

CREATIVE ECONOMY AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE: A NEW STRATEGY TO ALLEVIATE RURAL POVERTY

Jeffriansyah Dwi Sahputra Amory¹

¹Universitas Muhammadiyah Mamuju, Jln. Pattalundru No. 2, Mamuju, Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia

Email: jeffriamori77@gmail.com

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Abstract. The creative economy has been recognized as an innovative approach to addressing poverty, particularly in rural areas with limited access to conventional economic resources. This study explores the potential of the creative economy as a catalyst for change through a literature review employing a qualitative approach and descriptive analysis. Data were drawn from scholarly articles retrieved via Google Scholar from 2016 to 2024, with 22 articles selected after a rigorous screening process from an initial 43 articles. Findings reveal that the creative economy can enhance community welfare by leveraging local potentials rooted in culture, innovation, and digital technology. Case studies such as Penglipuran Tourism Village, Trusmi Village, and Kasongan Village highlight the critical roles of cross-sector collaboration, skill training, and digital infrastructure investment in supporting the success of creative economy initiatives. However, challenges such as limited technology access in rural areas and the need for sustainable policies to support creative economy growth were also identified. These findings provide significant implications for developing community empowerment strategies based on the creative economy in rural areas.

Keywords: Creative Economy, Poverty, Rural Areas, Digital Technology, Community Welfare

Abstrak. Ekonomi kreatif telah diakui sebagai salah satu pendekatan inovatif untuk mengatasi kemiskinan, khususnya di wilayah pedesaan yang memiliki keterbatasan sumber daya ekonomi konvensional. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi potensi ekonomi kreatif sebagai katalisator perubahan melalui tinjauan pustaka dengan pendekatan kualitatif dan analisis deskriptif. Data diambil dari artikel ilmiah yang diperoleh melalui Google Scholar pada periode 2016–2024, dengan 22 artikel yang dipilih setelah seleksi ketat dari total 43 artikel awal. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ekonomi kreatif dapat meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat melalui pemanfaatan potensi lokal berbasis budaya, inovasi, dan teknologi digital. Studi kasus seperti Desa Wisata Penglipuran, Desa Trusmi, dan Desa Kasongan menegaskan bahwa kolaborasi lintas sektor, pelatihan keterampilan, dan investasi infrastruktur digital memainkan peran berharga dalam mendukung keberhasilan inisiatif ekonomi kreatif. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi tantangan seperti keterbatasan akses teknologi di pedesaan dan pentingnya kebijakan berkelanjutan untuk mendukung pertumbuhan ekonomi kreatif. Temuan ini memberikan implikasi signifikan bagi pengembangan strategi pemberdayaan masyarakat berbasis ekonomi kreatif di wilayah pedesaan.

Kata Kunci: Ekonomi Kreatif, Kemiskinan, Pedesaan, Teknologi Digital, Kesejahteraan Masyarakat

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INTRODUCTION

The creative economy has emerged as one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in recent decades. This term refers to economic activities based on creativity, knowledge, and innovation, encompassing industries such as arts, design, digital media, music, and cultural tourism. According to research by Nabella & Rahmadanita (2024), the creative economy has the potential to empower communities, generate new employment opportunities, and improve the quality of life, particularly in developing countries. In rural areas, where traditional resources are often limited, the creative economy offers novel opportunities to transform challenges into productive strengths. Creativity-driven approaches help rural communities unlock value from local resources, such as promoting handicrafts, traditional cuisine, or unique culture-based tourism potentials.

Rural poverty remains a pressing issue in many countries, including Indonesia. Rural areas often face limited access to infrastructure, education, and financial services, exacerbating socio-economic disparities compared to urban areas. In this context, the creative economy emerges as a strategic approach to empower rural communities. The creative economy can serve as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth by leveraging digital technology, individual creativity, and local cultural uniqueness. In Indonesia, initiatives such as tourism villages and local creative industry development have demonstrated positive impacts on poverty alleviation (Dyantra & Nisa, 2024), although significant challenges in implementation remain.

One of the primary reasons the creative economy can combat rural poverty lies in its ability to generate locally-based employment opportunities. Unlike traditional industries that often require substantial capital or access to global markets, the creative economy emphasizes individual capacity to create unique, high-market-value products. For example, the artisan community in Jepara, Central Java, successfully integrated traditional wood carving skills with digital marketing technologies to reach international markets (Caratri, 2024). This strategy increased local incomes while strengthening the cultural identity that defines the community.

However, the success of the creative economy in rural areas does not occur automatically. Many communities face barriers to accessing training, business capital, and adequate technological infrastructure. This underscores the need for a holistic approach involving collaboration among government entities, the private sector, and educational institutions. Policies that support rural creative economy development, such as establishing creative training centers and providing internet access in remote areas, can play a key role in accelerating socio-economic transformation. For instance, government programs like Indonesia's Creative Economy Agency (BEKRAF) have provided training and assistance to creative industry

players in rural areas (Hendriyani, 2021), although its implementation requires continuous improvement.

Digital technology also plays a critical role in supporting the growth of the creative economy in rural areas. Small businesses in rural areas now have broader access to global markets and customers with the rise of e-commerce platforms, social media, and financial technologies (M Nasar & T Salsabila, 2024). Platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Instagram have become vital tools for creative entrepreneurs to promote their products without leaving their villages. However, to maximize this potential, adequate technological training is essential for rural communities to effectively utilize these platforms.

Education also plays a pivotal role in fostering the development of the creative economy in rural areas. Both formal and informal education focusing on creative skills, entrepreneurship, and technology can help rural communities understand how to manage creative businesses sustainably. Community-based skills training programs or creative workshops have proven effective in some regions. For example, Bali's tourism village initiatives, which involve training in handicrafts and digital marketing, have significantly boosted local incomes and attracted tourists to engage in local cultural activities (Udayani et al., 2024).

On the other hand, a collaborative approach is key to the success of the creative economy as a strategy to alleviate rural poverty. Collaboration among entrepreneurs, local governments, and non-governmental organizations can create an ecosystem that supports the development of local innovations. For instance, partnerships between weaving communities in East Nusa Tenggara and philanthropic organizations successfully created markets for traditional woven products previously limited to local markets (Kefamenanu, 2024). Consequently, these products now possess greater competitiveness in international markets, delivering significant economic impacts to the local population.

This research aims to analyze how the creative economy can function as a catalyst for change in alleviating rural poverty. The study explores various strategies successfully implemented at the local level, challenges encountered, and future development potential. Through this approach, the research seeks to provide practical and theoretical contributions to strengthening the role of the creative economy in empowering rural communities while offering relevant policy recommendations for governments and other stakeholders.

METHOD

This study employs a literature review method with a qualitative approach to analyze the role of the creative economy as a catalyst for change in addressing poverty in rural areas. A

literature review was chosen as it allows the researcher to investigate relevant concepts, theories, and empirical findings from various previous studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The qualitative approach was used because this research focuses on an in-depth exploration of complex social and economic phenomena, requiring interpretative and descriptive analysis. Data collection was conducted by searching for relevant scholarly articles using Google Scholar as the primary source. The search was concentrated on the period 2016–2024 to ensure that the data reflects the latest developments in the field of creative economy and poverty alleviation. Keywords such as "creative economy," "rural poverty," "poverty alleviation strategies," and related terms were used. The initial search yielded 43 scholarly articles.

The data selection process was conducted rigorously in several stages. First, the abstracts of each article were reviewed to ensure relevance to the research topic. Articles that did not directly discuss the creative economy or rural poverty alleviation were eliminated. Second, the selected articles were further reviewed to assess their credibility based on the quality of the journal, research methods used, and their relevance to the context of Indonesia or other developing countries. After this selection process, only 22 articles that met the criteria for relevance and quality were used in the analysis. The data analysis was performed descriptively, focusing on identifying key themes that emerged in the literature. The process involved organizing the data into thematic categories, such as the role of the creative economy in community empowerment, implementation strategies in rural areas, and challenges encountered. The categorized data were then interpreted to provide an in-depth understanding of how the creative economy can act as a catalyst for social and economic change in rural communities. This approach enabled the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and gaps in the existing literature, producing findings that are relevant and useful as a basis for policy recommendations. Figure 1 below encapsulates the adopted research flowchart.

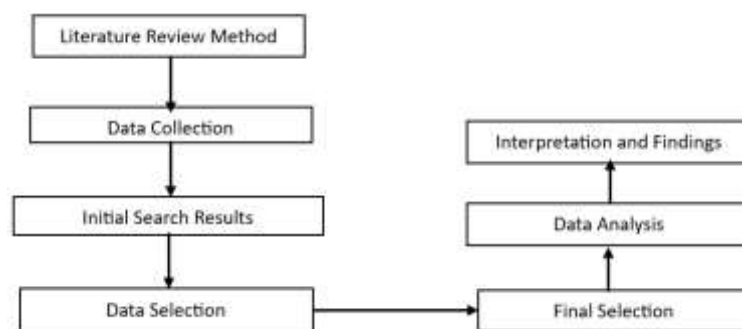


Figure 1. Methodology Flowchart

Source: Author (2024)

RESULTS

The creative economy emphasizes creativity, innovation, and the exploration of cultural potential to create value-added products and services (Boccella & Salerno, 2016). This sector includes areas such as arts, crafts, design, culinary arts, and information technology, all driven by human creativity. The creative economy plays a significant role in enhancing competitiveness and diversifying the economy, especially through the development of locally based industries accessible to small communities. In rural areas, the creative economy becomes a transformative tool to optimize local potential, such as culture and traditions, as the main capital for sustainably increasing community income.

Poverty refers to the lack of sufficient economic, social, and educational resources that limits individuals or communities from meeting their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter (Karo & Yusnida, 2023). In rural areas, poverty is often influenced by limited access to job opportunities, infrastructure, and adequate educational services. Poverty hinders individual development and is a major obstacle to regional economic growth. Therefore, empowerment-based approaches, such as creative economy development, become relevant strategies to address the root causes of poverty and provide new opportunities for communities to improve their living standards.

Rural areas are characterized by demographic and geographical features dominated by agrarian activities and populations spread across small communities (Fatimah & Nursaidah, 2022). These regions often possess abundant natural and cultural potential but face limitations in infrastructure, access to technology, and economic opportunities. These conditions make rural areas an important focus for community empowerment efforts through the development of the creative economy. Rural areas can transform into economic growth centers capable of sustainably improving the well-being of their inhabitants with appropriate approaches, such as engaging communities in locally based creative production.

Digital technology encompasses various internet-based tools and platforms that enable efficient information management, communication, and transactions (Harahap et al., 2023). In the context of the creative economy, digital technology serves as a bridge between local producers in rural areas and global markets, allowing them to market their products more broadly. Digital platforms such as marketplaces, social media, and online payment applications provide significant opportunities for entrepreneurs to expand their market reach and increase their income. Moreover, digital technology supports community training and empowerment through easier access to information and learning. However, its utilization requires adequate infrastructure and improvements in digital literacy within communities.

Cross-sector collaboration involves partnerships among government, private sectors, local communities, and educational institutions to achieve inclusive and sustainable development goals (Febrianty et al., 2023). In developing the creative economy in rural areas, such collaboration is essential for providing resources, funding, training, and market access that cannot be achieved by one party alone. For example, the government can offer supportive regulations and infrastructure facilities, while the private sector assists in marketing and investment. This collaboration ensures the maximum development of the creative economy's potential with wide-ranging positive impacts on society.

Community welfare refers to a condition where individuals and communities can live with their basic needs fulfilled, have access to education and health services, and opportunities to improve their quality of life (Warnaen et al., 2013). In the rural context, community welfare is often measured by increased income, reduced poverty rates, and strengthened social capital. A creative economy-based approach provides opportunities for communities to actively participate in economic activities, generate added value from local potential, and enhance their independence. Community welfare improves economically while also strengthening social cohesion and cultural identity with the right strategies.

DISCUSSION

The creative economy strategy for poverty alleviation in rural areas through the development of creativity-based local potential has proven effective, as seen in the development of Penglipuran Tourism Village in Bali. This village integrates local culture, innovation, and technology to create sustainable economic opportunities (Fujihasa et al., 2022). The uniqueness of its culture and traditions is professionally managed, transforming it into a tourist attraction that showcases Bali's cultural richness while providing direct economic benefits to the community. Local residents actively participate in cultural tourism sectors, such as becoming tour guides, selling handicrafts, and operating culinary businesses, all of which boost income and create new jobs. Furthermore, the use of technology for marketing through digital platforms expands market reach, attracts tourists, and promotes local products. This model demonstrates how the creative economy can generate significant socio-economic impacts, highlighting the potential of local resources to address structural poverty in rural areas sustainably and broadly.

A creative economy approach focused on adding value to local resources, both material and immaterial, is clearly demonstrated in Borobudur Village, Yogyakarta. Here, local residents have successfully developed creative businesses by utilizing bamboo waste and fabric

scraps to produce handicrafts marketed to tourists (Magelang, 2024). This strategy not only creates economic opportunities but also plays a vital role in environmental conservation. The creative economy in Borobudur Village provides additional income while reducing environmental waste by transforming waste into high-value products, thereby balancing economic development with nature conservation. Furthermore, community empowerment through skill training is an integral part of this strategy, expanding local capacity to produce high-quality and competitive creative products. Residents can create more valuable crafts that are preferred by consumers by enhancing their technical skills and creativity, ultimately increasing the competitiveness of their products in both local and global markets. This approach demonstrates that the creative economy is not only an economic activity but also a tool for generating positive social impacts, fostering environmental awareness, and improving community welfare by strengthening individual and collective capacities to face market challenges.

While the creative economy holds great potential for empowering rural economies, its implementation often faces significant challenges, particularly regarding access to technology and digital infrastructure. An example of this is in East Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, where many creative entrepreneurs encounter limited internet access, hindering their ability to market products online and expand their market reach (Nuka, 2022). Without adequate digital infrastructure, creative enterprises that rely on technology and digital marketing cannot fully thrive, reducing their potential income. Addressing this issue requires substantial investment in digital infrastructure development, including expanding internet networks to remote areas and developing affordable technology training programs. These programs should focus on enhancing community skills in using digital technology for marketing, business management, and creative product development. Collaboration between local governments and internet service providers is also crucial to expand internet access in rural areas, enabling creative entrepreneurs to seize global market opportunities through digital platforms. The creative economy in areas like East Manggarai can grow faster, create more jobs, and increase the competitiveness of local products in broader markets with adequate digital infrastructure and improved technological skills.

The strategy of leveraging digital technology in creative economy development has proven effective, as reflected in the use of digital platforms by SMEs in Trusmi Village, Cirebon, to market local batik products to national and international markets (Rachmat & Darmansyah, 2023). Platforms such as Tokopedia, Shopee, and Instagram allow batik artisans in the village to expand their market reach and enhance product visibility in wider markets. This digital

adoption facilitates more efficient marketing, enabling direct interactions with consumers and providing space for innovation in creating more engaging and data-driven marketing strategies. Digital training organized by the government and non-governmental organizations plays a crucial role in equipping artisans, initially limited in technology use, with the competence to utilize digital platforms to boost sales. Additionally, the integration of financial technology, such as GoPay and Dana, allows batik artisans to manage transactions more efficiently, reduce payment barriers, and accelerate product production and distribution cycles. Through this digital payment system, transactions become faster, safer, and more convenient, enabling artisans to focus on product development and meet market demand more efficiently. The application of digital technology in Trusmi's creative economy creates an ecosystem that supports operational efficiency, enhances local product competitiveness, and opens opportunities for broader market expansion, contributing to rural economic growth and poverty alleviation.

Community-based education and training strategies in Kasongan Village, Yogyakarta, highlight how collaboration between local universities and communities can accelerate the success of the rural creative economy (Yuliana, 2023). Training programs on clay-based crafts organized by universities provide local residents with opportunities to develop new skills that improve product quality and enable them to create more innovative and competitive designs. In this context, educational institutions serve as bridges between academic knowledge and local practice, transferring new technologies and techniques that enhance the competitiveness of village craft products. Such collaborations also strengthen marketing networks, promoting locally produced crafts through broader channels at national and international levels. Additionally, partnerships with educational institutions help position Kasongan Village as a creative economy hub with a reputation for high-quality craft products. Continuous training enables artisans to innovate and adapt their products to changing market trends, while robust marketing networks allow them to access broader markets and increase income. Community-based education and training reinforce the capacity of communities to develop sustainable creative economies, create jobs, and promote economic empowerment in rural areas.

Cross-sector collaboration is a key element in the success of creative economy initiatives, as it fosters ecosystems that support innovation and sustainability. In Troso Weaving Village, Jepara, a tangible example of collaboration between weavers, the government, and e-commerce platforms has had a significant impact (Arifin & Triyanto, 2017). The government provides training and modern production tools, helping weavers improve the quality and productivity of their products. Meanwhile, e-commerce platforms like Tokopedia and Shopee facilitate global

market access, introducing woven products to international consumers and expanding market reach for weavers. This collaboration increases village income and brings international recognition to Indonesia's traditional products, reinforcing cultural identity and supporting craft-based tourism. Other positive impacts include the creation of new jobs and enhanced community skills, supporting sustainable economic growth in the village. The creative economy in Troso Weaving Village can thrive more effectively, generating innovative and sustainable solutions that improve rural community welfare with synergy between sectors such as government, business, and local communities.

The development of the creative economy in Ubud Village, Bali, highlights the significant potential of cultural tourism based on traditional performing arts such as Kecak dance and gamelan music to strengthen local cultural identity while driving economic growth (Ahmad Solehudin et al., 2022). Ubud attracts domestic and international visitors and preserves Bali's rich and unique cultural heritage by integrating performing arts into the tourism sector. This culture-based tourism development creates new economic opportunities for local communities, including artisans, artists, and tourism industry players, while boosting regional income. However, this strategy requires careful management to prevent commercialization that could erode the authentic values of the culture. Without a balance between cultural preservation and market needs, traditional performing arts risk losing their essence, leading to exploitation focused solely on profit without considering cultural sustainability. Thus, management involving local communities, creative entrepreneurs, and the government is essential to ensure that culture-based tourism respects and preserves traditions. Successfully integrating the creative economy with cultural preservation also requires education and training for local communities on maintaining cultural values while leveraging the economic potential of tourism. The creative economy can contribute to economic growth while safeguarding and enhancing the local cultural identity that attracts tourists with wise management.

Women's empowerment strategies in the creative economy in rural areas, as demonstrated in Lasem Village, Rembang, emphasize the vital role of women in managing household-based creative enterprises that influence family economics and contribute to broader local economic empowerment (Mifta, 2023). In Lasem, women play a central role in creating hand-drawn batik with distinctive motifs, preserving local cultural heritage, and generating sustainable economic opportunities. Strategies to support women in this sector include entrepreneurship training and access to business capital, enabling them to develop technical skills and manage their businesses more efficiently and professionally. Enhanced skills in business management, marketing, and production help women in Lasem improve product quality, expand market

reach, and ultimately increase family income and drive village economic growth. However, to maximize impact, sustained support from various stakeholders, including the government, NGOs, and the private sector, is needed. In addition to skill training, access to business capital is crucial to scale up production and introduce products to broader markets, including digital platforms. This opens opportunities for women to participate in larger supply chains and strengthens their position in an inclusive local economy. Women can act as economic change agents in their villages, driving more inclusive and sustainable creative economies through empowerment strategies encompassing training, capital access, and product marketing.

Sustainability strategies for rural creative economies, supported by policies such as financing small businesses through People's Business Credit (KUR), are crucial to addressing funding challenges often faced by creative entrepreneurs in remote areas. For example, in Penglipuran Village, Bali, KUR financing support provides local entrepreneurs easier access to modern production equipment and tourism facility renovations (Mareni et al., 2022). This financing enables entrepreneurs to improve product and service quality, expand production capacity, and ultimately enhance business competitiveness in local and global markets. Government-backed policies like KUR also offer security to business actors with affordable interest rates and flexible repayment terms, making it a highly relevant choice to support creative enterprises in rural areas focused on small and medium-sized industries. This policy acts as an effective catalyst for accelerating rural creative economy growth by strengthening business capital needed to increase production capacity and introduce local products to broader markets. However, for this strategy to succeed, synergy among the government, financial institutions, and local communities is essential to ensure optimal utilization of financing access. Furthermore, this policy should be supported by entrepreneurship training programs that assist creative economy actors in financial management and product development to become more innovative and market-aligned. Rural creative economies can grow sustainably, improve community welfare, and contribute more significantly to the national economy with supportive financing policies and relevant training.

Sustaining creative economies in rural areas requires continuous evaluation and monitoring of the impact of implemented programs, particularly for tourist villages that often face challenges in maintaining visitor levels. In many case studies, initially successful creative economy programs, such as tourist village development, often experience visitor declines due to external factors like changes in tourism trends, natural disasters, or infrastructure issues. Therefore, a key strategy is product diversification and the development of new markets. Tourist villages or other creative enterprises can attract broader and more diverse market

segments by diversifying products, reducing reliance on seasonal tourist visits. For example, entrepreneurs in tourist villages can develop local products for online sales or create educational or eco-tourism experiences that are more resilient to tourism market fluctuations. New market development can also be achieved by leveraging digital platforms to reach international markets, such as marketing local products on e-commerce platforms or using social media to attract tourists or customers globally. Additionally, it is crucial to align products with changing market demands, such as creating more environmentally friendly or sustainable creative products increasingly favored by environmentally conscious global consumers. Sustainability in the creative economy also requires flexibility in adapting to changing trends, ensuring that offered products and services remain relevant. Long-term success necessitates collaboration among the government, private sector, and local communities in designing policies that encourage innovation and support creative economy actors to adapt to rapidly changing market dynamics. Rural creative economies can endure and thrive even in the face of market fluctuations or other external challenges with the right approach to diversification and new market development.

The creative economy holds significant potential in addressing rural poverty through community empowerment, cultural preservation, and technological integration. Community empowerment enables residents to develop skills that increase income through high-value local products, while cultural preservation introduces cultural potential as a tourism attraction and income source. Technological integration, such as e-commerce, expands market reach and improves operational efficiency, offering global market opportunities for local products. However, the success of the creative economy depends heavily on collaboration between the government, private sector, and communities, with investments in infrastructure and supportive policies such as business financing and entrepreneurship training. Case studies from Penglipuran Village, Trusmi Village, and Kasongan Village demonstrate that creative economy approaches based on local empowerment, training, and technology can create significant changes that enhance rural welfare, with sustainable positive impacts when supported by the right policies and strong collaboration.

Table 1. Creative Economy Strategies for Rural Community Empowerment to Alleviate Poverty

Strategy	Key Finding	Description
Tourism Village Development	Development of Penglipuran Tourism Village	Integration of local culture, innovation, and technology in Penglipuran Village, Bali, creates sustainable economic opportunities. The community engages in

		cultural tourism, increasing income and generating new jobs.
Utilization of the Creative Economy	Creative Economy in Borobudur Village	Use of bamboo waste and fabric scraps for handicrafts, creating economic opportunities while preserving the environment. Skill training enhances product quality and competitiveness in local and global markets.
Improvement of Digital Infrastructure	Infrastructure Challenges in East Manggarai	Limited internet access hampers online marketing of creative products. Investment in digital infrastructure and technology training is necessary to develop global markets and increase income.
Digital Marketing and Financial Technology	Digital Technology Utilization in Trusmi Village, Cirebon	Use of digital platforms (Tokopedia, Shopee, Instagram) to market local batik, expand markets, and enhance product visibility. Implementation of financial technology facilitates transactions and improves operational efficiency.
Collaboration in Community-Based Education and Training	Community-Based Education and Training in Kasongan Village	Collaboration between universities and the community in clay craft training enhances skills and broadens markets. This education strengthens the creative economy and creates jobs and economic empowerment in rural areas.
Sectoral Collaboration for Traditional Product Development	Cross-Sector Collaboration in Troso Weaving Village, Jepara	Collaboration among weavers, government, and e-commerce expands global markets, improves product quality and productivity, and creates job opportunities while gaining international recognition for Indonesia's traditional products.
Cultural Tourism Development	Art-Based Tourism in Ubud Village, Bali	Development of tourism based on traditional performing arts (Kecak dance, gamelan) boosts local income while preserving culture. Prudent management is necessary to ensure culture is preserved and not overly commercialized.
Women Empowerment in Entrepreneurship	Women Empowerment in Lasem Village, Rembang	Women play a key role in creating traditional handwritten batik in Lasem. Entrepreneurship training and access to capital help them develop skills and expand markets, increasing household and village economic incomes.
Access to Financing for Creative Enterprises	Financing Policies for Creative Enterprises in Penglipuran Village, Bali	Microcredit schemes provide financing access for small business development, including the procurement of production tools and renovation of tourism facilities, enabling local entrepreneurs to grow their

businesses and create new economic opportunities.

Source: Secondary Data (2024)

CONCLUSION

The creative economy has proven to be a significant catalyst for addressing rural poverty by empowering local potential rooted in creativity, culture, and innovation. This study shows that creative economy initiatives can increase income, create jobs, and strengthen local cultural identity in rural areas, as seen in cases like Penglipuran Tourism Village, Trusmi Village, and Kasongan Village. However, success heavily depends on cross-sectoral collaboration, investment in digital infrastructure, and community empowerment through education and training. The findings imply the need for a holistic approach involving stakeholders, including governments, local communities, private sectors, and educational institutions, to create a supportive ecosystem for creative economy growth. Additionally, digital technology development and inclusive financing programs should be prioritized to support rural creative entrepreneurs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To support the growth of the creative economy in rural areas, governments and internet service providers should prioritize the expansion of digital infrastructure to enable better access to online marketing platforms for creative products. This effort should be complemented by the expansion of entrepreneurship training programs focused on creative skills, involving local educational institutions to develop a workforce that is both skilled and innovative. Additionally, strategic partnerships between governments, private sectors, and local communities are crucial to facilitating access to markets, technology, and financing for creative economy actors. Entrepreneurs should also be encouraged to diversify their products to reduce over-reliance on specific sectors, such as tourism. Finally, the government must establish sustainability-focused policies that support creative economy initiatives through measures such as tax incentives, easier access to capital, and enhanced market research support, ensuring long-term growth and impact. This study has several limitations. First, the data analyzed is restricted to scholarly articles from 2016–2024, which may not fully reflect recent developments in creative economy implementation. Second, the study does not directly examine the impacts of creative economy programs in the field, making its findings more conceptual than empirically based. Third, the focus on cases within Indonesia means the findings may not be fully applicable to other countries with different socio-economic contexts. Future research is

recommended to adopt mixed-method approaches involving direct surveys of creative economy actors in rural areas. Additionally, an in-depth examination of the impact of digital technology on improving the competitiveness of creative products in global markets could be a critical area for further exploration.

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