# The Conceptual Framework of Creative City

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### Abstract

*This study aims to create a conceptual framework, provide variables that make up a creative city, and propose a model that illustrates the idea. This study discovered three primary variables in constructing a creative city: culture, creativity, and creative economy. The article's novelty derives from the fact that this study looked at both viewpoints of a creative city, firstly, as a place of culture and secondly, as a place of economy and commerce. The article concludes with a set of proposed activities for further operationalization.*

**Keywords:** *Creative Economy, Creativity, Culture.*

## Introduction

In The Rise of the Creative Class, Florida (2003) states that an individual's creativity is closely related to the city where that person lives. The quality of life, the amenities, and the city in which a person lives affect the creativity index of individuals. There are three dimensions to a place's quality, which are the combination of the built environment and the natural environment, a proper setting for the pursuit of creative lives, the diverse kind of people, interacting and providing indicators that anyone can plug into and make a life in that community; and the vibrancy of street life, cafe culture, arts, music and people engaging in outdoor activities – altogether a lot of active, exciting, creative endeavors.

Leadbeater (2008) criticizes Florida's view of the creative city as restrictive. He argues that Florida limits creativity to a small group that works in particular areas of the city. It figures an incomplete picture, overlooking the broader potential for creative energy to permeate and enrich the entire urban landscape. Leadbeater stresses that creativity is closely associated with culture and the arts, knowledge, and learning. Cities have always represented learning centers, the first home to libraries and universities, museums and galleries, providing some critical ingredients for cultural creativity: diversity, density, and proximity (Leadbeater, 2008). He suggests that investing in cultural institutions and renewal of the city's historic core while building cultural quarters will act as the basis for the broader economic regeneration of a city that will attract investment in new retail and leisure facilities, apartments, and knowledge worker jobs.

Discussion the Creative City, it emerged in the late 1980s; it was seen as aspirational, encouraging openness and imaginative thinking. The philosophy is that there is always more potential in any place than we would think at first sight, even though very few cities, apart from London, New York, or Amsterdam, are comprehensively creative (Landry, 2012). The potentialities lead to the creativity of the city planners in solving urban problems and designing the city. The initiatives might range from creating wealth to enhancing the visual environment or addressing a social problem such as homelessness (Landry, 2012). The soft infrastructure must include a highly skilled and flexible labor force, dynamic thinkers, creators, and implementers to be a creative city. Creativity is not only about having ideas. An extensive formal and informal intellectual infrastructure like universities only sometimes helps; the important thing is being able to give maverick personalities space, effective internal and external communication linkages, and an overall culture of entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, creative cities have a substantial impact on fostering a city's economic expansion on a global scale (Hatuka et al., 2018). The notion of creative cities has influenced many countries, including Indonesia. Furthermore, the significance of creative city research is highly essential, and it led to the movement where

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several cities in the country joined the UNESCO (United Nations for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and Creative Cities Network (UCCN). At the forefront of this movement stands Pekalongan, recognized in 2014 for its rich tapestry of crafts and folk art. Bandung proudly followed in 2015 as a creative city in the design sector. Ambon's musical heritage recently gained international recognition in 2019, further solidifying Indonesia's commitment to nurturing creative industries.

These successes are not mere badges of honor; they represent a conscious effort to leverage the power of creativity for economic growth. By fostering innovation, attracting talent, and driving tourism, creative cities unlock new avenues for prosperity, positioning themselves as vital players in the global marketplace. Indonesia's embrace of this concept showcases its foresight and its dedication to tapping into the immense potential of its diverse creative communities.

This study presents a theoretical framework for developing a creative city tailored to its cultural background. Moreover, it aims to identify the variables for understanding a creative city. Although the initial stage of this study uses a single city, we can use the proposed model of this study for other cities. Based on the above facts, there is a need to define the theoretical framework of creative cities, including their indicators.

*Theoretical Framework*

The definition of a creative city still varies. Nevertheless, a mutual understanding of the diversity of definitions is needed to make an ideal conception. The concept can then be implemented as an alternative economic driver to suit the dynamics and characteristics of the region. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), a creative city is:

'An urban complex where cultural activities of various sorts are an integral component of the city's economic and social functioning. Such cities tend to be built upon a strong social and cultural infrastructure, to have a high concentration of creative employment, and to be attractive to inward investment because of their well-established cultural facilities.'

In 2017, Indonesia's Coordinating Ministry of Economic Affairs (CMEA) developed a creative city concept, which acts as a guide but does not specify formal steps for developing a creative city (Tayyiba et al., 2017). The concept states that creative endeavors need more space to enhance their creativity rather than be constrained by rules and regulations. The three fundamental issues regarding creative cities, according to the CMEA, are (1) the focus on idea and creativity development, (2) the existence of creative communities (bottom-up approach), and (3) the creative process value chain. From this idea, a definition of a creative city in the Indonesian context emerges as a city that can explore, utilize, grow, manage, and conserve creativity, taking advantage of science and technology to develop local potentials such as human resources, culture, and economic commodities. Thus, it can be a local champion and regional identity to encourage improving welfare and achieving sustainable development.

Synthesizes from the literature review, the definition of a creative city used in this study is an urban complex that integrates cultural activities into its economic and social functioning, built upon a solid social and cultural infrastructure, with a high concentration of creative employment, and appealing to inward investment due to well-established cultural facilities. The city actively explores, utilizes, manages, and conserves creativity, leveraging science and technology to develop local potential, including human resources, cultural assets, and economic commodities. The goal is for the city to emerge as a local champion and a distinctive regional identity, fostering welfare improvement and achieving sustainable development.

The basis of the proposed conceptual framework originates from Smith & Warfield (2008), who suggest that creativity nowadays means innovative action. They state:

'Creativity describes both process and product, and as such, virtually anyone (or for that matter, anything) can now be creative. Not only can the artist, the poet, and the architect be "creative" – innovate, imagine, ingenerate, or invent – but so too can inanimately objects, creative places, creative economies, creative politics, and creative governance'.

Smith & Warfield (2008) further argue that the "value orientation" of the notion itself needs to be understood to understand its meaning. There are two conceptions of value regarding the notion of creative cities: the first is culture-centric, and the other is econ-centric. The former connotes that the characteristic of a creative city is a thriving and robust arts and culture scene, encompassing various creative and diverse forms of expression. This environment promotes inclusivity, artistic talent, and imaginative pursuits while also addressing themes related to identity, rights, beliefs, and the overall social welfare of its inhabitants. In contrast, from the econ-centric standpoint, creativity is a means to achieve the foremost goal of local economic development. As such, creative endeavors and ventures have some quantifiable value or measure. Figure 1 provides a detailed description of the discourse.

| Creative city orientation | Culture-centric | Econ-centric |
|---|---|---|
| Creative city values | Central value = arts, culture, and community well-being, access, and inclusion | Central value = urban economic sustainability and well-being through creative initiatives or industries |
| Definition of a creative city | Place of diverse and inclusive arts and culture | Place of economic innovation, creative talent, and creative industries |

**Figure 1.** Mapping The Value Orientation and Means to Achieve the Creative City (Smith & Warfield, 2008)

## Research Method

This study tries to uncover what is already known to the body of knowledge before initiating further research (Hart, 1998). Furthermore, to come up with a robust theoretical framework regarding the creative city, this study will provide a state-of-the-art review that serves at least the following purposes in research (Hart, 1998):

Distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done.

Discovering essential variables relevant to the topic.

Synthesizing and gaining a new perspective.

Identifying relationships between ideas and practice.

Establishing the context of the topic or problem.

Rationalizing the significance of the problem.

Enhancing and acquiring the subject vocabulary.

Understanding the structure of the subject.

Relating ideas and theory to applications.

Identifying the primary methodologies and research techniques that have been used.

Placing the research in a historical context to show familiarity with state-of-the-art developments.

The research method chapter discusses how to review the literature. A literature review is needed to discover the recent knowledge that has been done so far, such as how it has been researched and the key issues (Hart, 1998). The quality of the literature used plays a significant role in advancing the body of knowledge, and it often needs help to determine the quality of the literature. The primary base of the

literature review process should be from leading, peer-reviewed journals, as it provides sufficient theoretical background and leads to additional references on the specific subject matter (Levy & Ellis, 2006).

The literature review process is a sequential step to collect, know, comprehend, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate quality literature to provide a firm foundation for a topic and research method. The process is expected to reveal the understanding of previous research on the topic, the leading theory and rationale behind the selected topic, how previous research has been applied and developed, as well as the main criticisms that have been made of work on the topic. Therefore, reviewing the literature is a part of the research design (Hart, 1998). The literature is available documents, both published and unpublished on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data, and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfill specific aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic (Hart, 1998; Levy & Ellis, 2006).

The literature review is also conducted to maintain the quality of the research, which means that the research is appropriate, has breadth, depth, rigor, and consistency, with clarity and brevity, and is effective in analysis and synthesis—in other words, using the ideas in the literature to justify the particular approaches to the topic and the selection of methods and demonstrate that this research contributes something new (Hart, 1998).

A systematic literature review method is adopted from the work of Levy and Ellis (2006), known as the "input-processing-output" approach. The proposed framework follows the systematic data processing approach comprised of three major stages:

Inputs (literature gathering and screening) include ways to find applicable literature, qualify the literature, read research literature, and know that one is done with the literature search.

Processing is analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating the literature.

Outputs (writing the literature review), writing the actual literature review following the theory of argument.

The next consideration is dealing with the inclusion or exclusion of papers from the literature review and the ethical use of references. Both facets should be addressed during the literature search and gathering process to ensure a high-quality and effective literature review (Levy & Ellis, 2006). The process of backward and forward literature search techniques should provide additional valid references as the search progresses. However, this process may be a never-ending process. When the researcher needs to stop the search and move on to the processing and writing (output) of the literature review, it can be indicated when no new citations are discovered, and articles cited in newly discovered literature have already been reviewed (Webster & Watson, 2002).

## Findings and Discussion

There are two distinctions in perceiving a creative city. On the one hand, a city is a place of industry and commerce, known as the econ-centric orientation; on the other, it is also a place of art and culture (Scott, 2014; Smith & Warfield, 2008), known as the culture-centric orientation.

Previous research has yet to illustrate the complete picture of both orientations. Some publications, such as Banks and O'Connor (2017) and Zukin and Braslow (2011), discuss the culture-centric orientation heavily. Both articles mainly discussed the city's arts, creativity, culture, and cultural activities. From the econ-centric orientation, a similar case happens, in which some publications predominantly write about the creative economy (Pourzakarya & Bahramjerdi, 2019); Kashkouli et al. (2018); Boren and Young (2016); Kong (2014); Vivant (2013); Leslie and Catungal (2012)). Nevertheless, there were several articles within the search that incorporated all the variables in the making of a creative city, such as Scott (2014), Sasaki (2010), and Smith & Warfield (2008).

The theories underlying the result of the framework are as follows. Cerneviciute (2011) adds that the foundation of a creative city consists of a robust social and cultural infrastructure and a concentration of

creative employment to attract inward investment toward its well-established cultural facilities. Based on this foundation, a creative city sees that culture has an economic value that will eventually grow the regional industries, increase employment, and regenerate the areas to be developed better.

The creative cities came into being with the realization of a region's cultural capital. Culture, according to Throsby (1999), has two distinct constructions. The first is culture as a set of activities seen in the functional sense being represented in the economy. The second is culture as a set of attitudes, practices, and beliefs fundamental to the functioning of different societies. Based on this understanding, people were gradually aware that culture has value, which is different from, though not unrelated to, economic value (Throsby, 1999). Moreover, when the stock cultural value is embodied in an asset, it thus becomes the cultural capital.

Furthermore, a research framework definition for this study is proposed (Figure 2). In essence, the framework acts as a definition of a creative city in the Indonesian context which generated from the variety of literatures, including the combination of references from different parts of the world, what defines a creative city in the Indonesian context is that it needs to have a balanced perspective, both from its cultural features as well as economic (Scott, 2014; Smith & Warfield, 2008).

The other standpoint of a creative city is the econ-centric orientation, which relates to creating economic growth, including creative and innovative endeavors. The literature review found that a creative city needs to be supported by the creative economy (Howkins, 2002) as a single variable and an overarching principle consisting of five sub-variables. According to Cerneviciute (2011), the creative city has three main domains: making the arts and cultural heritage, the media and entertainment industries, and the creative business-to-business services. She also states that there is a need for a city to promote its cultural activities as an integral part of the city's economic and social functioning.

The culture-centric orientation should consist of two variables, which are culture and creativity (Landry, 2012). The former is culture, which is something that most articles state as an essential attribute, based on the literature review. For example, Jurene & Jureniene (2017) said that the increasing importance of a creative city impacts the arts and culture occupation rate. It nurtures city life, quality, social relations, and cultural identity. This statement elaborates that this attribute consists of two sub-variables, the arts sector, and the cultural resources, including the city's cultural activities. The culture should include the arts sector (Jurene & Jureniene, 2017) and cultural resources (Banks & O'Connor, 2017; Zukin & Braslow, 2011) as contributing factors.

The second variable of creativity refers to the creativity of the people, consisting of three sub-variables, which are (1) creative community, (2) grassroots capability, and (3) social inclusion (Sasaki, 2010). Having discussed the sub-variable of the creative community, Flora (2016) poses a concept of what she calls 'community capitals.' She stresses that community capital is an amalgamation of several other capitals: natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built (physical) capitals. Human capital, as Flora defines it, includes the skills and abilities of people to develop and enhance their resources, and to access outside resources and bodies of knowledge to increase their understanding, identity promising practices, and to access data to enhance community capitals (Flora, 2016). There is another aspect of community capital, which is social capital, according to Flora (2016). She explains that social capital reflects the connections among people and organizations or the social glue to make positive or negative things happen.

Regarding the sub-variable of social inclusion, Sasaki (2010) states that a socially inclusive creative city is a city that provides unique trends in arts and culture by promoting innovation and utilizing the creative activities of artists, creators, and ordinary people, supported by Alsayel et al. (2022), who states that there is a tension between creativity and inclusiveness of a city. It includes mutual trust, reciprocity, groups, collective identity, a sense of a shared future, and working together. Thus, social capital is the basis for communities to grow and develop their grassroots capabilities as another sub-variable of creativity. The sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to being together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Furthermore, Hillery & George (1955) states that a

community is bounded by physical or geographical location (neighborhood, school) and the basis of common interests, goals, or needs (sporting, hobby, or political groups).

Meanwhile, the economic perspective is represented by a single variable, the creative economy (Howkins, 2002), comprising five sub-variables: creative class (Florida, 2003), creative industries (Leslie & Catungal, 2012), creative milieu or place (Song, 2015), culture-led urban regeneration (Pourzakarya & Bahramjerdi, 2019), and city policymaking (Dudek-Mañkowska & Grochowski, 2019). The term creative employment by Cerneviciute refers to Florida's (2003) notion of the creative class as one of the sub-variables in the framework and their association with the creative industries. Florida states that the key to understanding the new economic geography of creativity and its effects on economic outcomes lies in the 3T of economic development: Technology, Talent, and Tolerance.

A creative city must have an ideal condition for blending those three elements to innovate and stimulate economic growth. A creative city will attract talents who choose a diverse place with a high tolerance for new ideas. Diversity generates more combinations and, in due course, leads to a high-speed flow of knowledge. 'Greater and more diverse concentrations of creative capital, in turn, lead to higher rates of innovation, high-technology business formation, job generation, and economic growth (Florida, 2003).

The creative industries sub-variable is considered the key driver in creative city-making. Numerous research studies have indicated that one of the vital indicators of a creative city is the growing development of creative industries. For Indonesia, the term is defined as those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill, and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property following DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) definition (2001).

The next sub-variable is the creative place, space, or milieu, in which each term has its own meaning and understanding. However, Landry's conception of a 'creative milieu' is relatively accurate for this study. Landry (2012) states that a creative milieu is a 'practical strategy' of a creative city, and it needs the right combination of hard and soft infrastructures. In agreement with this, Sasaki also stresses 'the importance of arts and culture-based creative milieu along with culture-based production, where cultural and economic value co-exist in the creative city' (Sasaki, 2010 in Song, 2015).

Many previous studies stated that in making a creative city, there have often been cases of urban regeneration projects, which are usually culturally led. For example, Pourzakarya & Bahramjerdi (2019) have an excellent case to explore, using the principles of urban regeneration to measure the economic impacts, tourism, and cultural vitality of a historical district in Iran. According to them, urban regeneration is defined as 'inclusive and structural action leading to the positive conversion of residential, commercial, or open-space places with social or cultural values which improve the regenerated area's economic, physical and environmental situation. It is also accompanied by a set of activities in urban development strategies called cultural planning, putting culture and creativity as effective factors in the middle of urban regeneration approach (Pourzakarya & Bahramjerdi, 2019).

The concluding sub-variable of the econ-centric creative city is policymaking. For this, Dudek-Mañkowska and Grochowski (2019) have the following view, 'For the development of a creative city, three components are needed: creative sector (identity), creative community (society), and appropriate strategies supporting creativity (policy) (Durmaz, 2015 cited in Dudek-Mañkowska & Grochowski, 2019) The interesting part is that they see the relation between creative city-making and place branding. The first two components, identity and society, have been discussed earlier. Regarding branding, the authors said that when identity is strong, place branding might be a process of sharing an existing identity with the world. The characteristics of a creative city may be in place, but the external audience is not aware of them. In this case, a branding exercise is more about promoting and marketing what exists rather than creating a particular identity (Dudek-Mañkowska & Grochowski, 2019).

For the policymaking element in particular, the authors would like to highlight the work of Dudek-Mañkowska and Grochowski (2019), who suggest that there is a relationship between a city's creative

economy and place branding. According to Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2014), culture and creativity are often core values of a place brand. Branding views culture and creativity as a place asset: something that a place has rather than something that a place is. The branding strategy of a city ought to be included in the urban planning program if a city wants to be acknowledged as "creative." However, this needs to be justified by the creative and cultural resources of the city.

In the context of policymaking, the authors are going to focus on the city branding strategy that the government needs to pay attention to since effective branding contributes to the increase of cities attractiveness and thus to the competitiveness in various fields (Dudek-Mañkowska & Grochowski, 2019). Moreover, this is important because creative cities specialize, just like a company. To achieve a competitive advantage, ideas appearing in each city should fit into the city's identity (Staber, 2008 in Dudek-Mañkowska & Grochowski, 2019).

The findings of this study are also intended to convince municipal stakeholders to focus on the elements that make a creative city in order to develop one. For example, policymakers need to focus on creating regulations that facilitate the city's development. As for the business sector, the findings of this study are intended to create a better industrial ecosystem in pursuit of sustainability.
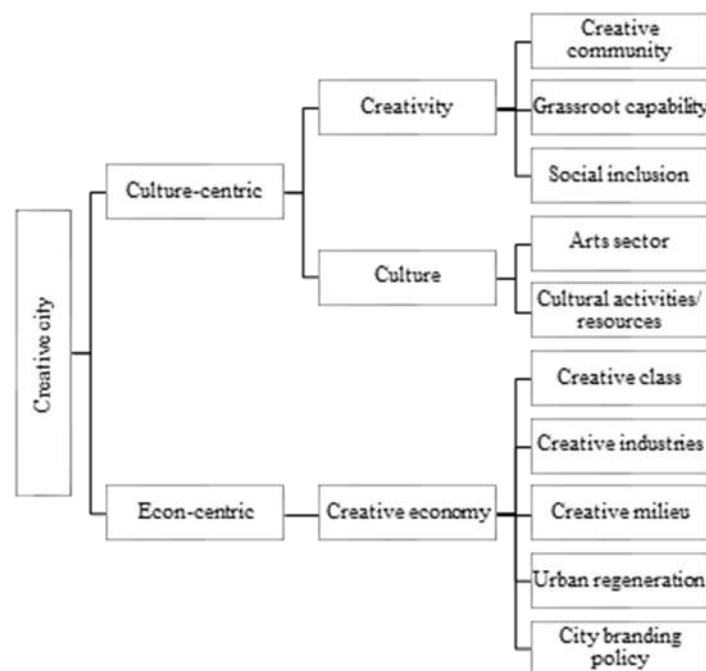


**Figure 2.** The Proposed Framework Definition of The Understanding of a Creative City.

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