in Theme 2 below.

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Theme 2: Gender-Based Pedagogical Strategies

The second theme addressed the pedagogical strategies that participants identified as effective in enabling women's meaningful engagement with entrepreneurship education. Analysis revealed three primary strategies: contextual and situated learning, peer-learning and collective mentoring circles, and integrated digital literacy development.

Contextual and situated learning emerged as the most widely validated pedagogical approach. Participants consistently emphasized that entrepreneurship learning becomes most meaningful and actionable when it is anchored in the specific production practices, market contexts, and community relationships that women already inhabit. Participant P-05, an educator at a PKBM, described how this principle had guided curriculum adaptation: 'We redesigned the module around batik making. Every business concept (costing, marketing, quality control) was taught using examples from batik production. The women recognized themselves in the material. They stopped feeling like outsiders in the business world.'

This approach reflects the theoretical principles of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010), both of which emphasize the importance of embedding learning in authentic community and cultural contexts. Beyond theoretical alignment, however, P-05's account speaks directly to RQ(b) and RQ(c): the recognition reported by learners ('they stopped feeling like outsiders') signals a measurable shift in entrepreneurial self-concept, not merely an improvement in skills retention. The pedagogical mechanism at work here is identity re-positioning—the move from 'woman who happens to make batik' to 'batik entrepreneur'—which the present analysis identifies as the core productive function of context-anchored GBEE.

Participant P-12 provided further evidence of situated learning's effectiveness by referencing outcomes from a community-based coffee enterprise education program: 'Women who had been processing coffee for generations had never thought of themselves as entrepreneurs. When we framed the training using coffee as the product, they suddenly became experts. Their confidence transformed.' This account analytically corroborates the same identity-repositioning mechanism, while also extending it: in the coffee sector, situated learning converts long-standing tacit knowledge into recognized expertise, thereby producing not just confidence but standing—a transferable claim to authority in the value chain.

Peer-learning and collective mentoring circles were highlighted by participants across all cohorts as particularly powerful strategies for supporting women's entrepreneurial development. Unlike hierarchical teacher-student relationships, peer-learning structures harness women's existing social networks and collective problem-solving capacities. Participant P-03 described the women's entrepreneurship circle she facilitated in Kecamatan Kaliwates: 'We meet every two weeks. The more experienced women share their challenges and solutions. The newer ones learn from real situations, not from textbooks. And when one woman succeeds, everyone feels it is possible for them too.' Read against the research questions, P-03's description provides a concrete pedagogical answer to RQ(b): peer-circles function as a distributed teaching architecture in which the expert role rotates, thereby simultaneously producing curriculum content, role models, and accountability structures—three of the four resources whose absence was documented in Theme 1.

The importance of integrating digital literacy into entrepreneurship education was raised by several participants, particularly those working with younger women entrepreneurs and those engaged in agro-tourism and fashion subsectors. Participants noted that digital platforms (particularly Instagram, WhatsApp Business, and e-commerce marketplaces such as Shopee and Tokopedia) had become essential market access tools, yet many women lacked the confidence and skills to leverage them effectively. Participant P-04 observed: 'Digital

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marketing opened a national market for my hijab products. But I only learned how to use it from another young woman in my community, not from any training program. There is a big gap in official education programs.'

These findings collectively suggest that effective GBEE in Jember requires a pedagogical architecture that is simultaneously culturally situated, socially networked, and digitally oriented a combination that existing training programs have not yet systematically achieved. This conclusion corroborates global evidence from Lindvert et al. (2017) and Naguib and Jamali (2015) that women's entrepreneurship education must engage multiple dimensions of competency development within coherent, gender-responsive frameworks.

Theme 3: Creative Economy as a Platform for Gender-Responsive Learning

The third theme identified in the analysis concerned the distinctive potential of Jember's creative economy sectors as platforms for delivering gender-responsive entrepreneurship education. Participants consistently emphasized that the cultural embeddedness of creative economy activities provides natural entry points for gender-responsive learning that conventional business education programs fail to capitalize upon.

Jember's batik industry was most frequently cited as an exemplary case. Participants P-01, P-03, and P-11 all drew on their batik entrepreneurship experience to illustrate how gender-specific knowledge, relationships, and creative processes could be repositioned as foundations for entrepreneurial competency development. Participant P-11, a batik entrepreneur who had subsequently become a community trainer, articulated this potential most clearly: 'Batik is not just a product. It is a relationship—between the maker, the pattern, the buyer, and the community. When we teach entrepreneurship through batik, we are teaching women to see the value in what they already know and to build business relationships from what they already have.' This statement furnishes a particularly compact analytical answer to RQ(c): GBEE's productive function in the creative economy is not the addition of new business knowledge to women already producing batik, but rather the strategic re-naming of their existing relational and cultural assets as commercial capital. Educational value is generated, in other words, at the moment of recognition rather than at the moment of instruction.

This perspective resonates with Bourdieu's (1986) theory of capital conversion, which suggests that cultural capital, including the tacit knowledge, aesthetic sensibilities, and community relationships embedded in traditional craft practices can be strategically converted into economic capital through entrepreneurially enabling educational processes. GBEE programs that explicitly recognize and build upon women's existing cultural capital are therefore more likely to generate sustainable entrepreneurial outcomes than those that treat women as blank-slate learners requiring external business knowledge.

Participants also highlighted the potential of Jember's coffee agro-tourism and culinary creative economy sectors as platforms for gender-responsive learning. Participant P-07, a local government official, described ongoing initiatives to develop women-led coffee tourism enterprises in Jember's highland areas: 'We are trying to connect coffee farmers' wives with tourism training and marketing support. They know the coffee, they know hospitality from daily life. What they need is the business framework and the market access.' This example illustrates the policy dimension of creative economy-based GBEE and its potential to simultaneously advance economic development and gender empowerment objectives.

Theme 4: Multidimensional Empowerment Outcomes

The fourth theme concerned the empowerment outcomes associated with GBEE participation, which participants described in terms that extended significantly beyond narrow economic metrics. Analysis identified three categories of empowerment outcomes:

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increased economic autonomy and self-efficacy, strengthened social capital and community leadership, and enhanced negotiating capacity within household and market spheres.

Increased economic autonomy emerged as the most immediately tangible outcome. Women entrepreneurs who had participated in gender-responsive training programs described substantial improvements in their ability to independently manage business finances, negotiate supplier contracts, set appropriate pricing, and access formal financial services. Participant P-02 described the transformation in her own entrepreneurial capacity following participation in a GBEE program facilitated by a local NGO: 'Before the training, my husband handled all the money for the business. After, I understood the real costs and profits, and I could show him with numbers that my food business was actually supporting our household significantly. That changed our relationship with money and with each other.' Analytically, this quotation supplies the clearest articulation of how GBEE answers RQ(c): empowerment outcomes do not stop at the boundary of the enterprise but propagate into the household by changing the evidentiary basis of intra-household economic negotiation. Quantitative literacy, in this account, functions as a relational instrument as much as a managerial one.

This account illustrates how economic literacy—developed through gender-sensitive entrepreneurship education—can produce ripple effects beyond the business domain, reshaping intra-household power dynamics and contributing to women's broader empowerment. This finding corroborates Kabeer's (2012) argument that women's economic empowerment is inherently relational, involving not only the acquisition of resources but also the renegotiation of social relationships that mediate access to and control over those resources.

Strengthened social capital was described by participants as both an input to and an outcome of GBEE. Women who had participated in peer-learning circles and collective mentoring programs reported expanded professional networks, stronger relationships with supplier and buyer communities, and enhanced access to market information through informal knowledge-sharing channels. Participant P-10, an NGO activist, described the community-level effects of a sustained GBEE program in Kecamatan Sumbersari: 'After two years, the women who started the program together are now referring customers to each other, sharing equipment, and collectively negotiating prices with suppliers. They have become a genuine business community.' Interpreted analytically, this outcome demonstrates the recursive logic of social capital in GBEE: peer-circles initially designed as pedagogical scaffolds become durable economic infrastructure once they outlive the formal training, directly answering RQ(c) about how GBEE outcomes manifest at the community level.

Enhanced negotiating capacity—within both market and household spheres—was identified as a particularly significant but often overlooked empowerment dimension. Participants described how GBEE had equipped women with the communicative, analytical, and assertive capacities needed to negotiate effectively in commercial relationships and to advocate for their entrepreneurial interests within their families and communities. These outcomes align with Sen's (1999) capabilities approach, which defines empowerment not merely as resource acquisition but as the substantive expansion of individuals' real freedoms to live lives they have reason to value.

Discussion

The findings of this study collectively demonstrate that gender-based entrepreneurship education constitutes a strategically important intervention for advancing women's creative economy development in Jember Regency. This conclusion is grounded in

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four interconnected insights that emerge from the thematic analysis and that are examined in relation to relevant theoretical frameworks and comparative empirical evidence.

First, the persistence and complexity of gender barriers in conventional entrepreneurship education underscore the inadequacy of gender-neutral approaches. The barriers documented in this study—encompassing sociocultural norms, curriculum blindness, and structural resource constraints—are not incidental features of specific programs but reflect systemic patterns embedded in the institutional architectures of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. This finding resonates with Brush et al.'s (2017) systemic critique of mainstream entrepreneurship education and supports calls for structural rather than merely programmatic responses to gender gaps in entrepreneurial development.

Second, the effectiveness of contextual, community-embedded, and peer-relational pedagogies in this study validates the theoretical frameworks of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and feminist pedagogy (Brush et al., 2009) in the specific context of Indonesian women's entrepreneurship education. Critically, these approaches succeed not only by transmitting relevant knowledge but by repositioning women as legitimate knowers and entrepreneurs within their own cultural and economic contexts. This repositioning—what Freire (1970) would term a process of conscientização—appears to be a prerequisite for the self-efficacy gains and negotiating capacity enhancements documented in Theme 4.

Third, the creative economy's role as a platform for gender-responsive learning underscores the strategic importance of context-specificity in GBEE design. Jember's distinctive creative economy sectors—batik, coffee agro-tourism, culinary arts, and fashion—provide culturally resonant learning contexts that both motivate women's engagement and render abstract entrepreneurial concepts actionable. This finding suggests that effective GBEE cannot be a generic product but must be co-designed with communities to reflect local economic ecologies and women's existing cultural competencies. This conclusion aligns with Naguib and Jamali's (2015) call for context-sensitive approaches to women's entrepreneurship education in developing country settings.

Fourth, the multidimensional nature of GBEE empowerment outcomes in this study challenges purely economic framings of entrepreneurship education effectiveness. The expansion of social capital, negotiating capacity, and community leadership documented among GBEE participants reflects what Sen (1999) terms capability expansion—the broadening of women's substantive freedoms to participate meaningfully in economic, social, and civic life. This understanding of empowerment as fundamentally relational and multidimensional has important implications for how GBEE programs are evaluated: narrow metrics of business formalization or revenue growth are insufficient to capture the full spectrum of transformative outcomes that effective GBEE generates.

The study's findings also illuminate the critical importance of enabling institutional conditions for GBEE effectiveness. Participants consistently emphasized that isolated training programs, however well-designed, generate limited sustainable impact without embedding institutional structures that sustain momentum, facilitate resource access, and maintain accountability for gender-responsive outcomes. The multi-stakeholder platform model—linking higher education, local government, civil society organizations, and women's entrepreneurship communities—emerged as the most promising institutional configuration for sustained GBEE impact in Jember.

These insights have significant implications for policy and practice. Table 3 synthesizes the study's policy recommendations, organized by intervention area, proposed strategy, responsible actor, and priority level.

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Table 3. Policy Recommendations for Advancing Gender-Based Entrepreneurship Education in Jember Regency

Recommendation Area	Proposed Strategy	Responsible Actor	Priority Level	Expected Impact / Success Indicator
Curriculum Development	Integrate gender-responsive modules into entrepreneurship training at Balai Latihan Kerja (BLK) and Community Learning Centers (PKBM)	Dinas Pendidikan, Dinas Koperasi & UKM	Very High	≥70% of BLK/PKBM entrepreneurship modules revised within 24 months; ≥60% participant satisfaction on gender-relevance index
Curriculum Development	Develop context-specific materials reflecting Jember's creative economy sectors (batik, tobacco agro-tourism, culinary arts)	Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember, LPPM, NGOs	High	At least 4 sector-specific learning packages produced and field-tested with ≥50 women entrepreneurs
Educator Capacity Building	Conduct gender-sensitivity training for all non-formal education facilitators and vocational trainers	Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan, BLK	High	100% of BLK facilitators trained within 18 months; measurable improvement on gender-pedagogy self-assessment scores
Educator Capacity Building	Establish a cadre of female entrepreneurship mentors drawn from successful local women entrepreneurs	PKK, Community Organizations	Moderate	≥30 active women mentors per kecamatan within 2 years; ≥1 mentoring cycle completed per mentee
Institutional Synergy	Form multi-stakeholder platform linking higher education, local government, and women's organizations	Pemkab Jember, Universitas PGRI Argopuro Jember	High	Formalized MoU among ≥5 institutions; quarterly coordination meetings sustained for ≥3 years
Institutional Synergy	Create gender-disaggregated data systems to monitor impact of entrepreneurship education on women	Dinas Statistik, Dinas PP&PA	Moderate	Annual gender-disaggregated dashboard published; ≥80% data completeness across kecamatan
Financing & Incentives	Provide targeted micro-credit linked to completion of gender-based entrepreneurship training	Perbankan, Koperasi, Pemkab	Very High	≥500 women entrepreneurs accessing GBEE-linked micro-credit within 3 years; <5%

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Recommendation Area	Proposed Strategy	Responsible Actor	Priority Level	Expected Impact / Success Indicator
				NPL rate among graduates
Digital Integration	Develop mobile-based entrepreneurship learning platforms with gender-inclusive content and local language support	Dinas Kominfo, Higher Education	Moderate	Mobile platform launched within 18 months; ≥2,000 active monthly women users in Jember by end of year 2

Source: Developed from study findings and policy analysis (2024)

Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that GBEE—when designed to be contextually responsive, pedagogically participatory, and institutionally embedded—constitutes a powerful mechanism for simultaneously advancing women's entrepreneurial competencies and their broader empowerment across economic, social, and civic dimensions. The study further establishes that the creative economy sectors distinctive to Jember—including batik, coffee agro-tourism, culinary arts, and fashion—provide culturally resonant and economically productive platforms for delivering gender-responsive entrepreneurship education that honors women's existing cultural capital while expanding their entrepreneurial capabilities.

Theoretically, the study contributes an analytical framework that integrates situated learning theory, feminist pedagogy, Bourdieu's capital conversion theory, social capital theory, and Sen's capabilities approach within the specific context of women's creative economy entrepreneurship education in Indonesia. This framework provides a conceptual architecture for future research examining GBEE in diverse regional and cultural settings.

Beyond stating that the findings are practically useful for policymakers, this study identifies a specific policy shift that the evidence supports: the mainstreaming of a gender-responsive, sector-anchored entrepreneurship education curriculum—co-developed with women practitioners in each creative economy subsector—as the default delivery model within Indonesia's Balai Latihan Kerja (BLK) and Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat (PKBM) networks, replacing the current gender-neutral, sector-generic model. This shift is institutionally feasible because it works through existing non-formal education infrastructure rather than requiring the creation of parallel programs, and it is replicable across other semi-rural, creative-economy-rich regencies in developing countries—including comparable rural districts in Vietnam, India, and sub-Saharan Africa—where women operate in culturally embedded informal economies under similar mobility and curriculum constraints. The Jember model thus offers a transferable template rather than a context-bound case.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is recommended that educators and policymakers focus on the integration of gender-responsive entrepreneurship curricula, the adoption of contextual and culturally situated pedagogical strategies, and the strengthening of multi-stakeholder institutional collaboration to support women's participation in the creative economy. Particular emphasis should be placed on expanding digital literacy training, improving access to micro-credit, and developing peer-mentoring ecosystems that align with women's sociocultural realities.

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Future research should explore the longitudinal impacts of gender-based entrepreneurship education (GBEE) on women's economic and social empowerment, as well as examine its scalability across diverse regional contexts in Indonesia. Additionally, further studies are needed to address limitations related to small sample size and qualitative scope, by incorporating mixed-method approaches and comparative analyses across different creative economy sectors.

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