

Realizing the Narrative: Higher Education Strategies as Creative Economy Agents in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The development of the creative economy in Indonesia encounters several obstacles, including regulatory issues and government protection, as well as the need for more technological knowledge and innovation owned by business people. Higher education academics, as intellectuals, play an essential role in developing this creative economy, considering that academics are very closely related to science, technology, and research innovation. This article will discuss Indonesia's creative economy and how people perceive it. Furthermore, it will look at the importance of higher education as a printer for young entrepreneurs in the sector. This article examines two aspects of curriculum development based on the creative economy and work placements for young entrepreneurs. It will then demonstrate how young graduates can be empowered to build creative economy careers. This research uses a literature review as the design. Five articles were taken as the data sources for this study. The results of the study show that to create young creative workers, higher education must create a curriculum that is based on the creative economy and is oriented towards; competency-based, facilitating creativity, skills, and talents possessed by students, and there is a balance of soft science and hard science for future tertiary graduates. In the narrative of job placement for young creative workers, every tertiary institution is trying to connect and even be able to create business opportunities in various sectors of the creative economy without looking at the economic and social factors of these young creative workers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's creative industry is currently growing. This growth should be balanced with competency abilities. Competitive competencies can help business actors win their business (Sukardi, 2017). The creative industry can be defined as an industry whose primary components are creativity, expertise, and talent and which can improve welfare by providing intellectual innovations (Sari et al., 2020). After the eras of agriculture, industry, and information, the creative industry era is present in the fourth phase of human civilization. The economic worth of a product or service in the creative period is defined by technology, creativity, and invention rather than raw materials or manufacturing techniques, as in the industrial era. Industry cannot compete in the global market solely on the basis of price or product quality but must also compete on the basis of technology, innovation, creativity, and imagination (Triyono, 2017).

The creative economy is a new economic concept that emphasizes information and creativity by relying on ideas and knowledge from Human Resources (HR) as the primary production component in its economic activities (Purnomo, 2016). With its 16 offshoot industries such as fashion, arts, gastronomy, product design, online gaming, film, animation, and others, the creative economy needs to be a strategic choice for continuing development. The endemic Gangnam-style phenomena are only one illustration of how South Korea's inventiveness might become a new economic engine. So Howkins' claim that a new economy has evolved around the creative economy controlled by intellectual property rules such as patents, copyrights, brands, royalties, and designs is not exaggerated (Komara & Setiawan, 2020).

With the rise of new millennial generation entrepreneurs who are increasingly demonstrating their existence as the spearhead of the development of the creative economy in various derivative sub-sectors, the year 2025 is forecasted to be a momentum for creating economic growth or the Golden year for Indonesia. This prediction comes from the fact that *kraft* stands for creative economic growth (Amin et al., 2020). Given its enormous potential, Indonesia's creative economy should be a central pillar of its economic expansion. The creative economy's contribution to Indonesia's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been steadily growing over the past three years, before the COVID-19 pandemic. This growth has maintained even after the pandemic began. In 2017, the creative economy contributed approximately 990.4 trillion IDR to the GDP. This number is higher than in 2016 when it was 894.6 trillion IDR, and higher than in 2015, when it was 852 trillion IDR. Additionally, in 2017, this industry was able to generate employment for 16.4 million people, an increase from 2016's total of 16.2 million workers and 2015's total of 16.96 million employees (Sopanah et al., 2020).

The creative economy will become a driving force for the expansion of the new global economy. Preparing competitive human resources is our collective obligation, especially within the Higher Education sector (Purnomo, 2016). Law 12 of 2012 requires higher institutions to produce graduates with vocationally and professionally applicable skills in conformity with scientific fields. Therefore, postsecondary institutions must develop curricula that can produce competent graduates—observing the impact of tertiary graduates following Government Regulation number 8 of 2012 that in the management of tertiary institutions, the Indonesian Higher Education National Standards (SNPT) must be able to serve as a guide (Sumardingsih et al., 2013).

Higher education contributes to the production and growth of the creative economy. The creative economy relies heavily on an adequate labour supply (flexibility, adaptation, non-monetary benefits, 'creativity,' etc. (Katre, 2020). These young creative workers attend college virtually constantly. Universities give such graduate training and credentials. Perhaps more importantly, it is in the school system that the concept of the "creative economy" as a desired career objective is inculcated - even as far as other potentially lucrative vocations are concerned (Sutrisno, 2017). More specifically, scholars are obligated to reflect critically on the role of higher education in the creative economy for two main reasons. First, in a highly competitive business with few job openings, young creative employees rely on credentials to set themselves apart (Purnomo et al., 2020). An unlimited resource for the creative

economy is provided by universities in the form of a large number of recent graduates who are willing to work for low or no pay in order to enter the field (Hasan, 2018).

The second trend is an increase in the number of unpaid internships or job placements offered by firms, organizations, and universities as a means of entry into the creative economy, as the number of graduates is far larger than the number of available positions in this field. That's according to a recent study (Dongoran, 2016). Recent graduates in Indonesia have an implicit knowledge that unpaid labour performed through apprenticeships or work placements is one of the most crucial ways to guarantee future employment with a salary (Ixtiaro, 2016).

Not only is there a lack of diversity in terms of socioeconomic status but also in terms of educational and occupational backgrounds. In Rahmawati & Fatmawati (2016), the impact of students' gender, ethnicity, and ability on their capacity to participate, prepare for, and complete work placements was discussed. Employment rates of women and members of racial and ethnic minorities in the creative economy are reflective of the difficulties they face. There is a clear structural disparity between male and female employment in the creative industries (Banks & Milestone, 2011). The neo-liberalization of labour must be fought against because it has given young workers the impression that their success or failure depends on their own efforts and that they are personally responsible for their failures.

The dominant story about work in the creative economy and the wider work agenda needs to be challenged, and this is where higher education comes in. Some previous studies have discussed higher education's contributions in transmitting the creative economy in multi-dimensional contexts (Bennerworth, 2018; Florida, 2006). Therefore, this recent study will also shed light on the ways in which higher education might develop the creative economy in any sector. This study focuses on understanding how to lay the groundwork for challenging the status quo in the creative economy and the work agenda. The research question for this study is, "What are the strategies of higher education for developing a creative economy in Indonesia?" To this end, we will design and host gatherings where people may talk openly about the state of the creative economy and how they fit into it.

2. METHODS

This study employs a literature review as the design of the research to investigate theoretical studies and describe field conditions/facts related to the implementation of entrepreneurship in tertiary institutions, which are presented in a systematic, actual, and accurate manner concerning facts, as well as the relationship between the phenomena under investigation (Gunawan, 2022). Five articles from journals were taken as the data of this study. The data were chosen because of two main criteria, namely the timely publication from 2012 – 2022 and the context of the study. The following is the data source of this study, namely the writing of Wiratno (2012), Wijaya et al. (2016), Banks (2017), Gaunty (2015), and Triningtyas (2016).

This qualitative method aims to comprehend the nature of social phenomena and the interaction between holistic and systemic symptoms. The underlying meaning or message behind the symptoms or the relationship between the symptoms must be comprehended about the research topic. The issue will be addressed using a specific theory or theoretical framework (Semiawan, 2010). Moreover, it must be highlighted that the essence or substance of the study's emphasis, as determined by a qualitative technique, is abstract. This implies that what is known consists of the thoughts, knowledge, beliefs, and emotions of the examined community, group, or social class. All of this can be traced back to behavioural or other symptoms. Observable symptoms are evaluated, interpreted, and must be explained and comprehended as the affected individual's behaviour (Sarwono, 2006). All of these understandings are related to existing theories. The researcher interpreted and reconstructed the theory to create a narrative about the strategy of higher education as an agent of the creative economy in Indonesia. This may result in a new understanding of the problem after conducting research.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This article examines whether higher education is an innovative economic agent. This article will discuss Indonesia's creative economy and how people perceive it.

3.1. Realizing the Narrative of Creating a Higher Education Curriculum Based on a Creative Economy

The higher education curriculum is always required to keep abreast of developments in science and technology and trends in the needs of the world of work. Even though each tertiary institution has autonomy in developing its institutions (including the curriculum), the tendency for the needs of each tertiary institution will be the same (Wiratno, 2012). Graduate competence must be developed following the characteristics and character of the tertiary institution itself. In addition, the tendency in fulfilling the competence of tertiary graduates, the designed curriculum needs to be oriented towards (Wijaya et al., 2016): 1) competency-based, intended for tertiary institutions to become individuals who have the knowledge and skills demanded by specific jobs and have a visionary soul who can accept various challenges, able to see opportunities, and dare to take risks, including training to analyze problems and make decisions with the right target; 2) facilitating the intensification of skills, talents, and creativity; and 3) a balanced program between hard science and soft science (arts and social sciences) for college graduates. Efforts to realize this idea, among others, can be made by:

1. Improving the effectiveness of link and match education at the tertiary level by implementing initiatives to convert existing entrepreneurial knowledge in the Business World and the Industrial World to the academic community (Ambarita, 2009). Higher education has carried out and has even become a tradition as a scientific community, combining explicit knowledge with other explicit knowledge, namely the process of systematizing concepts into knowledge;
2. Internalization from explicit knowledge to tacit knowledge. This is a process of turning explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge. This process is closely related to "learning by doing" (Susetyo, 2020);
3. Externalization, namely the process of articulating tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. This is the essence of forming knowledge, and tacit knowledge is converted into explicit knowledge. Universities should be proactive in conducting dialogue with actors. Inviting entrepreneurs and the business world to campus to share experiences on an ongoing basis allows the academic community to construct entrepreneurial knowledge through metaphors, analogies, concepts, or models of entrepreneurship that are explicit and can be learned by anyone (Rambe & Mbeo, 2017);
4. Socialization, namely the process of sharing experiences. Until now, there are still a limited number of students or lecturers doing internships in industry, and vice versa; there are still a limited number of companies that provide opportunities for students or lecturers to do "internships" or fieldwork lectures (Soegoto, 2013). Therefore, socialization is essential and should be carried out with CSR (corporate social responsibility) by the industry. The industry must share in terms of improving the quality of human resources through education and training in synergy.

It is, therefore, necessary to make genuine efforts to foster an entrepreneurial spirit as a pillar of creative economy development so that college graduates are oriented toward job creators rather than job seekers. The Directorate General of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture has developed a Student Entrepreneur Program (Student Entrepreneur Program), which is a continuation of the Student Creativity Program (PKM) and Cooperative Education (Co-op), which supports the creation of graduates who are ready to work and create jobs. The results of student work through these two programs have yet to be followed up commercially to become embryos based on a creative economy. Thus, institutional strengthening programs that encourage increased entrepreneurial creativity and accelerate the growth of new entrepreneurs on a creative economy basis need to be developed.

In the development of a creative economy-based higher education curriculum, what is meant is that creative economics education can be used as a bridging course for entrepreneurship courses. The creative economy education model developed is focused on being used as a bridging course for entrepreneurship courses in tertiary institutions. Model development is based on student creativity maps and entrepreneurship course curricula. Model development material includes three essential competencies: Growing Creative Ideas, Coming Up with Creative Products, and Developing Creative Product Designs. These three competencies were developed in a set of creative economy education models: syllabus, lesson plans, learning media, creative economics education teaching materials, and model assessment instruments. The expected outcome of implementing this model is an increase in Student Creativity in Entrepreneurship Courses to generate business and product ideas with creative and high-selling value.

So overall, a curriculum based on the creative economy and the formation of an entrepreneurial spirit needs to be developed in the world of education. The intended curriculum, namely: 1) a curriculum that builds competency so that graduates become visionary individuals who can accept various challenging scenarios, see opportunities and dare to take risks, including training the ability to digest problems and make the right decisions even without adequate guidance; 2) a curriculum that facilitates the intensification of skills, talents, and creativity; and 3) a curriculum that contains balanced programs between hard science and soft science (arts and social sciences). The implementation of entrepreneurship will be more perfect when universities have a network of cooperation with the business world and the industrial world to form graduates who have direct experience with the type of creative economy being developed. To make this happen, among other things, this can be done through networking with alumni where they work. This manifests alums' concern for the alma mater, which psychologically has a closer emotional relationship with fellow alums.

3.2. Realizing the Job Placement Narrative for Young creative workers

One of the many glaring structural inequalities is the wide variety of job opportunities present in the creative economy's many subsectors. Other challenges make the "hidden employment market." even more difficult to observe, such as the absence of a "standard" hiring process and the tendency for networks to function as intermediaries in hiring. Experts in the field can help students join these groups by suggesting they start their own networks, volunteer, or participate in internships.

The most problematic aspect of these concepts is that they make numerous assumptions about students and recent graduates, such as believing they will have the time and resources to pursue these changes. In the subsequent debate, it became evident that industry professionals gave little regard to the relationship between the absence of worker diversity and potentially discriminatory actions. Worryingly, the parties concerned need to understand one another. One is a recent graduate working for free to advance their career, while the other is a board member of a well-known corporation willing to volunteer (Brudney, 2016; Drucker, 1989).

These individuals are oblivious to the reality that they are members of the "small elite that can wield substantial market influence." Consequently, they are already highly compensated for their previous work. This reveals another sort of structural inequality: the way a small group of established, older working professionals sets the standard for a considerable number of younger workers, the vast majority of whom lack the money or privileges to match. The core of both of these problems is the limited influence and opportunities accessible to fresh college graduates in the creative economy (Triningtyas, 2016).

The concerns of power, agency, and structural inequalities that permeate the professional language and thought processes in the creative economy sector are something my coworkers and I have tried to address through work placements. This is one of the ways that we have addressed these issues. A set of "ethical" work placement contracts can be developed by bringing together the organizations that offer job placements, the educational institutions that provide them, and the students who have

participated in them. They are designed to combat the dynamics of exclusion and exploitation frequently occurring when unpaid labour is involved (Banks, 2017).

Within this newly developed framework, students were asked to consider what they hoped to gain from their work placement and how their experience there might help them acquire new skills or fill in gaps in their existing repertoire. This new framework was designed to help students prepare for their work placement. Students are prompted to consider the kind of supervision, training, and educational opportunities available during an internship or job placement. Many businesses have come to the attention that the primary concern that should be addressed is whether or not the opportunity being provided is a genuine work placement that includes well-defined educational goals, adequate training, and adequate supervision. Most importantly, how might higher education affect people now employed in creative sectors differently? (Gaunt, 2015).

According to our model, higher education institutions are obligated to make it clear to students that the objective of work placement is to help students improve their overall academic development, not to help students land a well-paying job in the creative economy in the near or distant future. Because work placements are inherently exclusive, we have attempted to make up for it through contracts by addressing the root cause of exploitation, which is the absence of genuine learning outcomes. This is because job placement roles are frequently developed so that the organization does not need to hire paid personnel to fill gaps in its operations. This keeps the company from having to incur additional costs.

Making "learning" a contractual purpose of a job offer or placement is how we hope to discover agency conditions. In order to put students in a position of strength, we make sure they understand why they are volunteering their time and what they want to gain from experience beyond what they have already learned in the classroom. In this way, we ensure that students may put themselves in a situation where they can put themselves. The contracts are an attempt to redefine job placements as a tool to critically examine the intellectual status of work in the creative economy and to challenge the idea that job placements are simply a mechanism for businesses to receive free labour. This will be accomplished by challenging the notion that job placements are simply a way for organizations to get free labour. The conditions that required students to do work that was not beneficial to them and spend their own money to gain work experience that would be beneficial to them in their own lives and further their careers have been eliminated. This makes it so that students no longer have to fulfil these requirements (Mutu, 2007).

The initial conversation with industry professionals demonstrates the industry-specific talents that recent graduates need to obtain jobs in the creative economy. Participants agreed that cognitive talents such as reading and writing well and being analytical are taken for granted. However, they also stated that recent graduates need to learn how to handle rejection and failure in the workplace. However, it is a crucial talent to cultivate in a field where failure is frequent and rejection often seems personal, as creative work needs a great deal of emotional engagement. Here, industry members want college to be a place where students can try new things and fail without worrying about the industry's pressures, where failure can result in a significant loss of revenue or the dissolution of professional contacts and networks. Universities should be locations where individuals can learn from their failures in a field with few second chances.

Despite the fact that several creative fields need specialized skill sets, it's interesting to observe that students involved in these fields aren't very concerned with the "toolkit" approach to learning and preparation (Miles & Green, 2008). Everyone is still determining if possessing the skills mentioned earlier is sufficient to obtain employment in the creative economy. Instead, they are particularly interested in information (such as where they can get information on how a particular sector or field operates) and a need for space to exercise self-reflection and self-evaluation to become more conscious—of their mode of communication or body language. Students express a need for additional opportunities to play a part, such as pitching a possible producer, learning how to network, engaging in social dialogues, and learning about the process's inner workings.

Students desire the opportunity to consider how they would react in various situations. Their opinions demonstrate the importance of the politicized work agenda and its emphasis on skills and knowledge (Fischer, 2009). The topic of characteristics, which lie at the core of a person's emotions and capacity to exercise their agency, requires a more in-depth examination and clarification regarding how we think about abilities and knowledge. There is a need for a greater understanding of the types of experiences, talents, and personality qualities that young graduates might acquire that will give them the confidence to work in the volatile creative economy.

Strategies for the growth of self-empowerment knowledge bases are mapped out in the creative economy-based curriculum. Assigning students with tasks and projects that help them tackle real-world problems facing the creative economy gives them a sense of agency and empowerment. The curriculum structure reflects students' desires to investigate employment concerns within the broader framework of what it takes to succeed in today's creative economy. As a result, "making a living" refers to more than just working a 9-to-5. It also necessitates a critical outlook on the difficulties inherent in creative work, the flexibility to juggle a growing number of responsibilities at work and in one's personal life, and the creativity to find new ways to deal with the inevitable times when one does things wrong or is unsure.

4. CONCLUSION

Those with more resources and social standing are more likely to find employment in the creative economy. The current demographics of the creative industry workforce illustrate how economic and social privilege distorts opportunities for professional advancement. The idea that universities, which produce students, or creative clusters, which produce creative economic products, must be fostered and supported is examined, as is the belief that the creative economy is a positive force for good as it is currently measured and quantified by governments. This is because the creative economy is good because it is an engine of economic growth. The definition of a good creative economy can be investigated and broadened in academic institutions. Can the growth of the creative economy be fostered in various ways through the introduction of the creative economy and entrepreneurship courses at the university level? How can a university that offers ways to guarantee worker diversity contribute further to the expansion of the creative economy? Studying these effects is a pressing concern, given the importance of the creative economy's outputs to our sense of identity. It is consequently essential to inquire about the sector's economic impact, potential social influence, and form. Attempting to address these issues necessitates presenting an alternative narrative to the one governments and organisations offer. Under the current push to satisfy the objectives of the employment agenda, the greatest obstacle for colleges may be how to study and influence any results or proposals. However, if universities continue their current course, they risk missing out on chances where they may be more than talent generators for the creative economy. Instead, we can identify strategies to affect meaningful change to overcome the sector's inherent imbalances and create a truly creative economy. To this matter, an action research study design is recommended to apply in scrutinizing such an issue.

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