

Creative Economy Development in PAK Theology for the Achievement of SDGS Goals in the STT Environment

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Abstract

The development of creative economy in Christian Religious Education Theology (PAK) is a strategic approach for Theological Colleges (STT) to achieve local economic prosperity in the midst of a digital revolution towards the achievement of SDGs. Creative economy is a global strategy, including in Indonesia, to create economic added value. The integration of the creative economy in PAK Theology encourages students to improve their creative economic skills in areas such as spiritual design, digital content production, learning media, service entrepreneurship, and social innovation based on faith. This integration enriches the PAK theological learning process but also increases student participation in church and community service, an integral part of the cultural mandate. Research findings indicate that the development of the creative economy has a significant impact on the achievement of various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Economic Growth and Decent Work), SDG 9 (Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Communities). Therefore, the integration of creative economy development in PAK Theology not only increases the academic relevance of STT, but also serves as a tangible contribution to sustainable development in the era of Industry 5.0. It is hoped that STT graduates will become independent, innovative, adaptive, and visionary graduates who can think far ahead and play a role as agents of reform in the digital, social, and community welfare fields.

Keywords: Creative Economy, PAK Theology, Christian Religious Education, SDGs, Industry 5.0

A. INTRODUCTION

The global changes that have occurred in the last two decades have brought the world into a new phase of human development, namely the era of the Industrial Revolution

4.0, which is now transitioning to Industry 5.0. This era emphasises the integration of humans, technology, creativity, and human values. Higher education, including theological colleges, is required to adapt by providing a curriculum that not only develops spiritual aspects but also creativity, innovation, and the ability to deal with the complexities of the modern world.

Christian Religious Education (CRE) has an important responsibility in shaping students with Christian character, strong spirituality, and the ability to be a real blessing in a dynamic world. However, the traditional approach that focuses only on doctrine, lectures, and theory is no longer adequate. CRE needs to integrate elements of creativity in response to an increasingly visual, digital, and creative world.

John Howkins states that "the creative economy is an economy based on ideas, imagination, and individual creativity that are turned into economic value."¹ Thus, creativity is not only art, but a model of innovation that is relevant to the world of ministry.

Samuel Hakh emphasises that theological education must have a clear social contribution, because "theology is a tool for social transformation, not merely an academic study."² This perspective reinforces the urgency of integrating the PAK curriculum with the creative economy, not only as a pedagogical method but as a mandate for service.

B. THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

1. Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1:26-28): In Genesis 1:28, God instructs humans to "rule over" and "cultivate" His creation. John H. Walton states that the cultural mandate is an invitation for humans to develop creativity as an aspect of God's work: "Humans are involved in God's creative work as stewards who develop culture, beauty, and innovation"³. The creative economy is a form of human participation in the cultural mandate.

2. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20): Bosch emphasises that the church's purpose is always innovative and applicable: "Mission must always use the language of the times and express the Gospel in culturally relevant forms."⁴ In the digital world, this task requires innovative expression through visual media, video, music, podcasts, and digital content.

3. Vocational Theology

Miroslav Volf states that: *Work is a form of cooperation with God in sustaining and transforming the world.*⁵ The creative economy is not just a business, but a form of meaningful service. This is also emphasised by the Apostle Paul as the fruit of good work in Colossians 1:10.

4. The Philosophy of Creativity in Education

Charles Leadbeater explains that innovation arises from creative communities that share with one another: *"Communities of creative thinkers are the new engines of*

¹ John Howkins, *Creative Economy* (London: Penguin Books, 2013), 14.

² Samuel Hakh, *Theology and Social Transformation* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2020), 44.

³ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), 62.

⁴ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2011), 57.

⁵ Miroslav Volf, *Working in the Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 33.

innovation.⁶ Theological colleges can become centres of creative spiritual communities and economic welfare for the people.

B. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN THE STT ENVIRONMENT.

The growth of the creative economy in Christian Religious Education (CRE) is a process that unites theological values, human creativity as the image of God, and digital innovation to create meaningful works and services for the church, theological colleges (STT), and society. In the context of theological higher education, the creative economy is not merely a business activity, but also functions as a model of contextual ministry that uses design, digital media, art, spiritual content, and entrepreneurial ministry as tools for empowerment and education. This is done by integrating the creative economy into the curriculum, empowering students as creative agents, utilising modern media for ministry, and establishing cooperation between STTs and the creative economy industry.

As stated by Howkins, the creative sector is growing at a faster rate than various traditional economic sectors. An economy focused on creativity has significant potential to drive modern economic growth. Creativity and innovation provide significant added value, create new job opportunities, and increase competitiveness at the global level. Therefore, the development of the creative economy in PAK Theology is an important strategy to support sustainable development and achieve the SDGs, while meeting the needs of the digital era by creating an inclusive, adaptive, and transformative economic model.

C. THE GREAT CULTURAL MANDATE AS THE MEANING OF PAK THEOLOGY

The Great Cultural Mandate is God's instruction to humanity since the beginning of creation, as written in Genesis 1:28, to rule and care for the earth as a continuation of God's work in the world. This mandate means that humans are invited to develop culture, knowledge, art, and social order as a reflection of the nature of God who is the Creator.⁷ Therefore, humans as the image of God (*Imago Dei*) have the ability to create and build a good and responsible life.⁸

In Christian Religious Education Theology (PAK), the Great Cultural Mandate serves as a theological foundation that considers education not only as the transfer of knowledge, but also as playing an important role in shaping individuals to think critically, act ethically, and manage nature responsibly. CE sees humans as learners who are called to develop their creative potential and live out the values of the Kingdom of God in various aspects of social, cultural, and technological life. Thus, the cultural mandate becomes a framework for understanding the educational role of the church and Christian educational institutions in preparing students to face the challenges of the times.

The Great Cultural Mandate also provides guidance for PAK to apply a theological perspective in understanding the progress of the modern world, including digitalisation, art,

⁶ Charles Leadbeater, *We Think: Mass Innovation* (London: Profile Books, 2009), 32.

⁷ John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), pp. 55-56.

⁸ Anthony A. Hoekema, *Created in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 12-18.

popular culture, and the creative economy. Through this mandate, PAK invites students to act as agents of restoration who can contribute to society, build public ethics, and create social change that reflects Christian values. Thus, the cultural mandate serves as a theological basis for comprehensive, creative, and relevant Christian education in the global age.

D. INTEGRATION OF THE PAK CURRICULUM AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

The integration of the PAK curriculum and the creative economy is an educational method that combines religious values, Christian character development, and spiritual skills with creative and innovative capacities and the use of digital technology to create works that are beneficial to the church and society. With this integration, Christian Religious Education not only emphasises cognitive and spiritual aspects, but also provides students with skills in design, digital media, religious content, service entrepreneurship, and creativity as a form of faith practice. Thus, the PAK curriculum can produce a generation that is faithful, productive, independent, and able to contribute to the development of the creative economy and church ministry in a creative and contextually appropriate manner. The following can assist in the development of PAK Theology to achieve its goals:

1. Development of Creative Economy Courses

The development of a creative economy curriculum in higher education is a strategic step to meet the needs of a modern era full of technology and social change. In the fields of theology and Christian Religious Education, a creative economy curriculum is vital because churches and educational institutions need innovative, adaptable, and digital-based services. This curriculum encourages students to think creatively, produce tangible results, use technology, and develop innovative learning media, liturgy, creative communication, and opportunities in the creative economy.

The main objective of the creative economy course is to empower students so that they can innovate, collaborate, communicate well, and have the courage to produce work. In the era of Industry 4.0 to Society 5.0, students are expected to integrate theology with technology, art, and the creative economy through an interdisciplinary approach. Therefore, creative study programmes need to focus on student-centred learning, digital technology integration, collaboration, and authentic assessment through real projects. The learning process includes research, discussions, creative activities, workshops, and project-based learning to produce learning outcomes that are beneficial to the church and society.

Through this learning model, they are directly involved in a fun, relevant, and creativity-focused learning experience. In addition, the application of the latest technologies such as artificial intelligence, graphic design, video editing, podcasting, animation, or digital platforms are important elements in preparing students to face changes in an increasingly competitive and digital-based real world.

The following courses should be included in the PAK curriculum:

- 1) Digital PAK Learning Media
- 2) Creative Liturgy
- 3) Theology & Creative Economy
- 4) Service Entrepreneurship

Organisational Communication, The aim is for students to:

- 1) Think creatively

- 2) Produce products that add economic value, including digital spiritual products and SMEs
- 3) Be able to compete in the global creative world

According to Keller: "The church needs to build a culture of creativity rooted in theology and serving the context of society."⁹ Therefore, the development of creative economy courses is not merely an update to the curriculum, but also a change in perspective and methods in educating students to become creative, innovative individuals who are ready to contribute to the church and society. Its implementation requires support from institutions, teaching capabilities, supporting facilities, and a curriculum that emphasises direct experience and technical skills. Ultimately, creative courses serve as a driving force that helps students integrate faith, creativity, technology, and community service into a comprehensive learning process.

2. Project-Based Learning

This model produces tangible works such as:

- a. Short films with a faith theme
- b. Bible story animations
- c. Spiritual graphic design
- d. Digital learning modules
- e. Theological podcasts

UNESCO emphasises that creative economy learning is at the heart of *sustainable* development: "*Creative and reflective learning is the foundation of sustainable education*".¹⁰ UNESCO affirms that creative and reflective learning is an essential foundation for sustainable education. This indicates that the learning process is not only aimed at transferring knowledge, but also at shaping creative, critical, and adaptable mindsets in line with the changing times.

Creative economy learning enables students to improve their ability to solve problems, collaborate, and generate appropriate solutions to global challenges such as environmental, social, and economic issues. Therefore, creativity is not just an additional skill, but also an important element in creating a strong, independent, and sustainable society in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3. Partnerships with the Creative Industry

Involving:

- Church art communities
- Local design studios
- Digital MSMEs
- Application developers

This model supports SDG 17 on global partnerships

D. CONTRIBUTION OF INTEGRATION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SDGs

1. SDG 4 - Quality Education

⁹ Timothy Keller, *Centre Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 123.

¹⁰ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Outcomes* (Paris: UNESCO, 2017), 12.

The role of integration in achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 4 on Quality Education, relates to efforts to combine various disciplines, teaching methods, technology, and human values into the education system in order to realise sustainable development goals. This integration shows that education is no longer seen as a separate process, but rather as a space for cooperation that combines cognitive elements, creativity, technology, character, social justice, and relevance in context.

Sustainable development thus requires integration to play a fundamental role in achieving SDG 4, as it ensures that education is inclusive, adaptive, and relevant to the challenges of the modern era. Integration:

- Improving digital literacy
- Enriching learning methods
- Expanding access to Christian education

UNESCO states: *Education for sustainable development requires creativity and innovation at all levels.*¹¹ This emphasises that education focused on sustainable development can only be achieved if all elements of education, from the curriculum, teaching methods, teachers, to the learning environment, are built on the basis of creativity and innovation. This shows that education is not just about imparting knowledge, but also about developing new ways of thinking, the ability to solve complex problems, and the courage to come up with relevant solutions to global challenges. Therefore, creativity and innovation are essential to ensuring that education produces a generation that can adapt, collaborate, and support the achievement of sustainable development goals.

2. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth aims to promote inclusive, sustainable, and equitable economic growth by providing safe, dignified, and adequately paid jobs for all without discrimination. This goal highlights the significance of innovation, entrepreneurship, technology, and human resource development in strengthening the economic foundation, reducing unemployment and poverty, and ensuring that the benefits of growth are felt evenly, especially by vulnerable groups. Internationally, the achievement of SDG 8 is a significant benchmark for assessing a country's success in integrating economic, social and sustainability aspects.

The creative economy has proven to create new jobs. Howkins writes: *The creative sector grows faster than many traditional economies.* Theology students can open as follows:¹²

- a) Spiritual design services
- b) Spiritual content production
- c) Christian merchandise
- d) Creative economy classes

In conclusion, Howkins' statement that "the creative sector is growing faster than many traditional economies" emphasises that the creative economy sector has the capacity to grow at a much higher rate than conventional economic sectors. This statement shows that

¹¹ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals*, 15.

¹² Howkins, *The Creative Economy*, 28.

creativity, innovation, and the ability to generate new ideas have become the main drivers of economic growth in the modern era.

E. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Practical implications are the consequences or effects that can be directly applied in daily life, field practices, or concrete actions as a result of a theory, study, research, or thought. This term describes how a concept or discovery is not merely an idea, but also produces applicable steps, provides guidance for decision-making, and contributes to effective problem-solving. Therefore, practical implications serve to connect theory with practice, so that research results can provide relevant, measurable benefits that can be felt by individuals, institutions, and society as a whole. The benefits are as follows:

1. For Theological Institutions

- A more modern curriculum
- Enhanced reputation
- Campus digital transformation

2. For Students

- Mastering creative economic skills
- Having opportunities for economic independence
- Being able to serve through digital content

3. For the Church

- Gain new creative resources
- Supporting visual and media services
- Strengthening congregational empowerment

4. For the Community

- Creating creative job opportunities
- Empowering young people
- Church-based social innovation

In general, an innovative curriculum serves as a strategic tool to link theological education with current global developments, improve the quality of church services, and create positive and sustainable social impact. This creative economy curriculum not only enriches learning but also transforms the church and society through creativity grounded in values of faith.

CONCLUSION

The development of the creative economy in PAK Theology is an important step that strengthens the position of the School of Theology (STT) as an educational institution that is in tune with the needs of the times. The combination of theological principles, imagination, and technology provides opportunities for students to enhance their creative abilities, which have an impact on ministry in the church and society.

Through this approach, STT not only provides students with theological understanding but also practical skills in spiritual design, digital media production, entrepreneurship in ministry, and other creative innovations.

By making creativity an element of cultural mandate and expression of faith, the development of creative economy in PAK Theology produces graduates who have competence, clear vision, and the ability to become agents of social and spiritual change. Therefore, this development not only improves the academic quality of STT, but also expands

the influence of church ministry and strengthens the role of STT in sustainable development in the digital age.

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