

Optimization Strategy for the Local Culture-Based Creative Economy as a Driver of the Real Sector in Polowijen Cultural Village

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Abstract

The transformation towards a knowledge- and creativity-based economy opens opportunities for local culture to become a driver of the real sector. However, at the community level, cultural potential is often not strategically managed due to institutional and managerial weaknesses. This study aims to analyze strategies for optimizing the local culture-based creative economy in the Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP) in Malang City. The method used is a mixed method approach through qualitative identification of strategic factors and quantitative analysis using the IFAS, EFAS, IE, SWOT, and QSPM matrices. The results show that KBP has a strong internal position (3.15) and supportive external conditions (2.89), thus placing it in the growth and build quadrant. The priority strategy established is the development of cultural educational tourism integrated with crafts, performing arts, and local MSMEs. These findings confirm that local culture can function as a driver of the real sector through the creation of added value, employment opportunities, and economic multiplier effects. Institutional strengthening and digitalization of promotion are key to sustainable development.

INTRODUCTION

The global economic landscape in the mid-second decade of the 21st century is undergoing a profound structural transformation (Aruni et al., 2023). The shift in development paradigm from one based on comparative advantage based on natural resources (a resource-based economy) to a competitive advantage based on knowledge and creativity (a knowledge-based and creative economy) has become a phenomenon that cannot be ignored (Menne et al., 2025). The creative economy is no longer viewed as a peripheral sector or merely a complement to the tourism industry, but has evolved into a new backbone for national economic resilience, particularly in developing countries seeking to escape the middle-income trap (Majidah et al., 2025). Indonesia, as an archipelagic nation with extraordinary cultural diversity, is strategically positioned to capitalize on this global trend (Ginting et al., 2025). The shift in national development orientation now increasingly emphasizes innovation derived from human creativity, traditional knowledge, and intangible cultural heritage (Wahyudi et al., 2024). This is in line with the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045, where the creative economy sector is projected to be a major catalyst for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Empirically, macroeconomic data demonstrates the resilience of this sector. According to data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, the creative economy sector has been shown to contribute significantly to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), absorbing approximately 27.4% of jobs and strengthening MSMEs as the backbone of the national economy, driven by subsectors such as fashion, crafts, and culinary arts (BPS, 2025). Increasing economic contributionThe contribution of creative industries to national GDP cannot be separated from the

role of MSMEs, which serve as the backbone of the real sector (Rahmawati et al., 2025). Data from the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Kadin) illustrates stable yet impactful growth. The role of MSMEs in contributing to Gross Domestic Product actually jumped sharply, from 37.3% in 2020 to 61.1% in 2024. This surge indicates a significant increase in productivity and added value among grassroots businesses, driven by digital adoption and the strengthening of product identities based on local wisdom.

Malang City has become one of the important hubs of creative economic growth in East Java, marked by its designation as part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in 2025 with a specialization in Media Arts, an international recognition that validates the strong collaborative ecosystem between government, academics, communities, and business actors (Pemkot Malang, 2025). In distributing this growth, the Malang City Government developed a Thematic Village strategy, one of which is the Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP) in Polowijen Village, Blimbing District, which is a unique case study because it rests on authentic historical and cultural foundations, not just aesthetic interventions (Rifdah et al., 2024). KBP is believed to be the birthplace of Ken Dedes and is a center for preserving Malangan Mask art, strengthened by the presence of the Sumur Windu site and the tomb of Mbah Reni as a mask maestro, thus having strong legitimacy to develop a heritage-based creative economy (Dewi et al., 2024).

The development of a local culture-based creative economy at the micro level, such as in the Polowijen Cultural Village, is a concrete representation of the national development strategy (Zurinani et al., 2020). The link between the creative economy in Polowijen Cultural Village and the real sector is evident in the growth of MSMEs. Based on pre-research data, creative economic activity in Polowijen Cultural Village demonstrates a close relationship with the real sector.

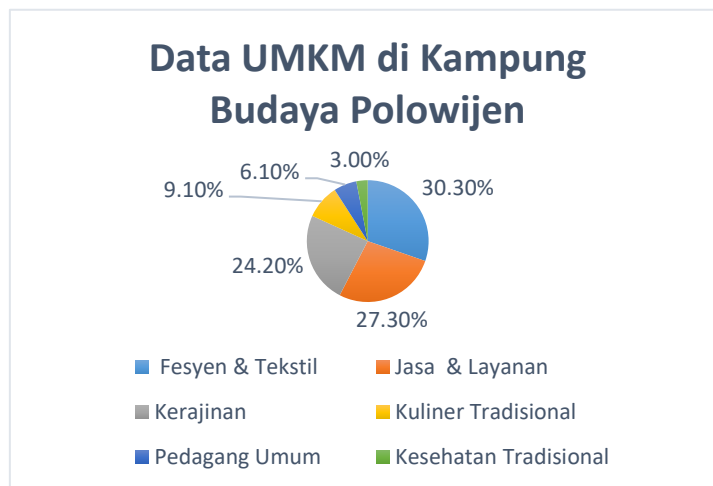


Figure 1: MSME data in Polowijen Cultural Village

Source: Pre-research Study (November 6, 2025)

After categorizing the community, it appears that the economic activities of the Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP) are dominated by the crafts and performing arts sectors, reflecting the richness of local culture. However, most MSMEs still operate on a small scale with limited capital, managerial capacity, and access to mentoring and infrastructure. Consequently, the existing creative economy potential has not fully improved community welfare equitably.

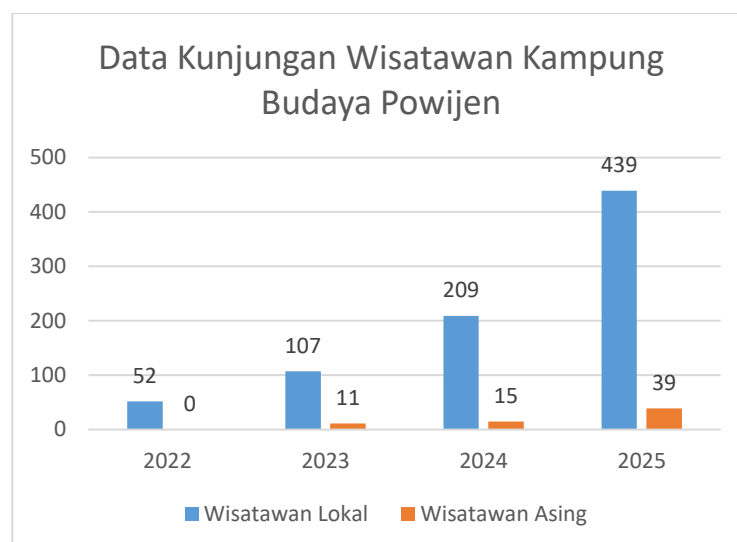


Figure 2: Tourist Visit Data at Polowijen Cultural Village

Source: Pre-research Study (November 8, 2025)

The data shows that the number of tourists visiting the Polowijen Cultural Village fluctuates annually. The high influx of tourists has the potential to drive increased local trade, particularly in creative products and Polowijen's culinary specialties (Dewi et al., 2024). However, this increase in tourist numbers has not been fully accompanied by an increase in community welfare, particularly for MSMEs and artisans around the KBP.

Pre-research studies conducted through field observations and interviews indicate that the development of a local culture-based creative economy in KBP is not yet supported by a planned and sustainable strategy. Creative economy actors still rely heavily on individual initiatives and social networks among residents, while local government support, particularly in the form of funding, training, and mentoring, has not been optimal. Furthermore, the low level of youth involvement in cultural activities poses a serious challenge to the continued transmission of local cultural values and skills. Previous research has generally focused on cultural preservation and tourism, while studies linking the local culture-based creative economy to operational strengthening of the real sector are still limited.

The urgency of this research lies in the need for an empirically condition-based strategy to optimize the role of the creative economy as a driver of the real sector and improving community welfare. Based on this description, the research questions in this study are: (1) What is the configuration of potential and internal and external factors in the development of a local culture-based creative economy in Polowijen Cultural Village? (2) What is the most optimal and adaptive strategy to strengthen the role of a local culture-based creative economy as a driver of the real sector and improving community welfare? In line with these questions, this study aims to analyze the configuration of potential and internal and external factors in the development of a local culture-based creative economy in Polowijen Cultural Village and to formulate an optimal and adaptive strategy to strengthen its role as a driver of the real sector and improving community welfare.

METHODS

The research used a descriptive approach with a mixed method, namely combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach was used to identify and explore internal and external factors in the development of a local culture-based creative economy in the Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP), while the quantitative approach was used to weight, assess, and determine strategic priorities through strategic management analysis tools (Rangkuti, 2006). The research location was determined in Polowijen Cultural Village, Polowijen Village, Blimbing District, Malang City. Data collection techniques were carried out through questionnaires, in-depth interviews with respondents, field observations, and documentation. Expert respondents consisted of 8 people selected by purposive sampling, including 2 MSMEs, 1 initiator, 1 craftsman, 2 community leaders, 1 partner and 1 supporter community. This selection was based on a deep understanding of the internal and external conditions of KBP. Data analysis techniques were carried out in stages. The first stage is the preparation of the Internal Factor Analysis Summary (IFAS) Matrix to calculate the total score of internal strengths and weaknesses, and the External Factor Analysis Summary (EFAS) Matrix to calculate the total score of external opportunities and threats. The second stage is the mapping of the organization's position through the IE Matrix (Internal-External) which places KBP into nine strategy cells, namely Grow and Build, Hold and Maintain, or Harvest and Divest, based on the total IFAS and EFAS scores. The third stage is the SWOT analysis and Cartesian Diagram to determine the position of the main strategy quadrant, whether it is in the aggressive, diversified, turnaround, or defensive quadrant. The final stage is the preparation of the Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix (QSPM) as the decision stage, where alternative strategies resulting from the SWOT analysis are assessed using the Attractiveness Score (AS) and the Total Attractiveness Score (TAS) is calculated. The strategy with the highest TAS score is determined as the priority strategy in the development of a local culture-based creative economy in the Polowijen Cultural Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identify Strategic Factors

Identifying strategic factors is a fundamental step in understanding a region's endogenous capacity to drive the real sector (Sjafrizal, 2015). Polowijen Cultural Village, as a heritage-based area, has unique characteristics determined not only by its cultural richness but also by the quality of governance, community participation, and external market dynamics. (Zurinani & Kamilah, 2023) Therefore, an analysis of internal and external factors was conducted to uncover the configuration of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that influence the sustainability of the creative economy in the region.

The IFAS matrix is used to evaluate the internal conditions of Polowijen Cultural Village by weighting and rating the strengths and weaknesses that have been identified. previously identified. The weights reflect the level of importance of each factor, while the ratings indicate the

actual conditions based on respondents' perceptions on a scale of 1–5 (Rangkuti, 2006). The results of the IFAS Matrix calculation are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1 IFAS Matrix Calculation

Internal Factors		Weight	Rating	Score
No	Strength (S)			
S1	Strong and vibrant local culture such as Malangan Mask, Macapat, Wayang, Traditional Jamu, Traditional Culinary.	0.08	5	0.40
S2	Involvement of local communities as the main actors in arts, culture and MSMEs.	0.06	3	0.18
S3	The Malangan Mask original dance studio community is active and consistently practicing.	0.07	5	0.35
S4	Cultural educational tourism for students, university students, and tourists through the arts of puppetry, macapat, sinden, Javanese songs, and handicrafts.	0.06	5	0.30
S5	A platform for empowering the people's economy through culinary and craft MSMEs.	0.05	4	0.20
S6	MSME products that have unique characteristics based on local traditions and wisdom.	0.07	4	0.28
S7	Crafts and arts are produced manually while maintaining artistic value.	0.06	4	0.24
S8	The values of mutual cooperation and a strong sense of belonging among some residents.	0.04	3	0.12
S9	Complete KBP facilities such as Omah KBP, library, art gallery, batik gallery, mask gallery, stage, gazebo, kitchen, stalls, and homestay.	0.05	3	0.15
S10	Events, festivals, competitions, and cultural traditions such as the Polowijen Cultural Village Festival, Gebyak Wayang Topeng, Grebeg Suro, ruwatan, and the Malangan Mask procession.	0.06	3	0.18
Total Strength		0.60		2.40
No	Weakness (W)			
W1	Community participation is not evenly distributed, those who actively contribute tend to be the same people.	0.05	2	0.10
W2	Limited human resources in managing events and activities.	0.06	2	0.12
W3	Limited digital marketing and online promotion capabilities of MSMEs	0.05	2	0.10
W4	Lack of training, mentoring, and capacity development for MSMEs.	0.05	2	0.10
W5	MSMEs' dependence on KBP visits and events	0.04	1	0.04
W6	The organizational and management structure of KBP is not yet clearly organized.	0.04	1	0.04
W7	The regeneration of managers, artists, and MSME (craft) actors is not yet optimal.	0.03	2	0.06
W8	Transparency and recording of activities are not optimal	0.05	2	0.10

W9	The large number of programs and facilities has not been balanced by professional management, so that the implementation of activities is still spontaneous.	0.03	3	0.09
Total Weakness		0.40		0.75

Source: Primary Data after processing (2026)

Based on the calculation results, the total strengths score was 2.40 and the total weaknesses score was 0.75, resulting in an IFAS score of 3.15. This value indicates that Polowijen Cultural Village has a strong internal position in supporting the development of the creative economy. This dominant strength is primarily supported by the sustainability of local culture, consistent studio activities, and the existence of MSMEs based on local wisdom. However, weaknesses in managerial aspects, unequal participation, and limited digital marketing indicate the need for institutional strengthening to optimize internal potential sustainably.

The EFAS Matrix was used to analyze external factors influencing the development of Polowijen Cultural Village. Similar to the IFAS, the assessment was conducted through weighting and rating of opportunity and threat factors obtained from field identification. The results of the EFAS Matrix calculations are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. EFAS Matrix Calculation

External Factors		Weight	Rating	Score
No	Opportunity (O)			
O1	Potential for developing educational tourism and special interest tourism based on culture.	0.08	5	0.40
O2	Creative economy development through crafts, culinary arts, and performing arts.	0.07	4	0.28
O3	Organizing routine cultural events (festivals, wayang topeng gebyak).	0.05	5	0.25
O4	Product marketing collaboration as souvenirs, tour packages, and workshops.	0.06	3	0.18
O5	Collaboration with educational institutions, communities, and universities.	0.06	3	0.18
O6	Utilization of digital media and content creators for wider promotion of KBP and MSME products.	0.06	3	0.18
O7	Potential support from the government through empowerment programs, MSME training, and cultural tourism promotion.	0.06	4	0.24
O8	Packaging of facilities, cultural learning programs, and cultural rehearsals into an integrated tourism package (education – performances – culinary).	0.05	4	0.20
O9	Development of workshops, seminars, and cultural discussions as educational tourism and creative economy products.	0.04	3	0.12
O10	Increasing tourist interest in authentic and community-based cultural experiences.	0.04	3	0.12
Total Chances		0.57		2.15

No	Threat (T)			
T1	Changes in trends and tastes of the younger generation who prefer modern culture.	0.06	2	0.12
T2	Competition with modern tourist destinations that are more practical and commercial.	0.06	2	0.12
T3	Problems of cleanliness and environmental comfort if visits increase without good management.	0.05	3	0.15
T4	The risk of cultural authenticity decreasing if we follow market tastes too much.	0.07	1	0.07
T5	The increase in raw material prices affects the production costs of MSMEs.	0.05	2	0.10
T6	Dependence on community self-help due to minimal government support.	0.05	1	0.05
T7	Declining interest in traditional products and crafts made from recycled materials.	0.04	2	0.08
T8	The risk of sustainability of cultural programs if regeneration and funding do not run optimally.	0.05	1	0.05
Total Threat		0.43		0.74

Source: Primary Data after processing (2026)

An EFAS score of 2.89 indicates that KBP's external environment is relatively supportive, with opportunities outweighing threats. The main opportunities lie in trends in authentic cultural tourism, institutional collaboration, and digital promotion, while threats stem from changing market preferences, competition from modern destinations, and the risk of cultural commodification. Therefore, development strategies need to maintain a balance between market expansion and the preservation of cultural values. From Bourdieu's (1986) perspective, this condition indicates the presence of strong cultural capital. Cultural capital in the form of Malangan Mask art, macapat, and other performing arts not only serves as a symbolic identity but has undergone a process of conversion into economic capital through tourism and MSME mechanisms. This transformation demonstrates that culture can be a productive asset that generates added value. However, the threat findings related to the risk of cultural commodification in the EFAS analysis indicate the need for a balance between economic and symbolic value to prevent the degradation of local cultural meaning.

Strategic Position Analysis and Its Implications

The Internal-External (IE) Matrix is an analytical tool used to assess the position of an organization or sector by considering its internal strengths and external opportunities. This matrix serves as a basis for determining the most appropriate strategic direction and alternatives, according to the internal and external situations faced.

	Kuat 3,0-4,0	Rata-Rata 2,0-2,99	Lemah 1,0-1,99
Tinggi 3,0-4,0	I	II	III
Menengah 2,0-2,99	IV	V	VI
Rendah 1,0-1,99	VII	VIII	IX

Source: Primary Data After Processing (2026)

Figure 3. IE Matrix Diagram

The results of the IFAS and EFAS Matrix analysis show that Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP) obtained an IFAS score of 3.15 and an EFAS score of 2.89. This position places KBP in the growth and build quadrant in the Internal–External (IE) Matrix as shown in Figure 3, indicating the dominance of internal strengths and relatively conducive external support opportunities. This condition indicates that KBP is not in a defensive phase, but rather in a strategic expansion phase that allows for further development in a planned and sustainable manner. From the perspective of local economic development, the growth and build position reflects the strength of endogenous resources, especially the cultural capital and social capital of the community. The sustainability of cultural practices such as the Malangan Mask, puppetry, macapat, and MSME activities based on local wisdom not only function as a collective identity, but also as a productive asset capable of creating added economic value. Thus, local culture in KBP has the character of an economic driver, not just a cultural symbol.

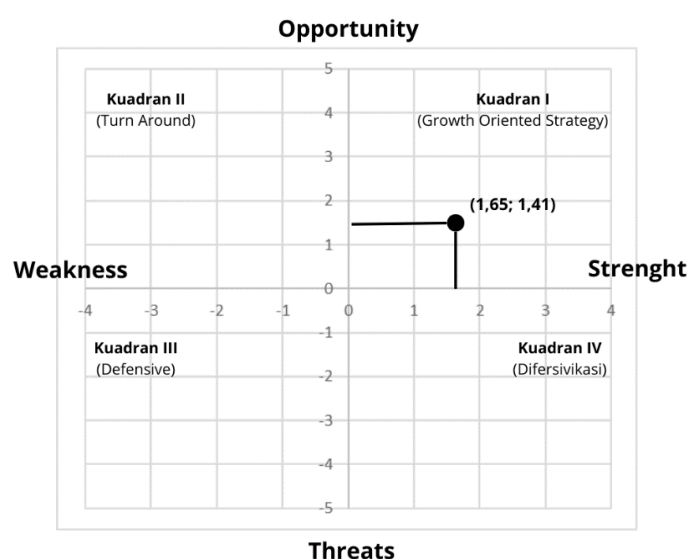
The growth and build position in the IE Matrix and Quadrant I in the Cartesian Diagram indicate that the development of Polowijen Cultural Village relies on internal strengths originating from the community itself. This aligns with the endogenous development approach, which emphasizes that sustainable regional development stems from the utilization of local potential, including cultural, social, and institutional resources (Sari et al., 2024). Cultural practices such as the Malangan Mask, puppetry, and tradition-based MSME activities are endogenous resources that drive the local economy. Therefore, the results of this study reinforce the argument that the success of developing a culture-based creative economy is not solely determined by external intervention, but rather by the community's capacity to manage and capitalize on its internal potential.

The SWOT Matrix synthesis shows that priority strategies lie in two main directions. First, the development of experiential cultural educational tourism integrated with MSME and performing arts activities. Second, strengthening institutional capacity through enhanced managerial competencies, digitalization of promotions, and regeneration of cultural actors. Both strategies are relevant to the need to increase destination competitiveness while fostering more professional governance. These strategic implications contribute directly to strengthening the real sector at the community level. The integration of cultural and economic activities encourages increased MSME income, expanded culture-based employment opportunities, and the formation of more structured local value chains. Within the framework of local economic development, this

strategy has the potential to create a multiplier effect that strengthens economic circulation in the surrounding environment. Thus, the local culture-based creative economy in Polowijen Cultural Village serves not only as an instrument for cultural preservation but also as a mechanism for accelerating community economic development oriented towards sustainability and local independence.

Strategy Formulation and Prioritization

The results of the SWOT Cartesian diagram analysis show that Polowijen Cultural Village has coordinates (1.65; 1.41), which are obtained from the difference between the total strengths and weaknesses on the X-axis and the difference between the total opportunities and threats on the Y-axis. This position places KBP in Quadrant I, which represents an aggressive condition (growth-oriented strategy). The findings of this study are in line with the study of Zurinani & Kamilah (2023) which emphasized that the development of cultural areas based on community participation has higher resilience to market dynamics and changes in tourism trends. In addition, various studies on cultural tourism villages show that the integration between cultural attractions and MSMEs can increase local added value and expand community-based employment opportunities. However, as also found in the local economic development literature, institutional and managerial aspects are often weak points that determine the sustainability of the program. This is consistent with the findings of this study which identified the need for strengthening governance and regeneration of cultural actors.



Source: Primary Data after processing (2026)

Figure 4 Cartesian SWOT diagram

Figure 4 shows the above position confirming the IE Matrix findings that KBP is in a strategic expansion phase, with dominant internal strengths and external opportunities. Conceptually, this condition indicates that the development strategy should be directed at optimizing cultural and social potential to capture maximum market opportunities, rather than a defensive or stabilization approach. Although the strategic position indicates an aggressive orientation, it is necessary to select the most relevant strategy for implementation. Therefore, the Quantitative Strategy Planning Matrix (QSPM) is used to determine the strategic alternatives that have the highest level of attractiveness.

The QSPM analysis results show that the SO2 strategy obtained the highest Total Attractiveness Score (TAS) of 1.87. This strategy focuses on developing experiential cultural educational tourism integrated with craft and performing arts activities. This value indicates that the SO2 strategy has the highest level of fit with the main strengths and opportunities of KBP. This strategy is in line with the concept of Local Economic Development (LED), which emphasizes collaboration between the community, businesses, and the government in driving a locally-based economy (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The integration of cultural activities, MSMEs, and educational tourism in KBP reflects the formation of a local value chain, where production, distribution, and consumption processes occur within a single community ecosystem. This pattern strengthens the resilience of the local economy and minimizes economic leakage outside the region. The TAS calculation can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. TAS Score Calculation

Strategic Factors	Weight	SO1		SO2		SO3		SO4	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS	AS	TAS	AS	TAS
S1 Strong local culture	0.08	5	0.40	5	0.40	4	0.32	5	0.40
S3 Active dance studio	0.07	4	0.28	5	0.35	5	0.35	4	0.28
S6 Unique MSME Products	0.07	5	0.35	4	0.28	3	0.21	4	0.28
O1 Educational tourism	0.08	4	0.32	5	0.40	4	0.32	4	0.32
O6 Digital Media	0.06	5	0.30	4	0.24	3	0.18	3	0.18
O10 Interest in cultural tourism	0.04	4	0.16	5	0.20	4	0.16	5	0.20
TOTAL BAG			1.81		1.87		1.54		1.66

Source: Primary Data after processing (2026)

SO1 (TAS 1.81) and SO4 (TAS 1.66) strategies serve as supporting strategies, particularly in the areas of expanding digital promotion and strengthening institutional partnerships. Meanwhile, SO3 (TAS 1.54) is positioned as an operational strategy that supports the sustainability of cultural activities. Thus, quantitatively and qualitatively, the integrated cultural education tourism development strategy is designated as the top priority strategy in optimizing the local culture-based creative economy in Polowijen Cultural Village. The determination of SO2 as a priority strategy indicates that a cultural experience-based approach has the greatest leverage in strengthening the real sector. The integration of arts, crafts, and tourism activities creates a more intensive local economic circulation, increases the income of MSMEs, and opens up sustainable culture-based job opportunities.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Polowijen Cultural Village (KBP) has strong internal capacity and a relatively supportive external environment for developing a local culture-based creative economy. The results of the IFAS analysis (3.15) and EFAS (2.89) place KBP in the growth and build position in

the IE Matrix and Quadrant I (aggressive) in the SWOT Diagram. This condition indicates that strengths in the form of authentic cultural wealth, sustainable studio activities, and the existence of local wisdom-based MSMEs can be optimized to capture opportunities for increasing interest in cultural tourism and support for institutional collaboration. The QSPM results determine a priority strategy in the form of developing cultural educational tourism based on direct experience integrated with crafts, performing arts, and local MSME activities. This strategy is considered the most effective in converting cultural assets into added economic value that has an impact on strengthening the real sector, increasing community income, and establishing a more structured local economic value chain. Thus, the local culture-based creative economy in KBP plays a role not only as a means of cultural preservation, but also as an instrument for sustainable community economic development.

The policy implications of this research emphasize the importance of strengthening institutional governance, enhancing managerial capacity, digitizing promotions, and developing a regeneration strategy for cultural actors to maintain program sustainability. Local governments and stakeholders need to focus interventions on professionalizing management, mentoring MSMEs, and systematically integrating cultural tourism programs to ensure the potential for more equitable welfare outcomes. Further research is recommended to conduct more in-depth studies on quantitative measures of economic impact, such as contributions to household income, job creation, and the multiplier effect on the local economy. Furthermore, comparative studies with other thematic villages or long-term sustainability analyses based on a development economics approach could also enrich the development of local culture-based creative economy models at the community level.

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