

Challenges and Strategies of Dayak Entrepreneurs in Modernization: An Accounting Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, Dayak groups in Central Kalimantan, especially the Ngaju Dayak tribe, have operated in line with their traditional norms and expertise, preserving their cultural identity in the face of modern challenges. However, the pressures of technology and globalization often impede their ability to maintain business sustainability, creating a complex dynamic between tradition and adaptation. The Ngaju Dayak culture is characterized by robust ideals embedded in everyday life, such as solidarity, reverence for the environment, and cooperation. These traditional values, including mutual collaboration, harmony with nature, reverence for ancestors, and social solidarity, significantly shape their daily lives and extend into their commercial practices. These cultural values deeply influence corporate practices, shaping thought processes and decision-making strategies within their businesses. By adhering to these principles, Ngaju Dayak entrepreneurs foster a sense of trust and collective well-being, which strengthens community bonds and supports business activities. The research methodology employed in this study was qualitative, involving in-depth interviews with 30 informants. The informants were selected based on their involvement in entrepreneurship and their ability to represent the diverse perspectives of the Ngaju Dayak community. The findings reveal that ethnic entrepreneurship among the Ngaju Dayak is intricately linked to both economic factors and enduring cultural values. Their cultural principles not only guide their business practices but also enhance the connection between ethnic entrepreneurship and broader corporate aspirations, ensuring that their businesses remain sustainable while staying true to their cultural heritage. This research underscores the importance of integrating cultural values into modern entrepreneurial strategies to foster resilience and sustainability.

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1. Introduction

Ethnic entrepreneurship reflects the way ethnic groups maintain their cultural identity through business (Banerjee, 2024; Tehseen et al., 2023). Ethnic entrepreneurship, shaped by distinct cultural and ethnic characteristics, highlights the role of local cultural values in business operations and their impact on long-term sustainability (Flere, 2024; Hajro et al., 2023). Businesses

run by ethnic groups often contribute significantly to the local economy (Yow, 2017), especially in areas that rely on culture-based products as the core of their economic activities. For generations, the Dayak people of Central Kalimantan, particularly the Ngaju Dayak tribe, have thrived by adhering to their local traditions and wisdom. Their ability to sustain businesses has been deeply rooted in cultural values such as solidarity, harmony with nature (Norhadi et al., 2024), and cooperation (Sulistiyani et al., 2022). However, the rise of modernization and globalization poses significant challenges to these traditional practices, compelling the Dayak community to adapt while preserving their cultural identity (Widen et al., 2024). This tension between maintaining cultural heritage and meeting contemporary economic demands underscores the critical need for a nuanced understanding of how local traditions interact with modern business practices. Cultural values influence behavioral patterns, including holistic or analytical ways of thinking (Ordin et al., 2024). In the case of Ngaju Dayak, entrepreneurship is not merely an economic activity but a socio-economic process deeply intertwined with social relations and cultural practices. However, despite the richness of their cultural values, a key limitation in Dayak businesses is the lack of emphasis on accounting literacy—a vital component of modern entrepreneurial success. Without adequate accounting skills, many traditional entrepreneurs struggle to make data-driven decisions essential for ensuring long-term business viability.

The existing literature on ethnic entrepreneurship has predominantly focused on global perspectives, exploring how indigenous or minority communities leverage their cultural heritage to build competitive businesses (Howell, 2019). However, there is a conspicuous gap in research that examines the interplay between accounting literacy, cultural values, and ethnic entrepreneurship within the Dayak communities. Most studies on Dayak culture emphasize cultural practices and traditions but rarely investigate their application in contemporary business practices, particularly in relation to business sustainability. This gap becomes even more pronounced in the context of the Ngaju Dayak tribe, where traditional entrepreneurial values remain primarily unexplored as intervening variables influencing the relationship between modern accounting literacy and business success.

This study aims to fill this critical gap by investigating how the integration of ethnic entrepreneurship (Sithas & Surangi, 2021) and accounting literacy, mediated by Ngaju Dayak cultural values, impacts business sustainability in Central Kalimantan. Specifically, it seeks to uncover the extent to which cultural values such as cooperation, respect for nature, and social solidarity can either enhance or hinder the application of accounting literacy and modern entrepreneurial strategies. The economy of social solidarity is an approach to overcoming contemporary economic, social, and environmental crises (Esteves et al., 2021). By focusing on these dynamics, this research not only contributes to the theoretical discourse on ethnic entrepreneurship but also offers practical insights for policymakers and non-governmental organizations to design culturally aligned business training and mentoring programs.

Understanding these relationships is essential for empowering indigenous communities to navigate the complexities of contemporary economic challenges while preserving their cultural identity. The findings of this study will provide a framework for developing inclusive and sustainable economic empowerment strategies that honor local cultural values, offering a unique contribution to the growing field of Indigenous entrepreneurship and sustainability.

History and Culture of the Ngajuk Dayak Tribe

The Dayak people of Kalimantan (Borneo) have a profound and extensive history. The origins of the Dayak people remain contentious; nevertheless, several ideas and archeological discoveries provide a clearer understanding of their first emergence in the region. Insights on migration, cultural influences, and social development of the Dayak people in Kalimantan elucidate their early history. The ancestors of the Dayak tribe traveled to Kalimantan from mainland Asia, namely from Yunnan, South China, and Indochina. The Dayak tribe was included in the substantial migration of the Austronesian people that began from 2000 to 3000 BC and occurred via coastal routes. Austronesian peoples founded settlements in several regions of Southeast Asia, including the

Philippines, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan. Linguistic evidence confirms that the Dayak language belongs to the Austronesian language family.

Human footprints found at Niah, Sarawak, and North Kalimantan are estimated around 40,000 years old. Archaeological evidence from several areas of Kalimantan suggests that human habitation on the island dates back thousands of years. The results demonstrate that the island of Kalimantan has been inhabited since antiquity. This study indicates that people occupied Kalimantan for a prolonged duration; nevertheless, the individuals from that time may not be the direct ancestors of the modern Dayak tribe.

The name "Dayak" was used by outsiders, particularly Malays and European conquerors, to denote several ethnic groups residing in the interior of Kalimantan. Initially, the term "Dayak" had significant connotations, often used to describe those deemed "primitive" or those living beyond urban or coastal regions (Wilson et al., 2024). Over time, this phrase came to denote the indigenous populations of Kalimantan residing in the interior. Nevertheless, the Dayak society comprises several sub-tribes that possess distinct languages and cultural practices. Notable sub-tribes are Iban Dayak, Kenyah Dayak, Kayan Dayak, Ngaju Dayak, and Tunjung Dayak. The Dayak are an ethnic group distributed over the island of Borneo, now partitioned among Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei. The Dayaks inhabit not just the Indonesian part of the island but also the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak, as well as Brunei Darussalam. The Dayaks, a collective of several sub-tribes, occupy various regions around the island, particularly in the interior.

The Ngaju Dayak tribe is among the main sub-tribes of the Dayak group residing in the Central Kalimantan area, particularly around significant rivers such as the Kahayan, Kapuas, and Barito Rivers. The origins of the Ngaju Dayak tribe, like to other Dayak tribes, remain enigmatic. The consensus among historians and anthropologists is that the progenitors of the Dayak likely originated from mainland Asia (Indochina) and moved to Kalimantan many millennia ago. It is thought that they introduced an agricultural society characterized by shifting agriculture, along with hunting and gathering techniques. The Ngaju Dayak tribe resides in the upland, far from coastal regions, dominated by significant kingdoms like Kutai and Banjar, as well as the hub of Malay and Islamic commerce. Consequently, they remain relatively secluded and cultivate a unique culture, particularly around the major rivers are essential to their existence. A primary objective of the Dayak Ngaju tribe is the maintenance of balance and harmony with the natural environment. They assert that nature is an essential source of life that deserves respect and conservation. Every element of nature, whether it is a forest, river, or animal, has a spirit or spiritual essence deserving of veneration. Thus, all activities, including as hunting, agriculture, and deforestation, are executed with precision and consideration to preserve the balance of nature. Entrepreneurship forms an ecosystem of elements necessary to sustain a particular business (Stam & van de Ven, 2021).

A significant value that profoundly impacts the existence of the Dayak Ngaju tribe is reverence for ancestral spirits. They hold the belief that their forebears persist in observing and impacting the lives of the living. Consequently, several rites and rituals, including Tiwah (death ceremony), are conducted to venerate and guarantee that the ancestor spirits may repose quietly in the hereafter (Arsal et al., 2023). The essence of social life among the Dayak Ngaju tribe is rooted on communal living and the significance of cooperation. In the longhouse or betang, many families cohabit and share obligations. All community members are anticipated to assist one another in everyday tasks, including field clearance, home construction, and the preparation of traditional festivities. The principle of solidarity enables the Dayak Ngaju tribe to confront natural problems and preserve order within their society. Mutual collaboration encompasses not just physical labor but also spiritual dimensions, including the collective execution of religious rites.

The Dayak Ngaju tribe holds customary law in great regard, seeing it as a life guide down through generations. This customary law governs several facets of life, including marriage, land allocation, and penalties for social infractions. All types of disagreement or conflicts are often addressed via discussion conducted by traditional elders or someone regarded as intelligent. The Ngaju Dayak tribe upholds the principle of equilibrium in all aspects, including the interactions among people, environment, ancestor spirits, and community members. They contend that an imbalance in any facet of life might precipitate calamity or issues within society.

The principles of resilience and independence are integral to the Dayak Ngaju culture. Residing in a demanding woodland ecosystem, they must depend on their skills for survival. The abilities of hunting, farming, and using forest resources are integral to the identity of the Dayak Ngaju tribe and are rigorously safeguarded. Furthermore, kids are instructed to exercise independence in decision-making and refrain from depending on external assistance.

Shifting agriculture is a primary economic activity for the Dayak Ngaju people. They depend on rice cultivation as their primary food source. Shifting agriculture is the clearing of forests by deforestation and the incineration of underbrush to establish ephemeral agricultural plots. Following many harvests, the land is let to revert to its natural state to rejuvenate fertility, while new land will be cultivated elsewhere. This agricultural method demonstrates Dayak Ngaju's comprehension of the natural cycle and the significance of preserving ecological equilibrium. They use land intermittently to avoid irreparable harm to soil fertility.

Alongside agriculture, hunting and foraging for forest resources are essential components of the everyday existence of the Ngaju Dayak people. They pursue wild creatures, including wild boar, deer, and other bird species, to fulfill their protein requirements. Hunting proficiency is esteemed, and hunters use several traditional armaments, including blowpipes (utilizing poisoned darts) and spears. Furthermore, forest goods, including rattan, resin, honey, and many medicinal plants, contribute to their economy.

The Ngaju Dayak tribe is renowned for its handicrafts, particularly in the skill of wood carving. This craft of carving serves not only aesthetic functions but also has profound spiritual significance. Carvings often illustrate natural elements and traditional beliefs, including ancestor spirits and Kaharingan symbols. Other significant crafts in their life include the creation of shields, mandau (a traditional sword), and boats. The Ngaju Dayak tribe has a very communal social life. They reside in extensive collectives including many families in elongated structures known as betang. Betang homes may shelter dozens to hundreds of people and are often constructed along riverbanks. Life in betang homes is highly structured, with communal duties for security, agriculture, and traditional rites. The Dayak Ngaju tribe continues to observe several ancient rites associated with the Kaharingan spiritual system in their everyday life. Despite the widespread conversion to Christianity, aspects of Kaharingan persist within their culture. Significant rituals, like Tiwah (a funeral ceremony to guide the soul to the afterlife), Babukung (a ceremony to avert calamity), and Maraang (a spiritual purification), are still practiced by the Dayak Ngaju community. The primary tenet of the Dayak Ngaju tribe's existence is to preserve peace with the environment. They believe that any conduct detrimental to nature may provoke calamity or ire from ancestor spirits. Consequently, they typically extract just what is necessary from nature, avoiding the exploitation of natural resources. Superfluous authority.

Ethnic Entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship refers to the engagement of people from minority ethnic groups in entrepreneurial operations to surmount economic and social constraints (Kerr & Mandorff, 2023). In certain ethnic groups, such as the Dayak tribe, entrepreneurship is often intertwined with social capital, local culture, and contemporary innovation. The Dayak tribe, particularly those residing in Kalimantan, exemplifies how entrepreneurship may significantly benefit ethnic people grounded in traditional culture and situated in isolated regions. In the examination of ethnic entrepreneurship, many theories exist, specifically:

1) Social Capital Theory

This theory highlights the importance of social networks and relationships between individuals in supporting business activities (Kerr & Mandorff, 2023). Among the Dayak people, social networks based on kinship and regional ties play an important role in entrepreneurial success. Solidarity between community members is an important resource for sharing capital, information, and support.

2) Cultural Embeddedness

Dayak business is often grounded on robust local cultures, including traditional carving, handicrafts, and weaving. Dayak entrepreneurs in various sectors endeavor to preserve traditional values while also adapting them to the contemporary commercial landscape. Dayak handicrafts are now marketed worldwide via e-commerce channels, hence broadening market access.

3) Blocked Mobility Theory

This idea posits that engagement in entrepreneurship often occurs as a reaction to restricted options inside the formal sector. Dayak communities can have difficulties securing formal sector work owing to geographic constraints or prejudice, making independent entrepreneurship an appealing option.

Understanding of Accounting by Dayak Entrepreneurs

Accounting is a crucial discipline in the business realm, relevant to entrepreneurs from many backgrounds, including Dayak entrepreneurs. The Dayak tribe is an ethnic group residing in the Kalimantan area, characterized by a rich and diverse culture. Dayak entrepreneurs (Keling et al., 2023) must comprehend fundamental accounting concepts to manage their firm finances effectively.

In Dayak culture, particularly among those residing in the interior, the conventional economic structure mostly relies on agriculture and trade. Value is not just quantified in monetary terms, but also encompasses other assets such as land, food, or cultural artifacts like handicrafts. This comprehension affects the perspective of the Dayak people about accounting and financial documentation. Community-owned resources are often seen not as capital to be documented in contemporary accounting but as elements of social and cultural relationships.

Over time, Dayak entrepreneurs engaged in contemporary enterprises started to assimilate and use modern accounting principles to secure the sustainability of their ventures, particularly in commerce, creative industries, and tourism. Dayak enterprises embraced contemporary accounting to enhance their comprehension of cash flow, profit and loss, and tax administration.

Successful Dayak businesses have often embraced contemporary methods of documenting financial transactions. They comprehend the need to report cash flow as one of the accounting concepts. Robust cash flow enables effective management of monetary inflows and outflows, ensuring the long-term viability of the organization.

A multitude of Dayak entrepreneurs participate in small and medium enterprises, including the trade of agricultural products (such as rattan, timber, and other agricultural goods), handicrafts, and the tourist sector. The implementation of accounting in micro enterprises is often straightforward, including the documentation of sales transactions, the computation of operating expenses, and the determination of net profit (Derbyshire et al., 2023). Nonetheless, despite its simplicity, this recording is crucial for assessing the financial health of the company.

2. Methods

This study employs an ethnographic research design, a qualitative methodology that facilitates an in-depth understanding of the culture, traditions, and lived experiences of a community through participant observation and extensive interviews. The ethnographic approach is selected because it enables a holistic examination of the interplay between cultural heritage and business practices (Sanz Abad, 2025) in the Dayak Ngaju community. By focusing on real-world experiences and integrating theoretical frameworks, this research design ensures a robust and contextually rich understanding of how cultural values mediate the relationship between accounting literacy and business sustainability. The study involves 30 informants, selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth of insight. These informants are Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs who have been engaged in business activities for at least three years. Their experiences and perspectives provide a rich source of data on the integration of cultural values, entrepreneurial practices, and accounting literacy.

Ethnographic Methodology

The Data Collection Phase is conducted through an Immersion in a community approach to gather detailed insights through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The data collection process includes (1) Participant Observation, engaging directly with the Dayak Ngaju community to observe their business practices, interactions, and cultural activities in their natural settings. (2) In-depth interviews, Conducting semi-structured interviews with the informants to explore their entrepreneurial practices, perceptions of accounting literacy, and the role of cultural values in shaping their business strategies; (3) Document Analysis, Reviewing relevant community records, business documents, and cultural artifacts to supplement the primary data.

The Data Analysis Phase is carried out to analyze data using qualitative methods to develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between cultural values (Stainova, 2024), entrepreneurship, and accounting literacy. Data analysis employs descriptive-qualitative analysis to analyze the collected data systematically, (1) Thematic Coding: Identifying and categorizing recurring themes from the interviews and observations, focusing on cultural influences, entrepreneurial behaviors, and accounting practices; (2) Socio-economic context analysis: outlining the socio-economic conditions of the Dayak Ngaju community and linking these conditions to their entrepreneurial activities; (3) Theory integration: linking findings to theoretical concepts such as social capital theory and cultural embeddedness to understand how social networks and cultural values shape entrepreneurial practices and the adoption of accounting literacy.

The Dissemination Phase is the presentation of findings through detailed descriptions and theoretical interpretations, providing actionable insights for stakeholders such as policymakers and development practitioners. This phase aims to translate research outcomes into practical strategies that support sustainable business development, foster cultural preservation, and enhance the economic resilience of the community. Through targeted reports, workshops, and policy recommendations, the findings will inform programs that align with the values and needs of the Ngaju Dayak entrepreneurs while addressing contemporary market demands.

3. Results

Ethnic Entrepreneurship in Central Kalimantan

Ethnic entrepreneurship is the participation of a group in an economic system related to cultural heritage (Dos Santos-Souza et al., 2024; Indarti et al., 2021). The study reveals that ethnic businesses in Central Kalimantan, particularly those operated by the Dayak Ngaju community, play a dual role as sources of income and preservers of cultural heritage. For example, five out of 30 informants run artisan businesses that utilize indigenous materials like rattan and wood. These businesses contribute to the handicraft sector, which accounted for about 15% of the region's revenue in 2022. This sector often integrates old methods with contemporary advancements, resulting in items that possess aesthetic appeal and commercial competitiveness. In addition, strong social networks have an impact on Dayak Ngaju ethnic entrepreneurs. Many business actors collaborate in product marketing and support each other through a barter system. The findings also show that social networks and collectivist principles are essential for business success.

Collaboration in marketing and barter systems among entrepreneurs underscores the importance of community ties. However, significant challenges persist, with limited access to formal financial institutions. Only 30% of business owners have been able to secure financial support, which restricts their capacity for growth. According to Andi S, one of the informants said, this causes many businesses to be forced to operate only at their best capacity. Therefore, it is essential to augment stakeholders' comprehension of finance and accounting to enable more effective administration of their organizations. Taking all these aspects into account, it can be said that ethnic entrepreneurship in Central Kalimantan has significant potential to augment the entrepreneurial endeavors of the Dayak Ngaju group. Realizing this potential requires help from all stakeholders, including the government, financial institutions, and the community.

Accounting Literacy in Central Kalimantan

In terms of accounting literacy, the study finds that only eight out of 30 entrepreneurs understand basic accounting principles such as preparing financial statements and documenting transactions. Many entrepreneurs rely on intuition and experience rather than structured accounting practices,

which affects their ability to calculate production costs and selling prices accurately. Numerous business owners have difficulties in determining suitable production expenses and selling prices, which eventually impacts their profitability.

This lack of accounting literacy also hinders access to funding, as financial institutions require detailed financial disclosures. Approximately 20% of entrepreneurs have applied for formal loans, but most applications were rejected due to insufficient documentation. These findings highlight the significant gap in accounting knowledge among the Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs. Various non-governmental organizations have initiated training programs to improve business professionals' understanding of accounting and financial management. These programs need support from both the government and the commercial sector to include a wider range of entrepreneurs. In such a situation, accounting knowledge helps the business world and empowers the community. To encourage local economic growth, business actors will be better able to make better and more sustainable decisions with an understanding of accounting. Therefore, improving accounting knowledge among the Dayak Ngaju community should be a top priority in efforts to develop the local economy.

Ethnic Entrepreneurship and Accounting Literacy on Business Sustainability

Cultural values also strongly influence business practices among the Dayak Ngaju community. Cultural principles such as cooperation and environmental respect shape business decision-making, with many entrepreneurs favoring environmentally friendly raw materials and long-term customer relationships. The study shows that 80% of informants believe their cultural values guide their business decisions, while 70% report that customers prefer goods from trusted and culturally aligned entrepreneurs. However, balancing cultural values with the demands of a competitive market remains a challenge.

The relationship between ethnic entrepreneurship and accounting literacy is evident in the study's findings. Entrepreneurs who participate in community networks (Hussam et al., 2022) are more likely to exchange accounting knowledge and adopt better management practices. Seventy-five percent of entrepreneurs involved in joint venture groups demonstrate a better understanding of financial statements compared to those working individually. However, limited access to formal accounting education poses a significant barrier to further improvements in accounting literacy (Aristei et al., 2024).

4. Discussion

This study shows that the Dayak Ngaju community in Central Kalimantan has different entrepreneurial characteristics influenced by local cultural values. This study shows that the Dayak Ngaju people are more likely to use a community-oriented entrepreneurial approach, where they are interested in businesses that are assessed based on social benefits and economic benefits. Previous research shows that strengthening social networks and collaboration between community members are the main factors contributing to local economic resilience. Data shows that 70% of informants believe that support from the surrounding community is the key to their business success.

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic and cultural sustainability in the Dayak Ngaju community. By leveraging indigenous materials like rattan and wood and incorporating traditional methods, Dayak entrepreneurs create products that are not only commercially competitive but also culturally significant. Ethnic entrepreneurs adapt to urban and suburban conditions (Zhuang, 2019). This aligns with broader theories of cultural embeddedness, where local traditions and social structures shape entrepreneurial practices. The handicraft sector's contribution of 15% to regional revenue in 2022 underscores the economic potential of ethnic businesses in Central Kalimantan. However, the reliance on collectivist principles and strong social networks, while beneficial, also presents challenges. These networks facilitate collaboration and resource sharing, as seen in barter systems and cooperative marketing. Yet, they may inhibit individual innovation and risk-taking, which are essential in a competitive and globalized market. This tension between community-oriented practices and the need for market responsiveness reflects the dual-edged nature of ethnic entrepreneurship. Strong social networks can enhance access to information and resources but may also constrain entrepreneurial independence.

Moreover, the study shows that Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs have better financial capabilities with high accounting literacy. Moreover, understanding accounting is very important for business

aspirations. This deficiency limits their ability to make data-driven decisions, accurately calculate costs, and prepare financial statements (K. Ahmad, 2024). These capabilities are crucial for business sustainability, particularly in securing funding. Financial institutions typically require detailed financial disclosures, which many entrepreneurs are unable to provide, leading to high rejection rates for loan applications.

Entrepreneurs who have a strong understanding of accounting are more likely to make the right choices about their businesses. Currently, 65% of people who understand accounting well say they can sustain their businesses for more than five years. Challenges remain despite the positive correlation between accounting literacy and ethnic entrepreneurship. The study found that many entrepreneurs face difficulties due to a lack of access to formal accounting education. About 60% of informants said they did not have the opportunity to receive sufficient accounting training. The lack of accounting literacy also exacerbates operational inefficiencies. Entrepreneurs who rely on intuition and experience often struggle to price their products competitively, impacting profitability. This finding underscores the importance of structured financial education and training programs tailored to the needs of indigenous entrepreneurs. However, it also raises questions about the accessibility and relevance of existing programs. Many training initiatives fail to address the specific cultural and contextual challenges faced by communities like the Dayak Ngaju, limiting their effectiveness. This suggests that the government and educational institutions must participate in improving the accounting knowledge of local entrepreneurs.

The Relationship between Ethnic Entrepreneurship and Accounting Literacy

Entrepreneurship is effective in encouraging national economic development (Endrawati et al., 2023). The relationship between entrepreneurship and accounting literacy influences each other in daily business practices, and this shows the relationship between ethnic entrepreneurship and accounting literacy among the Dayak Ngaju community. Strong ethnic entrepreneurs encourage entrepreneurs to learn and apply accounting in their businesses. According to this study, entrepreneurs who participate in community networks are more likely to exchange accounting knowledge each other. This community participation leads to increased accounting knowledge collectively. Community networks play a role in the process of individual adaptation to environmental change (Kapucu et al., 2023). Entrepreneurs of the manufacturing sector have a low level of financial literacy (Anshika et al., 2021). This suggests that ethnic entrepreneurship creates business opportunities and helps entrepreneurs become better at management. This is in line with previous research stating that collaboration between entrepreneurs in the community can help them better in management and accounting.

Interview data shows that, compared to entrepreneurs who work individually, 75% of entrepreneurs who work in joint venture groups have a better understanding of financial statements. Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs who join cooperatives or joint venture groups usually have better access to accounting training and other resources in this context. It highlights a symbiotic relationship between ethnic entrepreneurship and accounting literacy. Entrepreneurs embedded in community networks are more likely to share knowledge and resources, enhancing their financial management capabilities. For instance, 75% of entrepreneurs in joint venture groups demonstrate a better understanding of financial statements than those operating individually. This aligns with social capital theory, which posits that networks and relationships can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and resources.

However, Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs still face challenges, especially in terms of obtaining the information and resources needed to improve accounting literacy. According to the study, despite the potential for growth, many entrepreneurs are unable to take advantage of the opportunity because they do not have access to good accounting education (N. L. Ahmad et al., 2021). This gap underscores the need for culturally sensitive educational initiatives that bridge traditional practices with modern financial management skills. Such programs should be designed to respect and integrate cultural values, ensuring they are both accessible and relevant to the Dayak Ngaju community.

The Impact of Dayak Ngaju Culture on Business Practices

Dayak Ngaju culture greatly influences the business habits of its people. For example, many entrepreneurs choose to use local and environmentally friendly raw materials, following the longing values of the Dayak Ngaju people. Dayak Ngaju culture also influences the way entrepreneurs establish relationships with clients and business partners. Entrepreneurs who incorporate cultural

values into their business operations can increase customer loyalty (Irjayanti & Lord, 2024). Many entrepreneurs are afraid to adopt contemporary businesses that may not be in accordance with their cultural principles. Therefore, entrepreneurs need to realize the importance of maintaining cultural values when running their businesses. Entrepreneurs run their businesses based on cultural principles such as cooperation, mutual respect, and environmental desires. According to this study, eighty percent of informants believe that their cultural values help them make business decisions. Entrepreneurs who adhere to local cultural principles tend to concentrate more on building trust and long-term relationships with customers. 70% of people who participated in this study said that their customers prefer to buy goods from entrepreneurs they know and trust. However, in the midst of the increasingly strong current of globalization, there are challenges to maintaining cultural values. This study found that fifty-five percent of informants had difficulty finding a balance between their cultural values and market demands.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that business policies and practices that can be implemented to support the sustainability of Dayak Ngaju community businesses are very important. First, the government must create policies that support entrepreneurship through education and training. Local entrepreneurs can benefit from accounting training programs tailored to their needs. These programs can also improve their managerial skills. Second, there needs to be increased cooperation between the government, educational institutions, and civil society organizations. This is needed to create an environment that supports the growth of local businesses. The programs implemented can be more targeted and relevant to the needs of the community by involving various parties. This study shows that entrepreneurs who participate in collaborative programs are more likely to obtain the resources and information needed to develop their businesses. Third, raising awareness of cultural principles in business practices is essential. Supportive programs and social responsibility can help entrepreneurs understand the importance of maintaining cultural principles when facing the challenges of globalization. In this way, Dayak Ngaju entrepreneurs can maintain their cultural values while adapting to changes in the market. This research implies that implementation or support initiatives enhance the economic resilience of the Dayak Ngaju community, ensuring cultural preservation and market adaptability.

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