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Developing E-Comics Based on Central Kalimantan Cultural Wisdom to Enhance the Local Creative Economy

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Abstract

This study was motivated by the limited availability of learning media that integrate Central Kalimantan's local wisdom with creative economy learning in an engaging and contextual way. It aimed to develop an e-comic based on Central Kalimantan cultural wisdom and to examine its feasibility and student responses as a learning and promotional medium for the creative economy. The study used a research and development approach with the ADDIE model, consisting of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The cultural content focused on Dayak traditional crafts, especially rattan weaving and woven products, presented through a visual narrative. Expert validation produced a mean score of 3.78, indicating that the e-comic was highly feasible in terms of appearance, content, language, and goal relevance. Student responses yielded a mean score of 3.6, indicating positive acceptance in terms of interest, usability, and relevance to the material. These findings show that the developed e-comic is feasible and practical for use in creative economy learning while also introducing local cultural and economic potential. The study implies that culturally grounded digital media can support contextual learning, local culture promotion, and awareness of community-based creative economy opportunities.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the 21st century has transformed the economy, education, and culture. One sector that has grown rapidly through this transformation is the creative economy (Wani et al., 2025). This sector relies on creativity, ideas, and innovation as key resources for generating economic value (Li, 2020; Syafitri & Nisa, 2024). More broadly, the creative economy is also associated with sustainable growth, job creation, and the preservation of cultural identity (Canton, 2021).

Central Kalimantan has significant potential to develop a culture-based creative economy. This region is rich in Dayak cultural heritage, reflected in various art forms, such as rattan crafts, weaving, carving, and woven fabrics. These cultural products possess not only aesthetic but also economic value, potentially making them superior regional commodities. However, in reality, this potential has not been optimally utilized. Many local artisans face challenges in marketing, market access, and product innovation. Furthermore,

the younger generation's low interest in local cultural heritage poses a challenge to preserving and developing the regional creative economy.

On the other hand, digital technology opens new opportunities to introduce and develop local culture-based economic potential (Fadhilah et al., 2024; Mubarok et al., 2024; Susilatun et al., 2023). Using digital media for education and promotion is particularly relevant for younger audiences who are already familiar with visual and mobile platforms (Ayumawarsih & Winarni, 2025). One promising innovation is the use of digital comics (e-comics), which combine text and images to support understanding, motivation, and concept acquisition in learning contexts (Muhaimin et al., 2023; Putra & Milenia, 2021).

This medium does not only present information through an attractive combination of text and images, but also packages cultural and creative economy messages in a contextual and interactive form. Multimedia learning theory also suggests that the combination of visual and verbal elements can increase learner involvement and comprehension compared with conventional media (Mayer, 2020).

In economic education, digital media such as e-comics can support economic literacy and help students connect economic concepts with the realities of local communities (Pamungkas, 2022; Prasetyo & Anggraeni, 2020; Rusmaini, 2023). Through culturally based e-comics, students can learn how local culture may function as a source of creativity, entrepreneurship, and local product development, while also seeing how technology can support regional economic growth.

The primary problem underlying this research is the limited availability of learning and promotional media that can present local cultural values in an engaging, modern, and relevant manner to younger generations. In Central Kalimantan, this issue is particularly urgent because Dayak local wisdom represents an important part of regional identity, yet its transmission is increasingly challenged by modernization among younger generations (Suswandari et al., 2022). At the same time, rattan weaving, as one of the region's traditional crafts, has not been optimally developed through digital media, despite its established role as a local MSME product with economic potential (Nurbudiyani et al., 2019). As a result, students and the wider public may recognize local culture only symbolically, without understanding its potential contribution to entrepreneurship, local product development, and the creative economy.

This study, therefore, deliberately adopts Central Kalimantan local wisdom, particularly Dayak rattan weaving and traditional crafts, as the basis for e-comic development. This choice is not arbitrary. Among many cultural elements that could be used, these forms of local wisdom are especially relevant because they combine cultural representativeness with direct economic applicability. Culturally, they reflect a living Dayak identity in Central Kalimantan (Suswandari et al., 2022). Economically, they already exist as community-based craft products and MSME activities that can be linked to entrepreneurship and local product promotion (Nurbudiyani et al., 2019). Thus, they provide a more functional basis for this study than cultural elements that are primarily ceremonial or symbolic.

The urgency of selecting this local wisdom is also pedagogical. Research shows that locally wisdom-based learning materials make learning more contextual and meaningful by connecting subject matter with students' social and cultural environments (Suryanti et al., 2020; Suarmika et al., 2022). Likewise, studies on digital comics indicate that locally wisdom-based comic media can enhance learning interest and provide contextually relevant learning experiences (Kusumaningrum & Masruro, 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2025). For this reason, integrating Dayak cultural wisdom into an e-comic is expected not only to attract students' attention but also to help them understand economic concepts through examples that are familiar, concrete, and regionally relevant.

Although digital media such as e-comics, videos, and interactive modules have been widely used in education, most existing materials still focus on general learning outcomes, such as motivation, literacy, or conceptual understanding, without systematically

positioning local culture as a bridge between education and regional economic empowerment (Kusumaningrum & Masruro, 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2025). Consequently, students may learn economic concepts in abstract terms but fail to see how local cultural assets can be transformed into creative products and sustainable economic resources within their own region. This indicates a need for contextual learning media that not only teach economics but also strengthen cultural awareness and introduce the practical value of local products.

The novelty of this study lies not in the use of e-comics alone but in the specific way the product is constructed. First, the content centers on Central Kalimantan Dayak local wisdom, particularly rattan weaving and traditional crafts, as concrete examples of local cultural assets. Second, the design integrates that cultural content with creative economy material, so the storyline does not merely introduce culture but also explains entrepreneurship, local products, and regional economic potential. Third, the e-comic is positioned simultaneously as a learning medium and a promotional medium for local economic potential. Thus, the main contribution of this study is the integration of local cultural content, creative economy material, and digital comic design within a single contextual medium. Based on this rationale, the study aims to (1) develop an e-comic based on Central Kalimantan local wisdom, (2) examine its feasibility through expert validation, and (3) analyze student responses to determine its practicality as a learning and promotional medium for strengthening awareness of the local creative economy.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discussion on culturally responsive multimedia learning in economic education by showing how local wisdom can be embedded in a digital narrative medium. Practically, it offers a prototype digital product that can be used by lecturers and local institutions to introduce culture-linked economic opportunities in Central Kalimantan.

METHODS

This study employed a research and development (R&D) approach using the ADDIE model, comprising analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The model was chosen because it offers a systematic framework for producing and revising instructional media through iterative stages (Sugiyono, 2019). The research was conducted in the Economic Education Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Palangkaraya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.

The participants were undergraduate students of the Economic Education Study Program who had accessed and used the developed e-comic. A total of 50 students participated in the quantitative phase by completing the response questionnaire. In addition, 8 students were involved in interviews or focus group discussions (FGDs) to obtain deeper qualitative feedback. Participants were selected using purposive sampling with the criteria that they were active students, familiar with digital media, and had read the developed e-comic.

The development procedure followed the five ADDIE stages. In the analysis stage, the researcher identified the lack of locally grounded digital media in creative economy learning, the limited student exposure to the economic value of Dayak crafts, and the need for visually engaging media suited to digitally oriented learners. An audience analysis was then used to map students' familiarity with digital media and their preference for visual-narrative learning. Based on this stage, Dayak rattan weaving and traditional woven crafts were selected as the core content because they represent both cultural identity and existing local economic products. In the design stage, the storyline, character development, storyboard, narrative structure, and visual layout were prepared using multimedia learning principles (Mayer, 2020). In the development stage, the e-comic was produced and then validated by two media/design experts and one material expert. Two media/design experts were involved to assess visual layout, readability, navigation, character presentation, and

overall user experience, whereas the material expert evaluated the accuracy and relevance of the cultural and creative economy content to the learning objectives. Revisions were made based on their suggestions before implementation. In the implementation stage, the validated e-comic was distributed digitally to students, who then completed the response questionnaire. The evaluation stage in this study was formative rather than experimental; it focused on expert feedback, student responses, and identified revisions related to content depth, usability, and perceived relevance to local creative economy material.

Data collection used quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were obtained from expert validation sheets and student response questionnaires. The expert validation instrument consisted of 20 items on a 4-point scale (1 = Not Appropriate to 4 = Very Appropriate) covering visual appearance, character design, navigation, content suitability, language, and relevance to the learning objectives. The student response questionnaire consisted of 18 items on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree) covering interest, ease of use, clarity of cultural content, relevance to creative economy learning, awareness of local products, and overall satisfaction. A four-point scale was used to encourage clearer responses and minimize neutral choices (Sugiyono, 2019).

Content validity was established through expert judgment. The validators reviewed the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of each item, and revisions were made accordingly. The reliability of the student questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding $\alpha = 0.87$, which indicates good internal consistency.

Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively by calculating the mean score for each aspect and the overall product score. The resulting means were then interpreted using the validity and practicality criteria presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Validity and practicality criteria

Mean Score Range	Validity Category	Practicality Category
3.25 – 4.00	Very Valid	Very Practical
2.50 – 3.24	Valid	Practical
1.75 – 2.49	Less Valid	Less Practical
1.00 – 1.74	Not Valid	Not Practical

(Adapted from Akbar, 2017)

Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs were analyzed thematically through data familiarization, initial coding, theme development, and interpretation. The qualitative findings were used to support and explain the quantitative results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to develop an e-comic based on Central Kalimantan local wisdom, particularly Dayak traditional handicrafts, as a learning and promotional medium for the local creative economy. The development process followed the ADDIE model, consisting of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The resulting product was intended not only as a digital learning medium but also as a means to introduce local cultural values and strengthen awareness of the regional creative economy's potential.

Analysis

At the analysis stage, three main needs were identified. First, creative economy learning in the local context had not yet been supported by digital media that specifically introduced Central Kalimantan cultural products in a structured and engaging way. Second, Dayak crafts such as rattan weaving were widely recognized as cultural symbols, yet their economic value as local products and MSME-based creative commodities was not sufficiently emphasized in learning materials. Third, students were already accustomed to digital and visual learning formats, indicating the need for media that were concise, attractive, and contextually relevant. These findings confirmed that a digital comic could serve as an appropriate medium to connect cultural content with creative economy material.

The audience analysis further showed that the target users were undergraduate students who were familiar with smartphones, social media, and visual-based content, so they needed media that were easy to access and not overly text-heavy. This stage also informed the choice of narrative structure, character-based storytelling, and culturally familiar illustrations. As a result, the analysis stage did not only determine the topic of the e-comic but also defined the design direction, namely a visual narrative that introduces Dayak local wisdom while linking it to entrepreneurship, local products, and regional economic potential.

Design

Based on the analysis results, the design stage focused on preparing the story scenario, character development, narrative flow, and visual concept of the e-comic. The design emphasized the representation of Dayak cultural elements in an attractive and accessible form for students. In addition to the storyline and illustrations, the e-comic was designed to present examples of local products and creative economy activities related to traditional crafts in Central Kalimantan. Thus, the design stage did not focus solely on aesthetics but also on ensuring that cultural and economic content could be presented in an integrated, understandable narrative. The cover and characters in the e-comic as well as the contents of the e-comic are shown in Figure 1.

(a)

(b)

Figure 1 (a) Cover and characters in e-comic and (b) Contents of e-comic

Development

During development, the e-comic was produced according to the prepared design. This stage included the arrangement of comic panels, illustrations, narrative text, and supporting visual elements. After the product was completed, it was validated by two media/design experts and one material expert to assess its feasibility in terms of appearance, content,

navigation, language, and relevance to the learning objectives. The results of the electronic comic validation are shown in Figure 2.

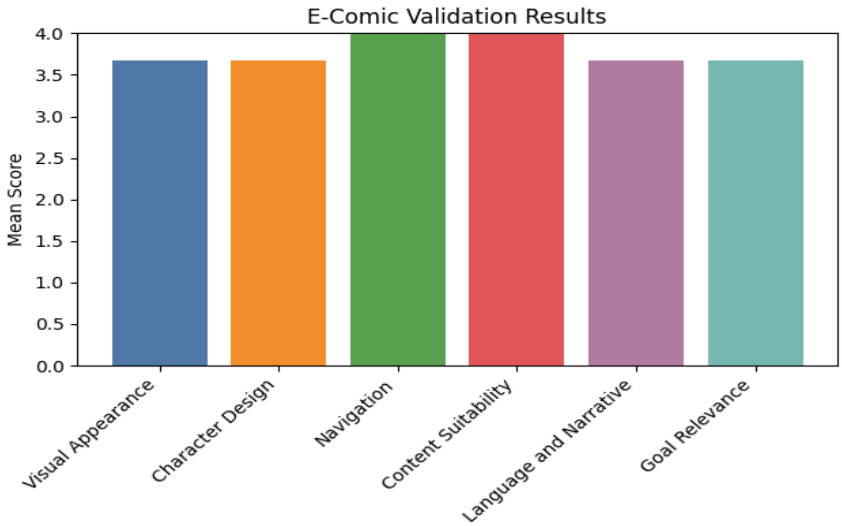

Figure 2 E-comic validation results

Figure 2 shows that the Central Kalimantan local-wisdom-based e-comic received an overall mean score of 3.78 on a four-point scale, placing it in the highly feasible category. This result indicates that the developed product met the expected quality standards and was feasible for limited implementation. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that digital comic media generally achieve high feasibility after expert validation and can be used as learning media in classroom contexts (Reinita et al., 2023; Kusumaningrum & Masruro, 2022).

The visual display aspect received a score of 3.67, indicating that the e-comic's visual quality was considered very good. Nevertheless, the validators suggested improving contrast in several panels to enhance readability and adding light animation to enrich the user experience. This finding confirms that visual design has an important role not only in attracting readers' attention but also in supporting comprehension and sustained engagement. In educational comics, visual clarity and visual literacy are closely related to the reader's ability to follow the narrative and understand the intended message (Golding & Verrier, 2021).

In terms of content, the validators considered the material relevant and appropriate. However, they recommended adding deeper explanations of the symbolism and cultural philosophy behind the Dayak motifs and handicrafts presented in the e-comic. This result suggests that the product was already feasible as a learning medium but still required enrichment in cultural depth so that students could understand local products not only as visual objects but also as carriers of cultural meaning. This aspect is important because local wisdom-based learning materials are more meaningful when they connect knowledge content with the socio-cultural context familiar to learners (Suryanti et al., 2020).

The goal relevance aspect also received a score of 3.67, indicating that the connection between the e-comic and the strengthening of the local creative economy was already evident. However, it could be further emphasized through scenes illustrating entrepreneurial practices and local product development. This finding is significant because it shows that the e-comic has practical potential not only as an instructional medium but also as a medium for introducing local economic opportunities. In Central Kalimantan, traditional rattan weaving is not only a cultural expression but also a local economic activity with potential for further development (Nurbudiyani et al., 2019). Overall, the validation results indicate that the e-comic is highly feasible and ready for a limited user trial.

Implementation

After the product had passed expert validation, the implementation stage was carried out through a limited trial involving students as the target users. At this stage, the validated e-comic was distributed digitally, and students were asked to read the product before completing the response questionnaire. The implementation was intended to capture users' perceptions of the e-comic in terms of interest, usability, language clarity, and relevance of the material to the local creative economy. The results of student responses are shown in Figure 3.

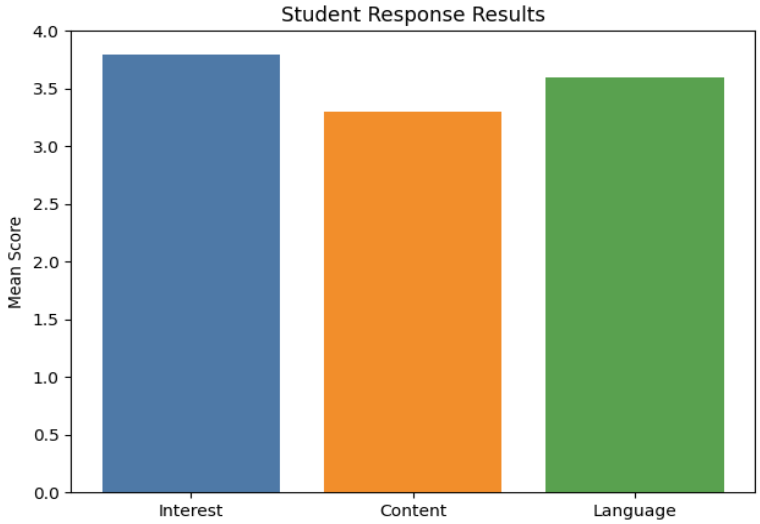

Figure 3 Student response results

Figure 3 shows that the interest aspect obtained the highest score, namely 3.8, indicating that students perceived the e-comic as highly engaging. However, this result should not be interpreted merely as a response to attractive visual design. Rather, it reflects the interaction among multimodal presentation, motivational design, and cultural context.

This finding can be explained through a synthesis of multimedia learning theory, motivational design, and local wisdom-based contextual learning. From the perspective of multimedia learning, the combination of concise text, illustrations, and narrative sequencing supports students in processing verbal and visual information through complementary channels, thereby facilitating comprehension and reducing unnecessary cognitive load (Mayer, 2020). From a motivational design perspective, visual appeal and character-based storytelling can attract learners' attention and sustain their curiosity, which are essential for generating learning interest (Keller, 2010). However, these effects became more meaningful because the e-comic also presented culturally familiar content. The use of Dayak motifs, handicrafts, and local product narratives allowed students to connect new concepts to cultural elements recognizable within their own regional context.

Thus, the high interest score did not simply indicate aesthetic preference but suggested that the e-comic successfully integrated multimodal representation with culturally meaningful content. This aligns with studies showing that digital comics can increase learning interest when designed in a contextual and engaging manner (Kusumaningrum & Masruro, 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2025). In addition, locally wisdom-based learning materials tend to strengthen students' engagement because they make learning more relevant to their own social and cultural environments (Suryanti et al., 2020). In this study, contextual relevance was not merely decorative; rather, it served as a bridge through which students could understand the relationship among culture, local products, and the potential of the creative economy.

This means that the developed e-comic should be understood not only as a visually attractive learning medium but also as a contextually grounded digital medium that introduces economic concepts through local cultural resources. Compared with previous studies that mainly discuss digital comics as tools for motivation or conceptual understanding, the present study indicates that e-comics may also support awareness of regional economic potential when local wisdom is integrated into the narrative structure. Therefore, the positive student response reflects the product's practical feasibility and promising use as a learning and promotional medium for the local creative economy.

Evaluation

In this study, the evaluation stage was formative and was used to identify revisions needed after validation and the limited user trial. Therefore, the evaluation results should not be interpreted as evidence of instructional effectiveness or as proof that the product directly improved the local creative economy. Instead, they indicate the aspects of the product that still require refinement before wider implementation.

Three main points emerged from this evaluation. First, the depth of cultural explanation still needs strengthening, particularly regarding the meaning and symbolism of Dayak motifs and crafts. Second, the e-comic would benefit from additional interactive features, such as short quizzes or reflection tasks, to reinforce comprehension. Third, accessibility and dissemination remain limited because the product has not yet been distributed through broader digital platforms. Several visual elements also need minor improvement in contrast and text readability for smaller screens.

These findings show that the current product has reached the stage of being feasible and positively received, but further development is still needed before claims about learning effectiveness or broader economic impact can be made. Future work should therefore extend the product through richer cultural explanation, additional interactive features, wider platform dissemination, and, most importantly, experimental testing to examine its effect on learning outcomes and awareness of local creative economy potential.

CONCLUSION

This study developed and formatively evaluated an e-comic based on Central Kalimantan cultural wisdom as a learning and promotional medium for the local creative economy. Expert validation produced a mean score of 3.78, indicating that the product was highly feasible in terms of design, content, language, and usability. Student responses produced a mean score of 3.6, showing that the e-comic was positively received and considered relevant, engaging, and practical for learning. These findings indicate that the developed e-comic is suitable for limited use as a contextual digital learning medium and as an introductory medium for local cultural and economic potential.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discussion of culturally responsive multimedia learning by showing how local wisdom and creative economy material can be integrated in one digital narrative product. Practically, it offers a prototype that may be used by educators and local institutions to introduce Dayak cultural products in relation to entrepreneurship and local economic awareness. Nevertheless, this study was limited to product development, feasibility, and user responses on a small scale; it did not test effectiveness through an experimental design and did not measure direct economic impact. Future studies should involve larger samples, broader cultural content, and experimental designs to test effects on learning outcomes, economic literacy, and awareness of local creative economy opportunities.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Conceptualization, AP; methodology, AP and MRH; data collection, AP, MRH, and MNA; formal analysis, AP and MRH; writing—original draft preparation, AP; writing—review and editing, AP, MRH, and MNA. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) solely for language editing and grammar refinement. The authors developed all scientific ideas, data interpretation, and conclusions. The authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript and take full responsibility for its content.

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