



Creativity and Innovation at Kahwa Home: A Qualitative Case Study

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana kreativitas dan inovasi berperan dalam perkembangan Kahwa Home, sebuah usaha kecil pemanggangan dan pemasokan biji kopi di Makassar, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus tunggal kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan pada Agustus 2026 melalui wawancara terstruktur dengan pemilik usaha, observasi langsung menggunakan lembar observasi yang diadaptasi dari kerangka EntreComp dan Oslo Manual 2018, serta dokumentasi pendukung. Data dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman melalui enam tema utama, yaitu operasional bisnis, profitabilitas, kreativitas dan inovasi, tantangan, strategi, serta pembelajaran kewirausahaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Kahwa Home berkembang dari kebiasaan pemilik dalam bersosialisasi menjadi usaha pemanggangan kopi yang melayani pelanggan individu maupun bisnis. Kreativitas dan inovasi muncul terutama melalui pengalaman pemilik dalam mengikuti kegiatan kopi nasional dan internasional, perbaikan produk dan kemasan, serta kemampuan beradaptasi terhadap perubahan pasar. Usaha ini masih menghadapi tantangan dalam mempertahankan konsistensi kualitas, menghadapi persaingan harga, memperoleh bahan baku dari petani, dan mengembangkan pemasaran. Untuk merespons hal tersebut, pemilik menerapkan adaptasi cepat, evaluasi mingguan, dan umpan balik pelanggan. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa inovasi pada usaha kopi yang dikelola pemilik berkembang secara bertahap melalui pengalaman, pembelajaran berkelanjutan, evaluasi, dan adaptasi, bukan hanya melalui produk yang sepenuhnya baru, dan bahwa konsistensi menjadi pelajaran penting bagi pelaku usaha kecil.

Kata kunci: Kreativitas dan Inovasi, Pembelajaran Kewirausahaan, Usaha Kecil, Bisnis Kopi, Studi Kasus Kualitatif

Abstract

This study examines how creativity and innovation have shaped the development of Kahwa Home, a small coffee bean roasting and supply business in Makassar, Indonesia. A qualitative single-case design was employed. Data were collected in August 2026 through a structured interview with the business owner, direct observation using a checklist adapted from the EntreComp framework and the 2018 Oslo Manual, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model across six themes: business operations, profitability, creativity and innovation, challenges, strategies, and entrepreneurial learning. The findings show that Kahwa Home developed from the owner's habit of socializing into a coffee-roasting business serving both individual and business customers. Creativity and innovation emerged mainly through the owner's experiences at national and international coffee events, product and packaging improvements, and adaptation to market changes. The business still faces challenges in maintaining consistent quality, responding to price competition, securing raw materials from farmers, and expanding its marketing activities. To respond, the owner applies rapid adaptation, weekly evaluation, and customer feedback. The study concludes that innovation in an owner-managed coffee business develops incrementally through experience, continuous learning, evaluation, and adaptation rather than solely through entirely new products, and that consistency is a key lesson for small business owners.

Keywords: Creativity and Innovation, Entrepreneurial Learning, Small Business, Coffee Business, Qualitative Case Study

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is often understood as a process of identifying opportunities, developing ideas, and creating value through business activities. In practice, however, entrepreneurship is not limited to starting a business and generating profit. It also involves recognizing problems, responding to customer needs, and developing ideas into products or services that can be implemented. Creativity plays an important role in this process because it enables entrepreneurs to generate ideas and approach business problems from different perspectives. Creativity and innovation are closely related but distinct concepts: creativity concerns the generation of ideas, whereas innovation concerns the implementation of new or improved ideas in practice. The Oslo Manual 2018 defines innovation as a new or improved product or business process that differs significantly from what an

organization previously offered or used and has been introduced or brought into use (OECD/Eurostat, 2018). This distinction is particularly relevant to small businesses, where ideas may emerge from everyday experiences, customer needs, market developments, and interactions with different business environments.

Recent studies have examined creativity and innovation from different perspectives. Hou et al. (2022) examined entrepreneurial bricolage and business model innovation and found that these processes were related to employee creativity. Alerasoul et al. (2022) also described entrepreneurship and innovation as closely connected fields that have developed together in the literature. Their discussion shows that innovation is not separate from entrepreneurial activity but can develop through the process of identifying opportunities and creating value. Panjaitan et al. (2023) examined entrepreneurial creativity and found a significant relationship between entrepreneurial creativity and entrepreneurial satisfaction. Yu et al. (2023) further showed that entrepreneurial creativity can be related to cognitive flexibility, entrepreneurial alertness, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. These studies indicate that creativity is not only related to the generation of ideas but can also develop through entrepreneurial experiences, flexibility, and the ways in which business activities are managed.

Other recent studies have highlighted the role of knowledge, learning, strategy, and innovation in business development. Agustina and Arganata (2023) examined entrepreneurial orientation, knowledge management, and collaborative innovation activities and found relationships between these factors and innovation performance. Nadliroh et al. (2023) also found that innovation management, technology, and motivation contributed to business performance. Anjaningrum et al. (2024) demonstrated the importance of organizational learning, network learning, and innovation in explaining business performance. Farida and Setiawan (2022) linked business strategy and innovation with competitive advantage, while Albats et al. (2021) highlighted the process through which open innovation can support business model innovation. In the coffee business context, Nurjanah and Thorfiani (2022) discussed the development of a new retail business model for coffee shops, while Christantyo and Shiratina (2023) examined the relationship between motivation, innovation, and coffee shop business performance. Digital marketing has also been associated with business performance in emerging markets (Deku et al., 2024), and social media strategic capability has been linked to business model innovation (Zhang & Zhu, 2022). Taken together, these studies suggest that creativity and innovation can develop through experience, knowledge, learning, resource use, strategic adaptation, and interaction with the surrounding business environment.

Although these studies provide important insights into creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial learning, and business development, they primarily examine specific relationships among variables or particular aspects of business performance. Research on entrepreneurial education and creativity, for example, has also examined how creativity contributes to entrepreneurial intention among students (Li et al., 2023). Less attention has been given to how creativity and innovation develop together through the everyday experiences, learning processes, challenges, and strategic responses of an individual business owner. This study addresses this gap through a qualitative case study of Kahwa Home, a small coffee roasting and supply business in Makassar. The business developed from the owner's habit of socializing and has grown into a business serving both individual and business customers. Its development provides an opportunity to examine how experiences, exposure to coffee-related events, product and packaging improvements, and responses to business challenges contribute to creativity and innovation in practice.

Therefore, this study aims to examine how creativity and innovation are applied in the development of Kahwa Home, identify the challenges faced by the business in developing and maintaining its operations, and analyze the strategies used to respond to those challenges. By focusing on a single owner-managed small business, this study provides a contextual understanding of how creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial learning develop through everyday business practices.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative single-case design to examine the development of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurial learning at Kahwa Home, a small coffee roasting and supply business in Makassar, Indonesia. The design was selected to provide an in-depth understanding of the business, particularly its development, operations, challenges, strategies, and learning processes from the perspective of its owner. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the case, data were collected through direct observation, a structured interview, and documentation.

Direct observation was conducted at Kahwa Home before the interview on August 29, 2026, using a structured checklist. The checklist consisted of 20 indicators focusing on entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, including business opportunities, products, marketing, customer service, customers, ordering and distribution processes, problem solving, competitiveness, and business development. The checklist was adapted from the EntreComp framework and the Oslo Manual 2018.

Following the observation, a structured interview was conducted with the owner of Kahwa Home on the same day. The interview consisted of 16 pre-prepared questions covering six areas: business operations, profitability, creativity and innovation, business challenges, problem-solving strategies, and entrepreneurial learning. The questions were adapted from previous studies by Suzianti et al. (2024), Yuliah and Triana (2024), Felix (2021), Adam et al. (2024), Sukma (2024), and Tisnoaji and Meiyanto (2019), and were subsequently adjusted to the characteristics of Kahwa Home.

To complement the observation and interview data, documentation was collected in the form of written information, organizational structure, photographs, and other materials related to Kahwa Home. The documentation served as supporting evidence for the information obtained through the observation and interview.

After data collection, the data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (2014) model of qualitative data analysis. The analysis involved data reduction, data organization, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Information obtained from interviews, field observations, and documentation was selected and organized according to the main areas of the study, including business operations and organizational structure, profitability, business ideas, creativity and innovation, challenges, strategies, and entrepreneurial learning. The organized data were then presented thematically to identify recurring patterns and relationships relevant to the development of Kahwa Home and its entrepreneurial practices. Conclusions were drawn through pattern identification and interpretation and were verified by comparing relevant information from the interview, observation, and documentation to examine the consistency of the findings.

This approach enabled the study to examine Kahwa Home as a single case while drawing on multiple sources of information to develop a contextual understanding of its creativity, innovation, challenges, strategies, and entrepreneurial learning.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings were obtained through observation, structured interviews, and documentation during the visit to Kahwa Home. The results cover business operations, profitability and business capacity, creativity and innovation, business challenges, problem-solving strategies, and entrepreneurial lessons.

3.1. Business Operations and Organizational Structure

Kahwa Home did not start from a deliberate plan to enter the coffee industry; it grew out of the owner's habit of socializing. The owner explained that coffee was not a personal preference, but socializing was an important part of the owner's activities. From this experience, the owner began thinking about how this habit could be turned into something that generated income:

"Pada awalnya tidak ada motivasi khusus untuk masuk ke bidang usaha ini. Saya sebenarnya tidak suka minum kopi, tetapi saya suka nongkrong. Sebelumnya saya bekerja sebagai translator, kemudian saya berpikir bagaimana kegiatan nongkrong tersebut bisa menjadi sesuatu yang menghasilkan" ("At first there was no specific motivation to enter this business. I actually don't like drinking coffee, but I like hanging out. Before this I worked as a translator, and then I started thinking about how that habit could become something that generates income," interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

This finding shows that the business opportunity emerged from the owner's everyday experience and social activities. Such opportunity recognition can develop from an individual's experiences and perceptions of possibilities in the surrounding environment (Baron, 2006). The business operated with a relatively simple organizational structure consisting of a director, head roaster, store manager, and helper, while the owner remained responsible for quality control, administration, and marketing. Observation also showed that the business process

was organized, the ordering system was easy for customers to follow, and operational problems were handled quickly.

Weekly evaluations were conducted through briefings to review the work and identify aspects that needed improvement:

“Evaluasi dilakukan setiap minggu melalui briefing. Evaluasi dilakukan untuk melihat bagaimana pekerjaan berjalan dan apa saja yang perlu diperbaiki dalam kegiatan usaha” (“Evaluation is done every week through a briefing. It’s done to see how the work has been going and what needs to be fixed in the business,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

Customer feedback was also used as a basis for making improvements. This indicates that evaluation was integrated into the business routine rather than conducted only when problems occurred. The owner’s experience therefore played an important role in identifying areas for improvement and developing the way the business was managed.

3.2. Business Profitability and Financial Performance

Income at Kahwa Home fluctuated depending on several factors. It tended to increase when the business participated in coffee competitions, particularly at the national level:

“Pendapatan bisa meningkat pada momen-momen tertentu, terutama ketika mengikuti lomba dan mendapatkan prestasi, termasuk pada tingkat nasional” (“Income can increase at certain moments, especially when we take part in competitions and win achievements, including at the national level,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

On the other hand, income could decrease because of competition from other businesses and limited availability of raw materials from farmers:

“Namun, pendapatan juga dapat menurun karena adanya kompetitor dan karena permintaan pelanggan terkadang tidak dapat dipenuhi akibat keterbatasan bahan baku dari petani” (“But income can also drop because of competitors and because customer demand sometimes can’t be met due to limited raw materials from farmers,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

Financial management was something the owner learned through experience. At the beginning of the business, the owner had limited knowledge of cash flow and gradually learned how to manage it through trial and error. This finding illustrates the role of experience in entrepreneurial learning, in which knowledge can develop through practical involvement in business activities (Politis, 2005).

3.3. Business Ideas, Creativity and Innovation

The business idea did not come from a specific ambition to enter the coffee industry but from the owner’s desire to turn a social habit into something economically productive. The owner also acknowledged that Kahwa Home did not yet have a strongly differentiated identity from other coffee businesses and did not rely heavily on gimmicks to attract customers.

Creativity and innovation at Kahwa Home developed mainly through continuous learning and experiences outside the business. The owner explained that new ideas were obtained by visiting and learning from other places and participating in national and international coffee events:

“Saya biasanya mendapatkan ide baru dengan keluar dan belajar dari tempat lain. Saya mengikuti berbagai event, termasuk event nasional dan internasional. Dari kegiatan tersebut saya bisa mendapatkan pengalaman baru dan mempelajari kultur dari berbagai tempat” (“I usually get new ideas by going out and learning from other places. I take part in various events, including national and international ones. From those activities I get new experiences and learn about the culture of different places,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

The owner's participation in national and international events exposed the business to different coffee cultures, including those in Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore. These experiences became sources of ideas for further developing the business. The observation also indicated that the creative process at Kahwa Home developed through trial, adjustment, and rebuilding rather than from a fixed concept established at the beginning.

At the product level, observation showed that Kahwa Home offered products that met customer needs, provided a variety of coffee choices, continued to improve its products, applied new or improved ideas to its activities, and used practical and appropriate packaging. The observation also recorded that the creative process had been "restarted from zero." This finding is consistent with the interview data, which indicated that ideas were developed through exposure to different environments and practices. Rather than following a fixed concept from the beginning, the business appeared to develop its creative practices gradually through trial, adjustment, and rebuilding. This process is consistent with the view that entrepreneurial creativity can be influenced by flexibility and the ability to recognize and respond to opportunities (Yu et al., 2023). It also reflects the connection between entrepreneurship and innovation described by Alerasoul et al. (2022). These findings indicate that creativity and innovation at Kahwa Home were applied through concrete improvements in products and business activities rather than remaining only as ideas.

3.4. Challenges in Establishing and Developing the Business

When Kahwa Home was first established, the owner faced several challenges related to capital, networks, and knowledge. These challenges were also influenced by the owner's limited experience in making coffee and lack of familiarity with coffee consumption:

"Tantangan terbesar ketika memulai usaha adalah modal, relasi, dan pengetahuan. Pada saat itu saya juga belum memiliki banyak pengalaman dalam membuat kopi dan sebenarnya saya bukan orang yang terbiasa minum kopi" ("The biggest challenge when starting the business was capital, connections, and knowledge. At that time I also didn't have much experience making coffee, and I actually wasn't someone used to drinking coffee," interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

As the business developed, the challenges changed. Maintaining consistent product quality became an important concern, while competition also increased because other businesses offered lower prices:

"Saat ini salah satu tantangan yang dihadapi adalah menjaga konsistensi kualitas. Persaingan juga menjadi tantangan karena terdapat usaha lain yang menawarkan harga yang lebih rendah" ("Right now, one of the challenges we face is maintaining consistent quality. Competition is also a challenge because other businesses offer lower prices," interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

Another challenge was the availability of raw materials. When coffee beans from farmers were limited, some customer orders could not be fulfilled. Observation also identified marketing as an additional challenge. Kahwa Home used digital and social media, mainly Instagram and Facebook, but had not yet expanded to a wider range of promotional methods.

These findings indicate that the challenges faced by Kahwa Home involved not only financial and operational aspects but also product quality, raw material availability, competition, and marketing. The ability to manage available resources is therefore important for maintaining business activities under changing conditions (Barney, 1991). The challenge of maintaining quality while responding to competition also shows that innovation cannot be separated from the practical conditions of the business. Farida and Setiawan (2022) emphasized the relationship between business strategy, innovation, and competitive advantage, while the findings from Kahwa Home show how these issues are experienced directly in day-to-day operations. The limited range of promotional activities identified through observation also indicates an area in which the business could further develop its marketing practices.

3.5. Strategic Approaches to Overcoming Business Challenges

The main strategy used by Kahwa Home to deal with its challenges was rapid adaptation. The owner viewed adaptation as an ongoing process rather than something carried out only when a problem occurred:

“Strategi yang dilakukan adalah beradaptasi lebih cepat. Saya harus melihat perkembangan yang terjadi dan melakukan improvement agar tidak tertinggal. Ketika ada orang lain yang memiliki ide atau cara yang lebih baik, saya harus bisa belajar dan menyesuaikan diri” (“The strategy is to adapt faster. I have to watch what’s developing and make improvements so I don’t fall behind. When someone else has a better idea or a better way of doing things, I have to be able to learn and adjust myself,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

The same approach was reflected in the owner’s understanding of creativity and innovation:

“Kreativitas dan inovasi sangat berkaitan dengan kemampuan untuk beradaptasi. Setiap bulan selalu ada sesuatu yang baru, sehingga saya harus terus menyesuaikan diri dengan perkembangan tersebut dan mencari cara untuk melakukan perbaikan” (“Creativity and innovation are closely tied to the ability to adapt. Every month there’s always something new, so I have to keep adjusting to those developments and finding ways to improve,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

The observation supported this strategy. Kahwa Home continued to make improvements, had characteristics that distinguished its business activities, and provided friendly and responsive customer service. The relationship between the team and customers was also observed to be relatively close and informal.

Overall, these findings show that innovation at Kahwa Home did not necessarily involve creating something completely new. Instead, it involved observing developments, learning from other practices, and adapting ideas to the business context. This reflects the incremental nature of innovation, in which businesses can improve existing practices in response to changing conditions (OECD/Eurostat, 2018). The finding is also consistent with studies emphasizing business model innovation and strategic adaptation. Albats et al. (2021) discussed innovation as a process that can involve changes to existing business models, while Zhang and Zhu (2022) highlighted the role of social media strategic capability in business model innovation. In the case of Kahwa Home, adaptation was expressed more directly through improvements in products, customer service, and business activities. Digital marketing was already used through Instagram and Facebook, but the observation showed that the range of marketing methods remained limited. This suggests that innovation at Kahwa Home was developing gradually across different parts of the business rather than through one major change.

3.6. Entrepreneurial Lessons and insights from the Business Journey

One of the most important lessons identified from the owner’s experience was the importance of consistency:

“Pelajaran yang paling penting adalah konsistensi. Saya belajar bahwa kita harus tetap berjalan dan terus belajar meskipun perkembangan usaha tidak selalu cepat. Konsisten adalah kunci utama dalam menjalankan usaha” (“The most important lesson is consistency. I learned that we have to keep going and keep learning even when the business doesn’t always develop quickly. Being consistent is the main key to running a business,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

The owner also emphasized that entrepreneurs should continue learning because business conditions continue to change. This reflects the role of experience and continuous learning in entrepreneurial development (Politis, 2005). The finding also supports the broader view that learning, knowledge, and innovation are interconnected in business development (Anjaningrum et al., 2024). In the context of Kahwa Home, entrepreneurial learning was not limited to formal training. It developed through managing cash flow, participating in coffee events, receiving customer feedback, observing other practices, solving operational problems, and evaluating business activities. This makes entrepreneurial learning an ongoing part of the business journey rather than a separate activity.

The six themes also show that the different aspects of the business were interconnected. Business operations influenced how evaluation and customer feedback were handled, while financial and raw-material conditions affected the ability to meet customer demand. At the same time, experiences outside the business contributed to ideas for product and business development. The findings therefore suggest that creativity and innovation at Kahwa Home should not be viewed as isolated activities but as part of an ongoing process involving operations, learning, evaluation, and adaptation.

The coffee business context is also important for understanding these findings. Previous research has discussed innovation and changing business models in coffee-related businesses (Christantyo & Shiratina, 2023; Nurjanah & Thorfiani, 2022). In Kahwa Home, however, innovation was described less as a change in the type of business and more as gradual improvement in products, packaging, customer service, and business practices. The case therefore illustrates how innovation can take place through relatively small and continuous adjustments in an owner-managed business.

The owner further advised prospective entrepreneurs not to change their business direction too quickly:

“Saran yang bisa saya berikan kalau sudah mengetahui arah usaha yang ingin dijalankan, sebaiknya langsung dilakukan dan jangan terlalu banyak ragu. Jangan mudah mengganti bisnis hanya karena usaha baru berjalan tiga atau empat bulan, karena kemampuan dalam suatu bidang membutuhkan proses dan pembelajaran” (“My advice, if you already know the direction of the business you want to run, is to just go ahead and not hesitate too much. Don’t easily switch businesses just because it’s only been running three or four months, because ability in a field takes process and learning,” interview, HH, August 29, 2026).

Overall, the findings across the six themes show that Kahwa Home’s development was shaped by opportunity recognition, experience-based creativity, adaptation to business challenges, and continuous learning. These factors worked together through an ongoing process of learning, evaluation, and adjustment rather than through a single business strategy.

4. Conclusion

This study examined how creativity and innovation are applied in the development of Kahwa Home, the challenges faced by the business, and the strategies used to respond to those challenges. The findings show that Kahwa Home developed from the owner’s habit of socializing into a coffee roasting and supply business serving both individual and business customers. Creativity and innovation were developed mainly through continuous learning and experiences gained from national and international coffee events. These experiences contributed to the development of products, product variety, practical packaging, and improvements in business activities. The findings also show that innovation at Kahwa Home was not necessarily based on creating entirely new products but on adapting existing ideas and practices to the needs and conditions of the business. The business faced different challenges throughout its development, including limited capital, networks, knowledge, product quality consistency, price competition, raw material availability, and marketing. To respond to these challenges, the owner applied rapid adaptation, regular evaluation, customer feedback, and continuous improvement. The findings further indicate that entrepreneurial learning developed through practical experience, trial and error, and continuous adjustment to changing business conditions. Overall, Kahwa Home demonstrates that creativity and innovation in an owner-managed small business can develop gradually through experience, learning, evaluation, and adaptation. Consistency and willingness to continue learning are important elements in supporting the ongoing development of the business.

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