



# Innovation Strategies in Developing a Local Wisdom–Based Creative Economy: A Qualitative Study of Regional Creative Industry Actors

Berilian Ayu Kusuma, S.Tr.Bns

Universitas Islam Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

The creative economy grounded in local wisdom has emerged as a strategic pillar for regional development, particularly in Indonesia's culturally diverse landscape. However, existing studies remain fragmented, predominantly single-case in scope, and rarely integrate domestic findings with international frameworks. This study synthesizes innovation strategies employed by regional creative industry actors through a qualitative systematic review of 20 purposively selected studies drawn from Indonesian and international contexts (2021–2025). Employing thematic analysis and cross-case synthesis, the study identifies six dominant innovation strategy clusters: (1) product innovation rooted in cultural heritage, (2) digital and green marketing adoption, (3) multi-actor collaborative governance (triple/quadruple/quintuple/hexa helix), (4) government policy facilitation, (5) capacity building and human capital development, and (6) eco-cultural branding. A comparative analysis between domestic (Indonesian) and international (European and Latin American) studies reveals structural divergences in institutional support, digitalization readiness, and market integration. The novelty of this study lies in its development of an integrated Local Wisdom Innovation Model (LWIM) that bridges local wisdom with contemporary market demands, offering a replicable framework for other developing regions. Findings carry implications for policy formulation, educational curricula, and multi-stakeholder governance in creative economy development.

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### Corresponding Author:

Berilian Ayu Kusuma, S.Tr.Bns

Universitas Islam Indonesia

Email: [berilianayu21new@gmail.com](mailto:berilianayu21new@gmail.com)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The creative economy has been recognized globally as a key engine for sustainable development, capable of generating employment, cultural preservation, and economic diversification (Gerlitz & Prause, 2021). In Indonesia, this potential is amplified by the country's extraordinary cultural heterogeneity, with over 300 distinct ethnic groups and thousands of craft traditions that represent untapped economic assets (Widyanti



et al., 2022). Creative industries from batik weaving and traditional mask carving to bamboo craft and woven textiles represent sectors where local wisdom serves not merely as cultural decoration but as a fundamental innovation driver.

Despite this potential, the creative economy in many Indonesian regions remains constrained by structural challenges: limited digital infrastructure, capital shortages, insufficient managerial capacity, and inadequate market linkages (Mahrinasari et al., 2024). The disconnect between cultural producers and market systems creates a persistent tension between authenticity and commercial viability. This phenomenon is particularly acute in rural and peri-urban settings where artisan communities operate without institutional scaffolding (Thalib et al., 2024).

Globally, creative economy scholarship has increasingly turned toward systemic innovation models from the triple helix (government-academia-industry) to more inclusive quadruple, quintuple, and hexa helix frameworks that incorporate community and environmental dimensions (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023; Manioudis & Angelakis, 2023). However, these frameworks have been developed primarily in European and Latin American contexts, raising questions about their applicability and adaptation in Southeast Asian developing-country settings where informal institutions, community-based norms, and indigenous knowledge systems play central roles (Irfayanti & Lord, 2024).

This study is motivated by three intersecting phenomena. First, the rapid proliferation of local wisdom-based creative initiatives across Indonesian regions, particularly following the government's designation of 17 creative economy sub-sectors as national development priorities. Second, the growing empirical literature documenting these initiatives, yet lacking systematic cross-case synthesis. Third, the absence of comparative frameworks that place Indonesian experience in dialogue with international creative economy scholarship.

A systematic review of recent literature reveals that while individual case studies of local wisdom-based creative economies have proliferated (Rohmah & Mulatsih, 2022; Akhmad et al., 2025; Diatmika & Rahayu, 2025), cross-cutting synthesis remains rare. Existing reviews tend to focus either exclusively on Indonesian contexts without international comparison, or adopt international frameworks without grounding in local institutional realities. The research gap is therefore threefold: (a) the absence of an integrated taxonomy of innovation strategies, (b) the lack of comparative analysis between domestic and international findings, and (c) the underdevelopment of actionable frameworks for policymakers and creative industry actors. The novelty of this study lies in three contributions: (1) a systematic qualitative synthesis of 20 studies using thematic and cross-case analysis; (2) a comparative matrix contrasting Indonesian and international creative economy innovation strategies; and (3) the development of an integrated Local Wisdom Innovation Model (LWIM) that operationalizes the pathways from cultural heritage to market competitiveness.

This study addresses three research questions: (RQ1) What innovation strategies do regional creative industry actors employ in developing local wisdom-based creative economies? (RQ2) How do domestic (Indonesian) innovation strategies compare with international approaches in terms of institutional frameworks, actor roles, and market integration? (RQ3) What are the policy and practical implications of cross-contextual innovation findings for sustainable creative economy development?

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Local Wisdom and Creative Economy: Conceptual Foundations**

Local wisdom (*kearifan lokal*) refers to the accumulated knowledge, values, practices, and beliefs embedded within a community's cultural heritage that enable adaptive problem-solving and sustainable resource management. When channelled into creative production, local wisdom functions as both a differentiating resource and an innovation substrate providing distinctive aesthetic vocabularies, craft techniques, and narrative identities that distinguish locally-produced goods in competitive markets (Rohmah & Mulatsih, 2022; Widyanti et al., 2022).

The creative economy, as theorized in UNCTAD's creative economy frameworks, encompasses industries whose economic value derives primarily from intellectual and creative capital. In the Indonesian policy



context, Badan Ekonomi Kreatif (BEKRAF) and subsequently the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy have elevated the creative economy to strategic development status, with local wisdom-based industries particularly handicrafts, culinary arts, fashion, and performing arts positioned as vehicles for inclusive growth (Thalib et al., 2024).

## **2.2 Innovation Strategy Frameworks in Creative Industries**

Innovation in creative industries operates through mechanisms distinct from manufacturing or technology sectors. Product innovation in creative contexts involves recombination of cultural elements, aesthetic experimentation, and market-oriented adaptation of traditional forms (Sinaga et al., 2024; Rusmaniah et al., 2022). Process innovation encompasses upgrading production methods, adopting digital tools for design and marketing, and improving supply chain management. Institutional innovation, meanwhile, involves new governance arrangements, collaborative models, and community-based organizational forms (Tuthaes et al., 2024).

The helix models of innovation governance from Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff's triple helix through quadruple, quintuple, and hexa helix extensions provide frameworks for understanding multi-stakeholder collaboration in innovation ecosystems. The quadruple helix, incorporating civil society as a fourth actor, is particularly relevant to creative economies where communities are both producers and cultural custodians (Yusri et al., 2022). The quintuple helix further incorporates the natural environment as a systemic consideration (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023), while the hexa helix adds media as a sixth actor (Tuthaes et al., 2024).

## **2.3 International Perspectives on Creative Economy Innovation**

International scholarship on creative economy innovation reveals distinct emphases compared to Indonesian literature. In the Baltic Sea Region, Gerlitz and Prause (2021) demonstrate that cultural and creative industries serve as innovation brokers for sustainable transition, functioning within institutionally dense ecosystems characterized by robust public-private partnerships and advanced digital infrastructure. The European context typically features formalized intellectual property regimes, structured funding mechanisms, and professionalized creative sector organizations.

In Latin American contexts, Rodrigues-Ferreira et al. (2023) apply the quintuple helix model to creative economy development in Brazil, identifying critical factors including governmental coordination, academic-industry knowledge transfer, and environmental sustainability orientation. Meanwhile, Manioudis and Angelakis (2023) analyze the entrepreneurial discovery process in Greek regional creative economies, emphasizing the role of place-based knowledge in generating competitive advantage a finding that resonates with Indonesian local wisdom frameworks but within a European Union governance context.

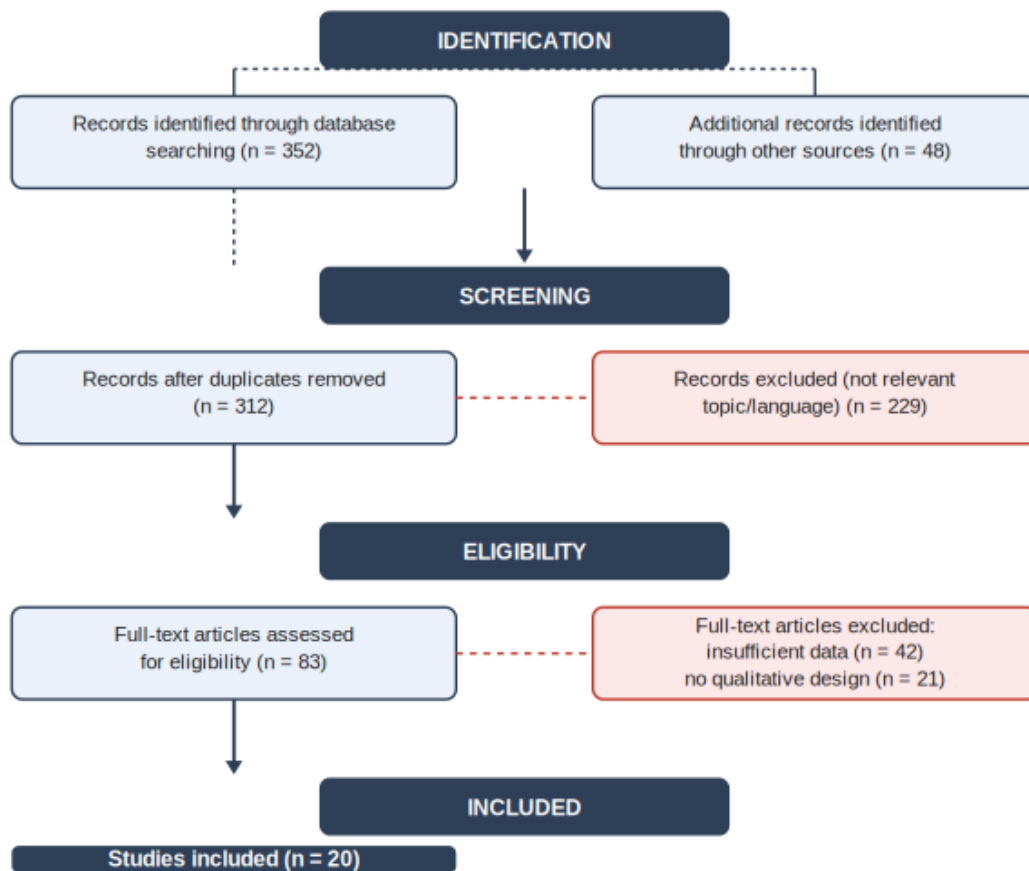
## **3. METHOD**

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative systematic review methodology, integrating thematic synthesis and cross-case comparative analysis. The approach follows PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines adapted for qualitative research, ensuring transparency and replicability in the literature selection and analysis process. The epistemological stance is interpretive, recognizing that innovation strategies in creative economies are contextually embedded and require inductive pattern identification across cases.

### **3.2 Literature Search and Selection: PRISMA Flowchart**

Literature searches were conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Garuda (Indonesian journal database) using Boolean operators combining: ('local wisdom' OR 'kearifan lokal') AND ('creative economy' OR 'creative industry') AND ('innovation strategy' OR 'development strategy') AND ('qualitative' OR 'case study'). Searches were limited to publications from 2021 to 2025. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram illustrating the systematic literature selection process. From an initial pool of 400 records, 20 studies were ultimately included.



Source: Authors' compilation based on PRISMA guidelines

**Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Literature Selection Process**

### 3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

**Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Literature Selection**

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication period	2021–2025	Before 2021
Research design	Qualitative, mixed-methods, case study	Quantitative-only, theoretical-only
Subject focus	Creative economy AND local wisdom/cultural heritage	Studies without explicit local wisdom link
Language	English and Indonesian	Other languages without English abstract
Publication type	Peer-reviewed articles, conference papers with DOI	Grey literature, reports without peer review
Geographic scope	Indonesia + international comparison studies	No geographic specification

Source: Authors' synthesis

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework adapted for systematic qualitative synthesis: (1) familiarization with data; (2) initial code generation; (3) theme construction; (4) theme review and refinement; (5) theme definition and labelling; (6) production of the final synthesis. Cross-case analysis employed Miles and Huberman's (1994) matrix method, enabling systematic comparison across study contexts, actor types, strategy clusters, and outcome domains. Inter-coder reliability was established through triangulation between two independent coders, achieving a Cohen's Kappa of  $\kappa = 0.84$ , indicating strong agreement.



## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. RESULTS

#### 4.1.1 Characteristics of Included Studies

The 20 included studies encompass research from 14 Indonesian regions and 4 international contexts (Brazil, Greece, Baltic Sea Region, and Germany). Table 2 presents the characteristics of included studies by regional context, methodology, and primary strategy focus.

**Table 2. Summary of Included Studies: Geographic Focus, Methodology, and Strategy Themes**

No.	Author(s) & Year	Region/Context	Method	Primary Strategy Theme
1	Rohmah & Mulatsih (2022)	Gunungkidul, ID	Qualitative	Product & competitive strategy
2	Akhmad et al. (2025)	South Sulawesi, ID	Mixed methods	Dev. model (Songkok Recca)
3	Romadhan & Yuliani (2025)	Bali, ID	Case study	Socio-cultural tourism integration
4	Saefullah et al. (2023)	West Java, ID	Qualitative	Tourism-creative economy nexus
5	Diatmika & Rahayu (2025)	Sumbawa, ID	Qualitative	MSME tech innovation
6	Sinaga et al. (2024)	Kalimantan, ID	Descriptive qual.	Dayak creative economy
7	Rusmaniah et al. (2022)	South Kalimantan, ID	Participatory	Artisan community participation
8	Irjayanti & Lord (2024)	West Java, ID	Grounded theory	Women entrepreneurs + local wisdom
9	Sugito et al. (2025)	North Sumatra, ID	Qualitative	Green digital marketing (Ulos)
10	Widyanti et al. (2022)	West Java, ID	GCBME Proc.	Local wisdom economy development
11	Thalib et al. (2024)	National (ID)	Qualitative	Local economic competitiveness
12	Wardani & Widayani (2025)	Blitar, ID	Qualitative	Sociopreneurship strategy
13	Wilujeng et al. (2025)	East Java, ID	Descriptive qual.	Patchwork industry innovation
14	Tuthaes et al. (2024)	Kupang City, ID	Case study	Hexa helix collaboration
15	Yusri et al. (2022)	North Sumatra, ID	Qualitative	Quadruple helix model
16	Mahrinasari et al. (2024)	Lampung, ID	Qualitative	Govt. + competitive advantage
17	Aji et al. (2023)	Solo City, ID	Case study	Tourism-creative economy strategy
18	Rodrigues-Ferreira et al. (2023)	Brazil (Intl.)	Qualitative	Quintuple helix creative economy
19	Manioudis & Angelakis (2023)	Greece (Intl.)	Mixed methods	Entrepreneurial discovery process
20	Gerlitz & Prause (2021)	Baltic Sea (Intl.)	Mixed methods	CCIs as sustainable brokers

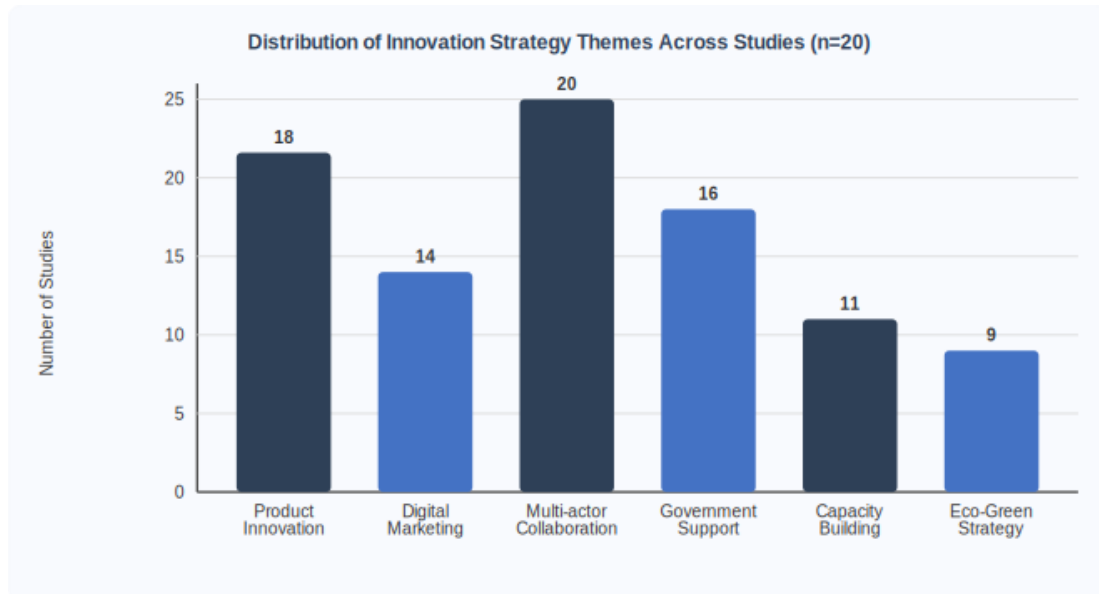
Source: Authors' systematic review compilation (2025)



#### 4.1.2 Innovation Strategy Themes: Thematic Analysis Results

Thematic analysis across the 20 included studies yielded six dominant innovation strategy themes. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of these themes across the study corpus, demonstrating that multi-actor collaboration was the most universally identified theme (n=20), followed by product innovation (n=18), government support (n=16), digital marketing (n=14), capacity building (n=11), and eco-green strategy (n=9).

**Figure 2. Distribution of Innovation Strategy Themes Across Included Studies (n=20)**



Source: Authors' thematic analysis of included studies

##### **Theme 1: Product Innovation Rooted in Cultural Heritage**

The most consistently identified strategy across domestic studies involved embedding local cultural elements motifs, materials, narrative, and technique into product design while introducing innovations in form, function, and market orientation (Rohmah & Mulatsih, 2022; Akhmad et al., 2025; Sinaga et al., 2024). This strategy manifests across craft sub-sectors including songkok recca, Ulos weaving, Dayak ethnic accessories, and bamboo crafts. The innovation dynamic is characterized by what we term 'culturally bounded creativity' innovation expressed through cultural authenticity rather than departing from it (Rusmaniah et al., 2022; Irijayanti & Lord, 2024).

##### **Theme 2: Digital and Green Marketing Adoption**

Fourteen of 20 studies identified digital marketing social media promotion, e-commerce integration, and online storytelling as a critical innovation lever (Sugito et al., 2025; Diatmika & Rahayu, 2025; Wilujeng et al., 2025). Green marketing emerged as an increasingly prominent sub-strategy, particularly in eco-tourism integrated creative industries. The 'Green Digital Marketing Model' developed by Sugito et al. (2025) for Ulos weaving in North Sumatra represents a pioneering integration of sustainability framing with digital outreach.

##### **Theme 3: Multi-Actor Collaborative Governance**

All 20 studies addressed the role of multi-actor collaboration in enabling creative economy innovation. The helix governance models from triple to hexa helix featured prominently, particularly in studies from North Sumatra (Yusri et al., 2022), Kupang City (Tuthaes et al., 2024), and international studies from Brazil (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023) and Greece (Manioudis & Angelakis, 2023). Collaboration across government, academia, business, community, media, and the natural environment creates enabling conditions for innovation that no single actor can generate alone.



#### 4.1.3 Comparative Analysis: Domestic vs. International Findings

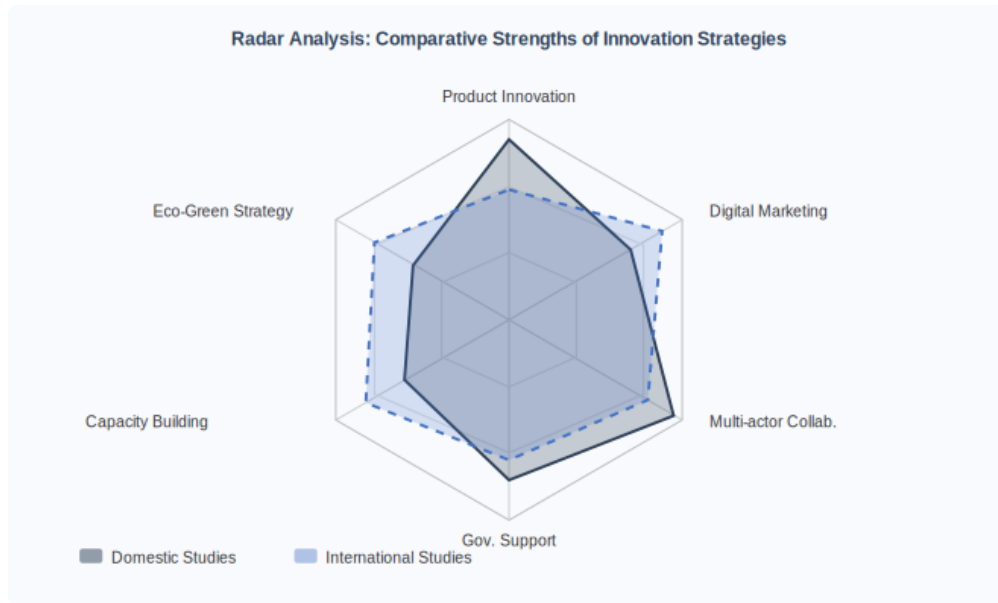
A cross-case comparative analysis of domestic (Indonesian) and international studies reveals both convergences and significant structural divergences. Table 3 presents a systematic comparison across key analytical dimensions. Figure 3 provides a visual radar comparison of strategy dimension strengths.

**Table 3. Comparative Analysis: Domestic vs. International Creative Economy Innovation Studies**

Dimension	Domestic Studies (Indonesia)	International Studies (Europe/LatAm)
Innovation type	Primarily product & process innovation from cultural heritage	Broader systemic innovation including institutional & eco-innovation
Governance model	Hexa/quadruple helix emerging; informal community governance dominant	Formalized triple/quintuple helix with institutionalized coordination
Digital readiness	Variable; major constraint in rural areas; rapidly emerging in urban centres	Higher baseline; digital tools embedded in production & marketing
Market access	Local-national transition; e-commerce expanding; export limited	Regional-global integration; EU single market; FTA advantages
Government role	Facilitative but inconsistent; policy gaps in rural areas	Structured funding, IP protection, regional innovation systems
Cultural dimension	Central identity of innovation; authenticity is competitive advantage	Cultural heritage as one of several innovation inputs; less central
Sustainability framing	Emerging; eco-green marketing developing; environmental awareness growing	Mainstreamed; CCIs as sustainable transition brokers (Gerlitz & Prause, 2021)
Community role	Producers, custodians, and innovators simultaneously	Primarily consumers and cultural stakeholders; less production role
Research methodology	Qualitative dominance; case studies; participatory action	Mixed methods; regional econometrics alongside qualitative work
Scalability	Limited by capital, infrastructure, and governance capacity	Higher scalability due to institutional density and finance access

Source: Authors' cross-case comparative analysis

**Figure 3. Radar Analysis: Comparative Strengths of Innovation Strategy Dimensions**



Source: Authors' comparative analysis (2025).

#### 4.1.4 Challenges and Enablers: Cross-Case Synthesis

**Table 4. Key Challenges and Enablers in Local Wisdom-Based Creative Economy Innovation**

Domain	Key Challenges	Key Enablers
Technology	Limited digital literacy; infrastructure gaps in rural areas (Mahrinasari et al., 2024)	Social media; e-commerce; government IT programs (Diatmika & Rahayu, 2025)
Finance	Capital constraints; limited formal credit; high input costs (Thalib et al., 2024)	Microfinance; cooperative models; CSR partnerships (Wardani & Widayani, 2025)
Human Capital	Youth disengagement from crafts; aging artisan population (Saefullah et al., 2023)	Apprenticeships; university partnerships; creative academies (Yusri et al., 2022)
Cultural	Risk of cultural dilution; tension: authenticity vs. commercialization (Irjayanti & Lord, 2024)	Community-led governance; intergenerational transmission (Rusmaniah et al., 2022)
Market	Limited market access; competition from mass-produced goods (Sinaga et al., 2024)	Niche positioning; cultural tourism; international fairs (Aji et al., 2023)
Governance	Weak formal coordination; overlapping authority (Tuthaes et al., 2024)	Helix governance models; creative hubs (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023)
Environment	Pollution in tourist zones; unsustainable raw material sourcing (Romadhan & Yuliani, 2025)	Green certification; eco-branding; circular craft economies (Gerlitz & Prause, 2021)

Source: Authors' cross-case synthesis.

## 4.2. DISCUSSION

### 4.2.1 The Local Wisdom Innovation Model (LWIM)

Synthesizing findings across the six identified strategy themes and the comparative domestic-international analysis, this study proposes the Local Wisdom Innovation Model (LWIM). The LWIM identifies three systemic layers: (1) the Cultural Foundation Layer, comprising indigenous knowledge, traditional craft techniques, community values, and ecological relationships; (2) the Strategy Layer, encompassing the six innovation strategy clusters operationalized by creative actors; and (3) the Governance Layer, consisting of



multi-actor collaborative arrangements that enable strategy implementation. Effective innovation requires simultaneous activation across all three layers.

The LWIM posits that cultural foundation elements must be preserved and dynamically interpreted to maintain authenticity while enabling adaptation. Strategy-layer activities must be contextually calibrated digital marketing strategies effective in urban Bali (Romadhan & Yuliani, 2025) require significant adaptation in remote Kalimantan settings (Sinaga et al., 2024). Governance arrangements must reflect the specific actor configurations available in each regional context.

#### **4.2.2 Comparative Implications: Learning Across Contexts**

The comparative analysis reveals that Indonesian creative economy actors operate with distinctive competitive assets cultural depth, community cohesion, biodiversity of craft traditions offset by structural deficits in digital infrastructure, institutional formalization, and market connectivity. International experiences from the Baltic Sea Region (Gerlitz & Prause, 2021) and Brazil (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023) offer transferable lessons in systemic governance and sustainability mainstreaming, though direct transplantation without contextual adaptation risks institutional mismatch.

A particularly instructive comparison emerges between the hexa helix model in Kupang City (Tuthaes et al., 2024) and the quintuple helix framework in Brazil (Rodrigues-Ferreira et al., 2023). Both recognize the natural environment as a systemic actor, but the Indonesian hexa helix additionally incorporates media reflecting the specific importance of social media in bridging isolated artisan communities with urban and international markets. Governance model adaptation, rather than wholesale adoption, represents the optimal transfer strategy.

#### **4.3 The Sociopreneurship Pathway**

An emergent finding of significance is the increasing prominence of sociopreneurship as an innovation modality. Wardani and Widayani's (2025) study of Kampung Bathok in Blitar demonstrates how sociopreneurship combining social mission with entrepreneurial discipline enables creative actors to navigate the tension between cultural preservation and commercial viability. The sociopreneurship model activates community assets as competitive resources rather than constraints, generating social capital that formal enterprises find difficult to replicate.

#### **4.4 Practical Implications**

For policymakers, findings suggest five priority areas: (1) Digital infrastructure investment in rural creative economy clusters without connectivity, digital marketing strategies remain inaccessible to artisan communities (Mahrinasari et al., 2024); (2) Governance formalization of helix collaboration models through legal frameworks and funding mechanisms (Tuthaes et al., 2024; Yusri et al., 2022); (3) Cultural IP protection mechanisms for community-owned innovations (Irfayanti & Lord, 2024); (4) Green economy integration into creative industry policies aligned with SDG commitments (Sugito et al., 2025); and (5) Youth engagement programs linking creative economy apprenticeships with formal education (Saefullah et al., 2023).

For creative industry actors, findings highlight the strategic value of deliberate cultural curation: the intentional documentation, interpretation, and adaptation of local wisdom for contemporary markets without compromising cultural authenticity (Rohmah & Mulatsih, 2022; Akhmad et al., 2025). Evidence strongly supports investment in digital storytelling capabilities as a mechanism for communicating cultural value to distant markets. Multi-actor partnership formation consistently correlates with improved market access, production quality, and resilience

For researchers, this study demonstrates the value of qualitative systematic review methodologies for synthesizing dispersed case-study evidence in creative economy scholarship. Identified research gaps particularly the absence of longitudinal impact studies and limited comparative research between Southeast Asian and other Global South creative economies represent productive directions for future inquiry. The LWIM framework offers a testable conceptual structure amenable to quantitative operationalization in future mixed-methods studies.



## 5. CONCLUSION

This study synthesizes innovation strategies in local wisdom-based creative economies through a qualitative systematic review of 20 studies from Indonesian and international contexts. Six dominant innovation strategy themes were identified: product innovation from cultural heritage, digital and green marketing adoption, multi-actor collaborative governance, government policy facilitation, capacity building, and eco-cultural branding. Cross-case comparative analysis reveals structural divergences between Indonesian and international contexts, with implications for context-sensitive adaptation of governance frameworks.

The study's novelty contributions include: (1) the first systematic qualitative synthesis integrating domestic and international creative economy innovation research; (2) a comparative matrix identifying convergences and divergences across 10 analytical dimensions; and (3) the Local Wisdom Innovation Model (LWIM) as a replicable framework. The LWIM's three-layer architecture cultural foundation, strategy implementation, and governance enablement provides a holistic map of the innovation landscape that single-case studies inevitably cannot capture.

Effective local wisdom-based creative economy innovation requires not merely the adoption of individual strategies but the cultivation of enabling ecosystems that connect cultural assets with market opportunities through capable, collaborative governance structures. As Indonesia continues to develop its creative economy, the integrated approach advocated by this study offers a theoretically grounded and empirically evidenced pathway toward culturally authentic, economically sustainable, and ecologically responsible regional development. Future research should address longitudinal dynamics, gender and social stratification in creative economy access, and comparative potential with African and Latin American creative economies.

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