

## Creative Economy as an Alternative Solution to Increase Competitiveness in the Digital Era

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### ABSTRACT

The rapid development of information and communication technology is currently able to encourage the growth of business activities to enter the creative economy era, which will be very elastic and dynamic in facing the challenges of globalization and modernization. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a literature study method. The results of the analysis state that the creative economy is a form of effort to find a formula for sustainable development through ideas and creativity. The creative business in Indonesia contributes 3% to the world's GDP. Therefore, it is clear that this area of the economy is booming because of the rise of digitization and the improvement of service delivery. Digitalization has bolstered this by creating more employment openings, but labor impermanence is still not an issue in the creative sector. The presence of a creative economy aids in reducing poverty and increasing economic levels. The development of information and communication technology contributes to and encourages the growth of the creative economy, which can be used as a solution to social welfare because the creative economic system provides added value both to the industry itself and to existing resources. The creative economy is an alternative solution to the welfare of society by improving the economy to become competitive.

**Keywords:** Competitiveness; Creative Economy; Digital Era

## **INTRODUCTION**

The super fast development of information and communication technology (ICT) in the current millennial era is pushing all lines life to be able to adapt to a dynamic environment (Semenov, 2005). Naturally, the development of ICT is carried out in order to make activities in various fields practical, effective and efficient so that we can maximize resources, especially human capital, in increasing productivity so that performance becomes better, considering that business competition is currently experiencing a paradigm shift towards a direction where previously governance was still limited in nature. conventional, let's call it analog, which has undergone evolution following the development of information technology, turning into contemporary up-to-date governance which can be called digital, based on science and technology (IPTEK), both directly and indirectly providing a creative stimulus supported by variety of media available in the cyber world. The digital era in ICT allows the exchange of information in the form of voice, data and video to be transferred in seconds with global reach, which seems to penetrate unlimited time and space.

Business activities provide large profits, both from the organizers and service providers (providers) as well as users (users/subscribers). It is inevitable that those who are able to master information technology with the support of ideas and creativity will have greater opportunities to gain profits considering the very broad market potential with very high demand for a product (goods and services), not only within the country but able to reach international world (worldwide) (Gunawan & Cahayani, 2022).

In line with the digitalization era, various business activities have emerged with amazing creativity in various fields by utilizing developments in information technology, such as trade, transportation, banking, education, expeditions, hotels, various services, and even government services are digital-based. Business growth in terms of taking advantage of developments in the digital era seems unstoppable, both those who only take advantage of the cyber atmosphere by exploiting their creativity to gain benefits in running their business and those who create vibrant products or services (Banerjee et al., 2022).

In the habitat of technology (technopreneurship), these two areas of economic activity, from a business perspective, are often referred to as the creative economy. The creative economy is an alternative solution concept for realizing sustainable economic development based on creativity. Utilization of resources that are not only renewable, but almost unlimited, namely ideas, thoughts, talents and creativity. The economic value of a product or service in the creative era is no longer determined by raw materials or production systems as in the industrial era, but rather by utilizing creativity and creating innovation through the development of information technology. Thus, industry can no longer compete in the global market by relying solely on price or product quality, but must compete based on innovation, creativity and imagination (Afiff, 2012).

The creative economy is a transaction system (supply and demand) which has a broader meaning than the creative industry (Cunningham, 2008). On the other hand, the creative industries are defined by the UK's Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport as industries that originate from the use of individual creativity, skills, and talents to create prosperity and employment opportunities through the creation and utilization of the individual's inventiveness and creativity. This means that these industries can generate wealth and new jobs through the creation and exploration of intellectual property and content (Wallis & Buckingham, 2019).

Many parties involved in the creative industry refer to the definition of Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of UK. Ministry of Trade of Indonesia, when conducting a creative industry mapping study, also used the same definition (Indonesia. Ministry of Trade, 2008). The UK government has defined creative industries into 11 subsectors, while the Indonesian government has defined 14 subsectors which are creativity-based industries.

Taking into consideration these many perspectives, a straightforward and practical definition of the creative economy would be the ability of individuals to generate economically valuable creative and inventive ideas that have the potential to improve people's standards of living and lead to greater prosperity. In the creative economy, people's ability to think outside the box, come up with novel solutions to problems, and generally be imaginative is what drives economic growth, which in turn generates employment opportunities and overall wealth (Syahsudarmi, 2019).

The creative economy in the perspective of regional government administration is ideally built from innovative ideas (innovation) (Wuryaningrat et al., 2019) which are able to stimulate economic growth, business and investment (growing business), are competitively oriented towards the transformation of the creative industry (competition), and can improve the welfare of society (people). welfare). In this context, pre-conditions are needed for: (1) identification and inventory of the types of 14 creative economy sub-sectors in the region; (2) building a database; (3) formulate policies, orientation, achievement targets and development strategies; (4) increasing the institutional capacity of creative economy managers in the regions; (5) organize procedures, mechanisms and networks for marketing products to domestic and foreign markets; (6) increasing human resource (HR) competency; (7) guarantee product quality and post-sales service; and (8) environmental sustainability for business continuity.

The problem revolves around assessing the extent of creativity within today's business community. Creativity, as a talent, holds the potential to significantly contribute to the sustainability of individuals, communities, regions, and even national economies. It is important to understand how "creativity" (referring to the creative economy and creative industry) can stimulate regional and national competitiveness.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Creative economy**

An inclusive society may benefit from the knowledge-intensive creative economy, which relies on people's unique abilities and inventiveness. Furthermore, they play a crucial role in fostering a shared understanding of the people's cultural identity and values, which in turn improves interpersonal connections. Creative energy sustains urban economic development and revitalization, keeping cities thriving (Jailani et al., 2023).

An explanation of the creative economy as a manifestation of the value-added of human ingenuity and the establishment of intellectual property rights based on cultural, scientific, and technical legacy is provided by the Indonesian government via Bekraf (Lestari & Titalessy, 2023).

According to Howkins (2001), the creative industries provide the backbone of this economic model. Howkins claims that digital technology has separated the globe and that creativity is doing the same, but not in the sense that individuals are creative per se but rather in the sense that they have the ability to turn their creative ideas into commercially successful businesses. Howkins (2001) classifies the creative industries based on their contribution to the national economy, value addition, and distinction from more conventional sectors and their respective enterprises.

Performance in the creative industries is defined as the assessment and analysis of the sector's accomplishments and outcomes across several dimensions, such as economics, creativity, innovation, employment, and social effect. Evaluating the efficiency of operations, the success of company strategies, the handling of finances, the use of technology, and the industry's social impact is crucial for assessing creative performance (Julita & Nainggolan, 2023).

### **Digital Era**

The era of information, predominantly characterized by the Internet and various digital communication platforms along with data storage systems, encompasses a broad spectrum of elements. This includes the tangible aspects of computer networks, the software facilitating online transactions such as e-commerce, and the content generated and consumed within the digital economy, as described by Barefoot et al. (2018).

An excellent case study on the interconnections between the digital economy, technical advancement, and creative industries in Southeast Asia is Singapore. According to the study by Sukarno et al. (2020), Singapore had the second-highest level of computer literacy and technology in the world in 1995. An excellent illustration of the role of stakeholders in Singapore's progress along the corridor of the creative economy is that the public and private sectors are working together to keep the concept of the digital economy and NII up-to-date and relevant. The notion of digital collaborative consumption is built around the expansion of the digital economy and creative industries. An economic activity centered on the leasing, selling, trading, or sharing of non-owned services and goods is known as digital collaborative consumption (Saadah et al., 2017).

Given that, in the context of globalization, competitiveness is the primary means of achieving success and success. It follows that the creative economic sector is an effective means of enhancing digital age competitiveness in relation to the global market. Aside from customers and businesses, the creative sector relies on the participation of other players. Without the backing of other parties, innovation in the creative sector would fail. Businesses have a pivotal role in driving economic activity, while academics contribute to media-disseminated research, the government has rule-making power, and the community is responsible for sustaining and supervising innovation.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method used in this paper is literature study. Various literature used is in the form of journals, e-books, news portals and other reading materials that are relevant to the topic discussed in this paper.

## **RESULTS**

As a new talent, the creative economy is expected to be able to become a lever of competitiveness. Its existence requires recognition which must be realized through various regulations/policies and joint actions between regulators, mediators, facilitators, implementers, actors and even other beneficiaries (beneficiaries).

Managerially, from a sense of urgency perspective, 5 (five) creative economy development agendas have been identified that require complete structuring and management. The five agendas are (1) mapping operational constraints; (2) breakthrough efforts; (3) commitment and action; (4) public awareness; and (5) the importance of databases (Syahbudi & Ma, 2021)

Creativity-based capital can boost an area's economic development, originating the term "creative economy." The creative economy, as stated by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, is the fourth wave of economic development, building on the successful third wave while focusing on innovation, culture, heritage, and the environment (Putra, 2021).

Foord (2009) states that there must be integration between public and private institutions with the growth of companies and social causes that are increasingly popular at the city level in the development of the creative economy. Promotional activities and support for the development of creative industries require strategic planning. At the same time, creative industry job growth is starting to become erratic in the centers of creative industry cities, so broader and greater economic knowledge is needed to overcome this.

The term "creative economy" (Rusydi & Noviana, 2018) describes a new economic age that places a premium on human capital—specifically, the ideas and knowledge stored in people—as the primary resource for producing goods and services. To rephrase, human capital is the central tenet of the creative economy.

Science (knowledge) in the modern economy plays the most important role. A society that is developed, advanced in civilization and has good welfare is a society that has a good basic economic knowledge. This is absolutely necessary, especially in Indonesia, whose economy is still developing (Alam, n.d.).

Using human resources (creative individuals) and information (including cultural legacy and technology), a creative economy generates value on several levels (economic, social, cultural, and environmental). Science, technology, engineering, and telecommunications are all valid bases for creative works; art and culture are not the only acceptable bases. Creativity, invention, and discovery are the three pillars upon which economic creativity rests (Indonesia. Ministry of Trade, 2008)

### **Basis of Economics Creative Creativity**

Creativity is defined as the power to make something new, different, and appealing to a wide audience. You may generate innovative and practical solutions to address a problem or explore entirely new approaches (engaging in creative thinking). If one is creative and knows how to harness their creativity, they may make something that helps themselves and others (Hussein, 2018)

### ***Innovation***

The creative process of improving upon previously established methods or products by making use of previously discovered information in order to create something new and better. Take a look at the many "lifehack" videos on YouTube for an example of creativity in action. This video demonstrates how enhancing an existing product via innovation may lead to a more valuable and practical end result (Lestari, 2019)

### ***Discovery (Invention)***

The focus here is on making something completely new, something that neither exists nor has ever been known before, something that serves a certain purpose and stands out from the crowd. Applications built on the Android and iOS platforms are another illustration of how technological advances and discoveries in the information age have simplified people's lives (Fitria, 2021).

It was not long after John Howkins published "Creative Economy, How People Make Money from Ideas" that the phrase became common use. Economic activity in which ideas serve as both inputs and outputs is known as the creative economy (Howkins, 2001). Ideas are the essence of creativity. Someone who is creative may perceptibly only make a respectable living off the capital of ideas.

With a number of industries serving as the backbone of the Indonesian economy, the country is working towards its goal of a sustainable economy. Ultimately, sustainable development is the end consequence of being able to adapt to changing geographic circumstances and economic constraints (Saleh, 2019)

High growth is reflected in the competence of individuals in creating innovation. Due to the fact that people own creative capital, which they put to use in the process of developing inventions, the Creative Economy, which encompasses creative sectors, has a high level of bargaining power in an established economy (Habib, 2021)

The following are examples of what is considered to be a contribution to the economy in Indonesia. The first factor is the contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), this industry in Indonesia contributed 7.28% to GDP in 2008 and 7.8% to GDP on average from 2002 to 2008. The creative industry's contribution to GDP mostly comes from fashion businesses (3.7%) and crafts (1.9%) (Fardiansyah, 2023).

Second, job creation, data from BPS shows that the creative industry in Indonesia absorbed 7,686,410 workers in 2008 and an average of 7,391,642 workers from 2002 to 2008. On average from 2002 to 2008, the industry creative absorbs 7.7% of the total workforce in industry. With this percentage, the creative industry is the fifth largest industry that absorbs labor after the Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Fisheries industries; Trade, Hotels and Restaurants; Service Sociability; and Processing.

Third is increasing export activities. In the period 2008-2010, the creative industry recorded a dominant and ever-increasing net trade contribution, respectively amounting to 41.7%, 54.7%, 57.8% compared to national net trade. According to these numbers, the creative sector represents a strong foundation for people's incomes to rise. Furthermore, the creative industry plays a significant role in establishing national monetary stability as one of the primary industries that contributes to the nation's foreign exchange.

According to the UK Government Task Force as cited by Hadida (2015), creative industries is defined as those industries which have their origins in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property. Then the definition of creative industry is almost the same as that referred to Indonesian Ministry of Trade (2008). In order to generate wealth and job possibilities, creative industries rely on people's unique blend of skills, knowledge, and experiences to solve problems and come up with novel solutions. A total of fourteen unique economic sectors are classified. These sectors include the following: (1) advertising; (2) architecture; (3) markets for art goods; (4) crafts; (5) design; (6) fashion; (7) video, film, and photography; (8) interactive games; (9) music; (10) performing arts; (11) publishing and printing; (12) computer services and software; (13) television and radio; and (14) research and development.

The classification of 14 creative industry subsectors in Indonesia is divided based on two dimensions, namely (1) dominant substance in the industrial subsector creative; and (2) intensity of resources required in the creative industries subsector. These two dominant aspects determine the development of the creative industry.

#### **Dominant Substance**

The dominant substance in an economic subsector can be divided into four aspects which characterize it, namely as follows.

##### ***Media***

In this subsector, the goods/services produced rely on media to display the content so that it can provide added value.

##### ***Art and Culture***

In this sub-sector, the goods/services produced rely on the artistic and cultural content contained therein so that they can provide added value.

##### ***Design***

In this sub-sector, the goods/services produced rely on design/design aspects so that they can provide added value.

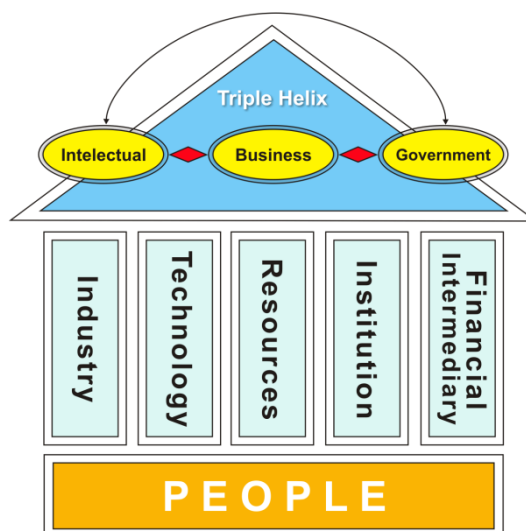
##### ***Science and Technology***

In this subsector, the goods/services produced rely on the use of knowledge-based technology as a means of creation so that they can provide added value.

#### **Resource Intensity**

In general, the creative industry emphasizes creativity as the main resource. However, there are many industries that require physical resources, such as the use of natural resources. For example, in the fashion industry, even though the global trend is to increase added value from the design aspect, this industry still requires natural resources in the form of thread which is then made into fabric so that the resulting product shows its physical form. Another example is the craft industry which still requires natural raw materials such as wood, rattan, stones, metal, etc. as well as the printing industry which still requires paper, all of which require natural raw materials.

**Figure 1.** Creative Economy Development Model



Source: (Etzkowitz & Zhou, 2017)

As can be seen in the picture above, the foundation for developing the creative economy is human resources (people). The uniqueness of the creative industry is the role of human resources which is the main capital for creating economic activities to produce a new industry. Intellectual capacity and other forms of human capital are a company's most valuable assets. Managers and value creators in any organization are people. To rephrase, people are crucial and play a significant role in business management, particularly in terms of their competence, knowledge, and brainpower.

There are several aspects of the creative economy that make it almost impossible to define. A spike in digitization and services is bolstering this sector, which already accounts for 3% of global GDP, making it a formidable new economic force.

According to those keeping tabs on the creative economy, if it can be reversed a few critical tendencies, their impact will only increase. Worldwide commerce and commodities director at UNCTAD, Pamela Coke-Hamilton, said, "The creative economy and its industries are strategic sectors that, if nurtured, can boost competitiveness, productivity, sustainable growth, employment, and export potential". The creative process, however, will not magically lead to a more diverse economy. A microcosm of the sweep of global concerns today are the myriad difficulties faced by the culture and creative industries (CCIs). Critical analysis is necessary on the following issues: the climate catastrophe, growth limitations, copyright and intellectual property (IP), digitization and e-commerce platforms, the future of employment, trade terms, and distribution network access. The question therefore becomes; what are the current tendencies that impact both creativity and the capacity to profit from it.

According to Pratt (2008), professor of cultural economics at City University of London, there are three main areas that deserve attention, especially for developing countries: (1) the emergence of trade asymmetries, which are exacerbated by digital platforms; (2) the nature of work in the cultural and creative industries; and (3) the role of the environment and environmental sustainability.



The colonial trade networks were still there and concentrated on extractive value, and that southern nations were attempting to catch up in order to join numerous (existing creative) networks. He mentioned how artists from poor nations are increasingly relocating to developed nations like the US and Europe, where their work is more highly valued. The creative economy's increased extraction of value-added items like recordings and copyrights no longer leaves developing nations behind.

Pratt argued that the proliferation of digital platforms exacerbates this issue, a point also highlighted in the most recent Creative Economy Outlook report by UNCTAD. The point was made that although digitization has not benefited everyone, it has helped businesses with distribution management. Many players in the creative industry rely on digital rights for their livelihoods; thus, this is a problem for them.

According to South African cultural observer and economics professor Jeannette Snowball, who teaches at Rhodes University in South Africa, cultural commerce connects innovation with globalization (Comunian et al., 2021). It was argued that underdeveloped nations and emerging markets might share in the benefits of globalization, culture, and innovation if the creative process was more evenly distributed. As an example, it was mentioned how economic culture may spur product and process innovation, which in turn can boost productivity and competitiveness in other sectors. This is referenced studies conducted in nine South American nations that found more exports from the creative industries led to an increase in exports from the non-creative sectors (Gouvea & Vora, 2018). The main point was that underdeveloped nations cannot really benefit from cultural commerce since their industries and businesses are so unofficial. It was acknowledged the difficulty of enforcing stronger laws to level the playing field in intellectual property trading between rich and poor nations. For this to come to fruition, pragmatic policies grounded on data and informed by their unique expertise in cultural economics are essential.

### **Gigabytes and Gig Economy**

Margherita Licata of the International Labor Organization (ILO) stated that the nature of creative work is also being researched due to the decline in the number of permanent creative jobs (Galian et al., 2021).

The creative economy has always struggled with labor impermanence, but the rise of the gig economy and other digital disruptions have made the issue much worse. While the gig economy offers more possibilities, it also brings greater global competition, lower outsourcing costs, and more competitive pricing.

At the same time, Pratt (2008) argued that managing the growing precarity or impermanence of employment is an important aspect of the creative economy, particularly when considering the long-term viability of young people and digital creatives workers. Their digital footprint, high data expenses, and lack of network access all contribute to the precarious employment situation of creative professionals in underdeveloped nations.

### **Creating New Environments**

Participants in the creative economy must pay more attention to sustainable development and technology. Pratt (2008) argued, "We do not think about electronic waste in mobile devices or natural resources used in cultural products, especially digital cultural

products. This concern should make us worried because the creative economy is not yet completely clean". In addition, it was said that despite the fact that several concerns about sustainability have been discussed and handled within the fashion industry, this has not prevented the growth of fast fashion and the use of child labour.

A professor at the University of Melbourne named Christiaan de Beukelaer issued a call to action to creative producers, urging them to "green their people" and establish genuine ties between the creative sector and sustainable human development. As an example, he raised concerns about the connection that exists between the art world and oil businesses, considering that oil firms often finance art exhibitions and contests.

## **DISCUSSION**

As time goes by, human resources no longer play a role as supporting resources but as capital in an organization, known as human capital. For a firm to thrive in a competitive environment, it must not only be judged on financial returns but also on its ability to increase those returns over time. Based on this, the multiplication of company performance must be aimed at human capital performance.

There are several opinions regarding the definition of human capital. The definition of human capital quoted by Almannie (2015), including the opinion of Sari (2015), it refers to the entire experience and expertise, talents, passion, innovation, and quality that personnel in a firm possess (Yasin & Ali, 2016); a combination of knowledge, learning, core competencies of employees in order to achieve goals, programs in the organization and their functional tasks. Human capital includes resource considerations for humans at large, namely energy work for a company, and more specifically, individual competence in the form of knowledge, skills, and traits, the nature of managers and people, which he arranged (McGregor et al., 2004).

Human capital may be described as the combination of information, learning, experience, core competencies, skills, and talents that are required to be held by every person working for an organization or firm. This integration has the potential to ultimately increase employee productivity and have an impact on company productivity. Therefore, it is possible to draw the conclusion that human capital is an integral part of an organization or company. Therefore, the human resources approach as human capital is in line with the development of the creative economy which focuses on humans who have knowledge and creativity.

## **CONCLUSION**

In light of the conversation that has taken place up to this point, it is reasonable to arrive at the conclusion that the development of information and communication technology not only helps to the expansion of the creative economy but also supports its expansion. This is a solution that can be exploited for the welfare of society since the creative economic system delivers additional value to both the industry itself and to human resources. There is a possibility that this solution may be implemented. The presence of a creative economy has a beneficial effect on the reduction of the unemployment rate, which will eventually lead to a rise in the level of the economy.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest.

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