

# The Development of Creative Economy Research in Southeast Asia Based on Bibliometric Analysis and Thematic Trends 2013–2024

Loso Judijanto  
<sup>1</sup>IPOSS Jakarta

---

## Article Info

---

### Article history:

Received Feb, 2026

Revised Feb, 2026

Accepted Feb, 2026

---

### Keywords:

Creative Economy, Bibliometric Analysis, VOSviewer, Southeast Asia, Research Trends, Creative Industries.

---

## ABSTRACT

---

The creative economy has become a strategic sector in economic development in various Southeast Asian countries due to its contribution to innovation, job creation, and strengthening cultural identity. As academic attention to this topic increases, scientific mapping is needed to understand research developments, collaboration patterns, and emerging thematic trends in the literature. This study aims to analyze the development of research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia during the period 2013–2024 using a bibliometric approach. Research data was obtained from the Scopus database and analyzed using VOSviewer software to map the collaboration network of authors, institutions, countries, and the emergence of research keywords. The analysis results show that research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia has experienced a significant increase, with a primary focus on the theme of economic development, which is closely related to topics such as sustainability, commerce, finance, policymaking, and cultural industries. Visualization of the collaboration network indicates the existence of collaboration. Cross-border research, particularly between Southeast Asian and European countries, is also being conducted, although collaboration remains relatively limited. Thematic trend analysis also indicates a shift in research focus from economic development to more specific issues such as creative industry competitiveness, public policy, and the development of creative subsectors such as animation and cultural industries. The findings of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the dynamics of creative economy research in Southeast Asia and open up opportunities for further, more in-depth research on digital transformation, creative entrepreneurship, and regional economic integration to support future creative economy development.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](#) license.*



---

### Corresponding Author:

Name: Loso Judijanto

Institution Address: IPOSS Jakarta

e-mail: [losojudijantobumn@gmail.com](mailto:losojudijantobumn@gmail.com)

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, the creative economy has emerged as a major force in the global economic structure. This term refers to economic activities based on individual creativity, skills, and talents that have the potential to create wealth and jobs through the

utilization of intellectual property.[1]In Southeast Asia, this phenomenon is gaining increasing academic and public policy attention due to its significant potential for post-crisis economic recovery, rapid urbanization, and widespread penetration of digital technologies.[2]Rapid social and

economic changes are driving the government and stakeholders to understand the dynamics and contribution of the creative sector to national and regional economic growth. With the emergence of various creative industry clusters such as design, fashion, film, music, video games, and digital technology, the demand for intensive empirical studies is increasing, including mapping key themes and research development trends in this region.[2], [3].

Southeast Asia has diverse socio-cultural characteristics, which simultaneously present both opportunities and challenges for the development of the creative economy. Countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam have integrated the creative economy into their national development strategies, both through regulatory support and incentives for creative industry players.[4]This has sparked research aimed at understanding how these policies contribute to innovation, competitiveness, and economic equity. However, despite growing research interest, disparities in the intensity and focus of studies remain across countries within the region. Some countries excel in specific areas of study, while others lag relatively behind in scientific productivity and international research collaboration.[5].

Along with the rapid development of information and communication technology over the past decade, research on the creative economy has also evolved. Academics are discussing not only policy aspects but also the dynamics of digitalization, product innovation, new business models, and the integration of the creative economy with high-tech sectors.[6], [7]Scientific publications published in international journals and conference proceedings are important sources for understanding how knowledge about the creative economy is evolving, including the most popular topics, interdisciplinary connections, and future research directions. Bibliometric analysis is an effective tool for measurably identifying the characteristics of this scientific literature, through measuring citations, collaboration networks, and keyword trends.[8].

While there are a number of previous studies mapping specific aspects of the creative economy, comprehensive longitudinal reviews of academic developments in Southeast Asia are still limited. Some survey-based or qualitative studies provide in-depth insights into the experiences of industry players or the impact of specific policies, but they lack insight into the overall dynamics of scholarly research over time.[9]Thus, there is a strong need to understand publication patterns, thematic focuses, and the evolution of research trends over a relatively long period (2013–2024). This timeframe is important because it encompasses the transformative phase of digitalization and the region's response to economic changes following the global crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, bibliometric mapping can also reveal the relationships between researchers, institutions, and countries that contribute to the production of knowledge on the creative economy. In the era of cross-border research collaboration, identifying collaborative networks is highly relevant for fostering more effective and strategic research synergies.[8]At the Southeast Asian level, international collaboration can enrich perspectives and accelerate the adoption of best practices from diverse socioeconomic contexts. By understanding these collaboration patterns, policymakers, academics, and practitioners can formulate more inclusive and sustainable creative economy development strategies in the future.

Finally, thematic research trends play a crucial role in highlighting topics of primary concern during a given period. For example, whether research focuses more on digitalization, human capital development, economic impacts, regulatory challenges, or creative marketing strategies in the digital economy. Identifying these thematic trends not only helps researchers understand the dynamics of academic discussions but also guides the focus of future research to ensure it remains relevant to real-world needs and regional economic development.

Based on the above background, this research is formulated through the following main question: How has research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia developed during the period 2013 to 2024 in terms of the quantity of publications, citation patterns, collaborations between researchers and countries, and the main thematic trends emerging in the scientific literature? This issue is important because to date there has been no comprehensive longitudinal study that combines bibliometric methods with thematic analysis to describe the creative economy research landscape in this increasingly dynamic region.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with bibliometric methods combined with thematic trend analysis to map the development of creative economy research in Southeast Asia during the period 2013–2024. The bibliometric approach was chosen because it can provide a systematic overview of the structure and dynamics of scientific literature through measuring quantitative indicators such as the number of publications, the number of citations, the h-index, and collaboration patterns between authors and institutions. [10]. Furthermore, thematic analysis was used to identify the evolution of research topics based on the emergence and relevance of keywords used in scientific publications. By combining these two approaches, this study not only presents quantitative trends but also comprehensively maps the development of the substance of creative economy studies.

Research data was obtained from internationally reputable scientific databases that provide publication metadata, such as title, abstract, keywords, year of publication, author affiliation, and number of citations. Inclusion criteria included journal articles, conference proceedings, and other scientific documents published between 2013 and 2024 with primary keywords related to "creative economy," "creative industries," and other relevant terms combined with the names of Southeast Asian countries. The selection process was carried out through a filtering stage based on topic relevance, data duplication, and suitability of the study area. Next, the cleaned data was analyzed using bibliometric software such as VOSviewer to generate visualizations of collaboration networks, co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence. The analysis was conducted descriptively and exploratively to examine publication growth patterns, geographic distribution, and the intensity of collaboration between countries within the region.

For thematic trend analysis, this study employed keyword co-occurrence analysis and thematic evolution analysis to identify key theme clusters and shifts in research focus over time. The research period was divided into several phases to demonstrate the dynamics of topic development before and after significant events such as accelerated digitalization and the global pandemic. The resulting visualization and theme mapping were then substantively interpreted to understand the relationship between research developments and the socioeconomic context of the Southeast Asian region.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Visualization of Author Network

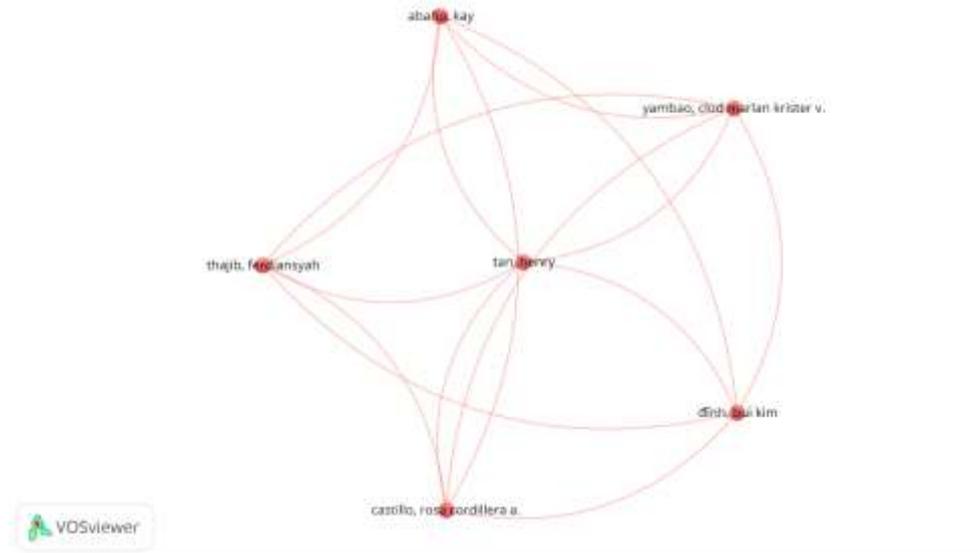


Figure 1. Author Visualization

Source: Processed Data

Figure 1 shows the collaboration pattern among several researchers who contributed to the study of the creative economy in Southeast Asia during the period 2013–2024. In this network, Tan, Henry appears to be the most central actor because he has connections with almost all other authors, such as Abano, Kay, Yambao, Clod Marlan Krister V., Dinh, Bui Kim, Castillo, Rosa Cordillera A., and Thajib, Ferdiansyah. This central position indicates that Tan, Henry plays a key role in the research collaboration network, indicating a significant contribution to the development of literature related to the

creative economy in the region. Furthermore, the interconnected relationships between the authors reflect the existence of research collaborations across institutions or countries, indicating that the study of the creative economy in Southeast Asia is developing through relatively close academic cooperation even though the number of researchers in this network is still limited. This fairly dense network structure also indicates that research in this field is still within a relatively small scientific community but has a fairly strong level of collaboration.

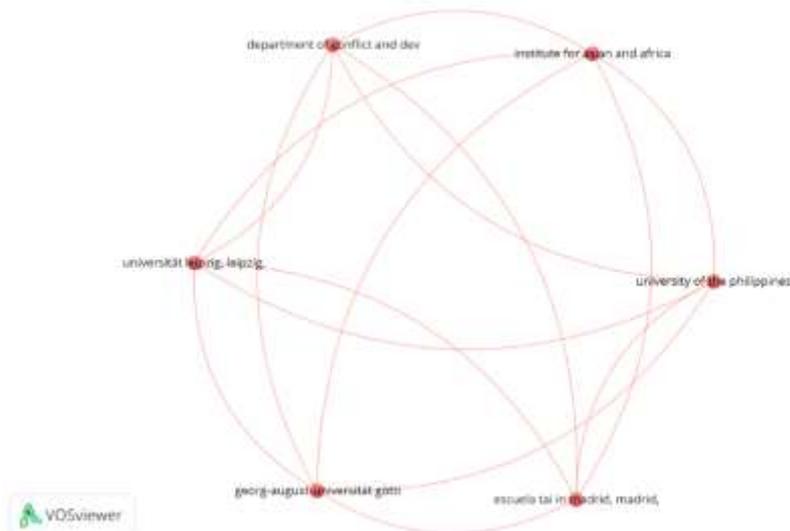


Figure 2. Institution Visualization

Source: Processed Data

Figure 2 shows the employment relationship. There are similarities between several academic institutions involved in creative economy research in Southeast Asia. Some institutions visible in this network include the University of the Philippines, Universität Leipzig, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Escuela TAI Madrid, the Institute for Asian and African Studies, and the Department of Conflict and Development. The lines connecting the nodes indicate cross-institutional, and even cross-

national, research collaborations, indicating that studies on the creative economy in Southeast Asia are conducted not only by local researchers but also involve academic institutions from Europe. Among these institutions, the University of the Philippines appears to have quite extensive connections with other institutions, demonstrating its important role as an active research center on this topic.

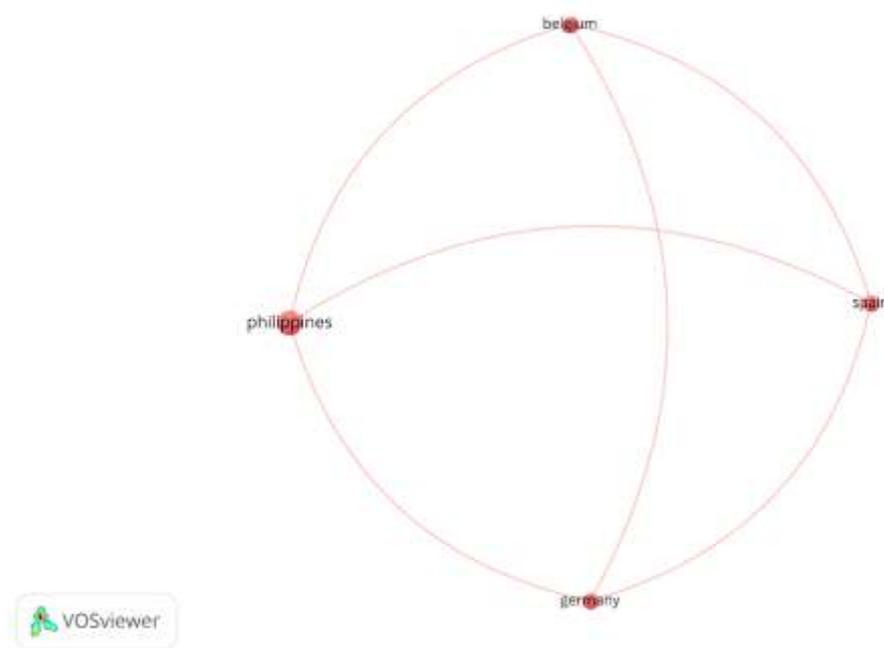


Figure 3. Country Visualization  
Source: Processed Data

Figure 3 shows the pattern of collaboration between countries in research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia. The network demonstrates the involvement of four key countries—the Philippines, Belgium, Spain, and Germany—connected through scholarly collaborations. The map shows the Philippines as one of the countries with collaborative relationships with European countries like Belgium, Spain, and Germany, demonstrating that research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia is not only developed regionally but also involves international academic partnerships. This interconnectedness reflects the exchange of knowledge, methodological approaches, and multidisciplinary perspectives between

researchers from Asia and Europe. Overall, the relatively small but interconnected network structure suggests that international collaboration on the creative economy is still limited to a few countries but has significant potential to expand as global attention to the role of the creative economy in economic development and cultural innovation increases.

Citation Analysis

Table 1. Literature with the Most Citations

Citations	Authors and Year	Title
44	[11]	Coworking and sustainable business model innovation in young firms
21	[12]	The fluid city, urbanism as process
20	[13]	Role of green financing and financial inclusion to develop the cleaner environment for macroeconomic stability: Inter-temporal analysis of ASEAN economies
20	[14]	When the creative class strikes back: State-led creativity and its discontents
17	[15]	The Political Economy of Transnational Governance: China and Southeast Asia in the 21st Century
15	[16]	The value of the underground: punk, politics, and creative urbanism in Bandung, Indonesia
9	[17]	Emerging Economies of Southeast Asia: Achieving and increasing radical innovations through collaborating with buyers and suppliers by fostering trust: The Case of Viet Nam
8	[18]	Crafting innovation hubs: Future cities and global challenges
7	[19]	Routledge handbook of cultural and creative industries in Asia
6	[20]	Lessons learned from studying public initiatives to support energy efficiency finance in Thailand from 1992 to 2014

Source: Scopus

Keyword Visualization

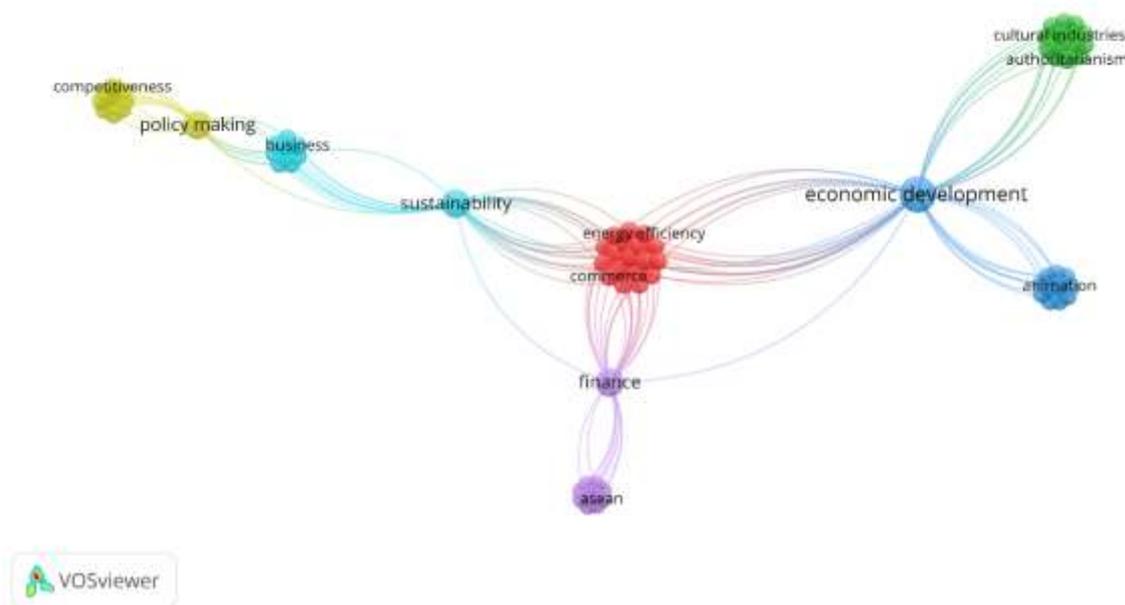


Figure 4. Network Visualization

Source: Processed Data

Figure 4 shows the thematic structure of research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia. This network displays several key clusters interconnected through central keywords such as economic development, sustainability, commerce, and finance. Economic development's central position

indicates that most creative economy research in the region focuses on the creative sector's contribution to economic growth, regional development, and improving social welfare. The strong interconnections between keywords demonstrate that creative economy studies are multidisciplinary and involve

various economic, social, and policy perspectives. The first visible cluster relates to the theme of economic development and the creative industry, demonstrated by the relationship between economic development, animation, and cultural industries. This cluster illustrates how creative industry subsectors such as animation and cultural industries are crucial in driving the growth of the creative economy in Southeast Asia. Research within this cluster generally addresses the contribution of creative industries to local economic development, strengthening cultural identity, and increasing the competitiveness of creativity-based industries.

The second cluster relates to sustainability issues and business practices, as demonstrated by the interplay between the keywords sustainability, business, and policymaking. This demonstrates that creative economy research is also beginning to integrate sustainability perspectives, both from an environmental perspective and long-

term economic sustainability. Furthermore, the presence of the keywords policymaking and competitiveness indicates that government policy plays a crucial role in driving the growth of the creative sector, particularly through regulation, innovation support, and strengthening the creative industry ecosystem. The next cluster focuses on the economic and trade dimensions, demonstrated by the interconnectedness between commerce, energy efficiency, and finance. This theme reflects that creative economy research also addresses broader economic aspects such as creative trade, resource efficiency, and financing mechanisms for creative industry players. The association with the keyword ASEAN indicates that some research places the creative economy within the context of regional economic integration and cooperation. The same between countries in the Southeast Asia region.

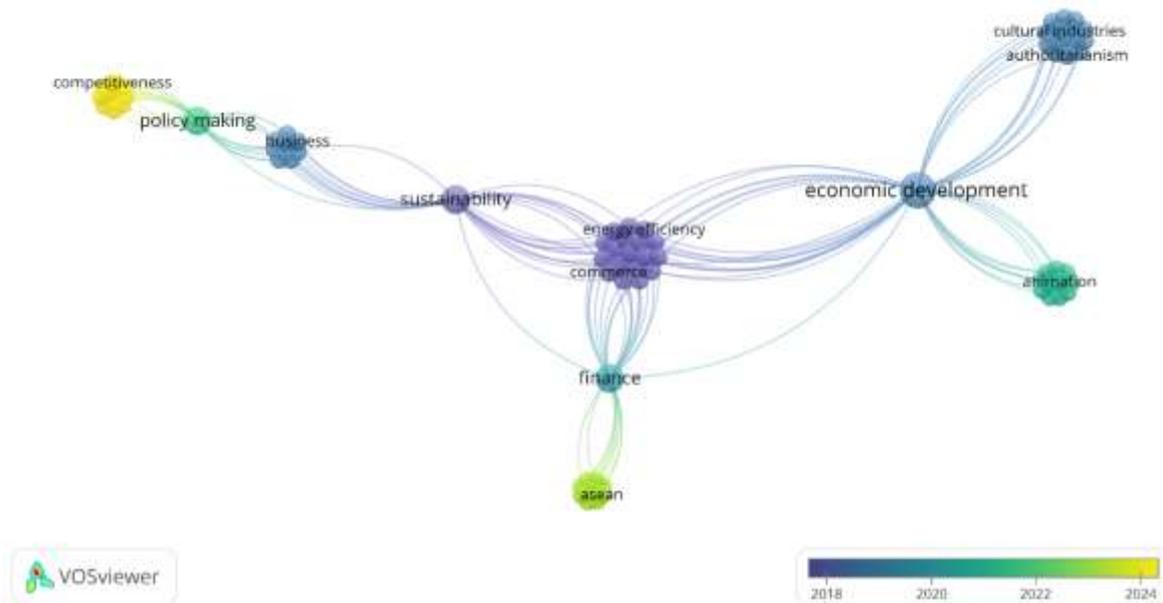


Figure 5. Overlay Visualization  
Source: Processed Data

Figure 5 shows the temporal development of research themes in the creative economy in Southeast Asia during the period 2013–2024. The color at each node

represents the average year of publication, with blue indicating themes that appeared earlier in the literature, while green to yellow indicate relatively new themes. In this map,

the keyword economic development appears as one of the core themes that has long been a focus of research and has strong links with various other topics such as commerce, finance, and sustainability. This indicates that the study of the creative economy in Southeast Asia was initially associated with its contribution to economic development and trade dynamics.

Over time, research has shifted to more specific and multidisciplinary issues. Themes such as sustainability, commerce, and energy efficiency have emerged as a bridge between economic development and business and sustainability. This reflects growing academic attention to how the creative economy sector can develop sustainably, both in terms of the environment, resource efficiency, and integration with the broader

economic system. Furthermore, the link between finance and ASEAN suggests that some studies are beginning to place the creative economy within the context of regional economic integration and financing mechanisms for the creative sector. In more recent periods, themes such as policymaking, competitiveness, and animation have emerged with greater prominence, signaling increased attention to public policy, the competitiveness of the creative industry, and the development of specific creative subsectors such as animation and the cultural industry. Furthermore, the presence of the keyword "cultural industries" indicates that recent research is increasingly emphasizing the role of the cultural industry as a crucial component of the creative economy.

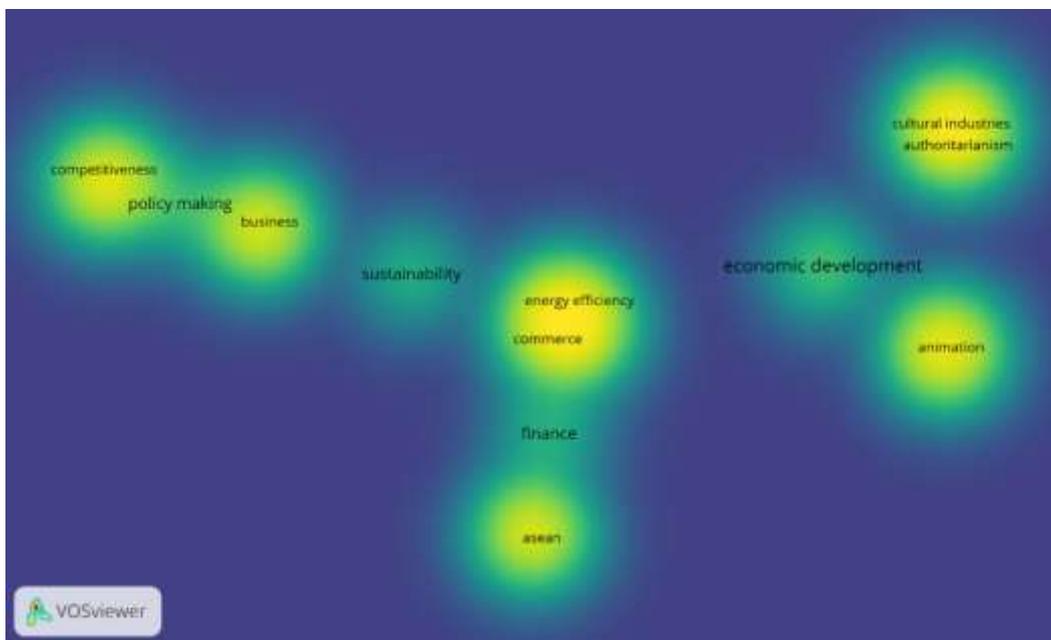


Figure 6. Density Visualization

Source: Processed Data

Figure 6 illustrates the intensity or density of keyword occurrences in creative economy research in Southeast Asia. Yellow areas indicate the most frequently occurring keywords with strong links to other topics, while green to blue areas indicate lower intensity. In this map, keywords such as commerce, energy efficiency, animation, policymaking, and cultural industries appear to be in high-density areas, indicating that these topics were a primary focus in the

creative economy research literature during the analyzed period. Furthermore, the keyword "economic development" also appears quite dominant, indicating that most research positions the creative economy as part of a broader economic development strategy. On the other hand, several keywords, such as "sustainability," "finance," and "ASEAN," are in relatively lower-density areas, indicating that these topics are beginning to emerge in research but have not

yet become a primary focus compared to other themes. This indicates opportunities for future research, particularly in examining the relationship between the creative economy and sustainability, the creative industry financing system, and regional economic integration in the ASEAN region.

### Discussion

The results of the bibliometric analysis in this study indicate that studies on the creative economy in Southeast Asia experienced quite significant development during the period 2013–2024, both in terms of the number of publications and the diversity of research themes. Based on keyword mapping using VOSviewer, the concept of economic development emerged as a central theme connecting various other topics such as commerce, finance, sustainability, and cultural industries. This indicates that most studies position the creative economy as a crucial instrument in driving economic growth and regional development. In the Southeast Asian context, the creative economy sector is often viewed as a source of innovation, job creation, and strengthening cultural identity that can increase a country's economic competitiveness.

Furthermore, the analysis also shows that the role of public policy and governance is a key focus in the creative economy literature. The emergence of keywords such as policymaking and competitiveness indicates that many studies highlight the importance of government support in developing the creative sector. Policies that support innovation, strengthen the creative industry ecosystem, and develop digital economic infrastructure are highly influential factors in the development of this sector. In various Southeast Asian countries, governments have developed various strategies to encourage creative economy growth, such as the development of culture-based industries, creative business incubation, and strengthening creative entrepreneurship at the local and national levels.

The findings of this study also demonstrate that sustainability issues are gaining increasing attention in creative

economy studies. Keywords such as sustainability and energy efficiency indicate that research is no longer solely focused on economic growth but is also beginning to consider aspects of environmental sustainability and resource efficiency. This aligns with the growing global focus on sustainable development, where the creative economy sector is seen as having the potential to integrate innovation, creativity, and environmentally friendly business practices. Thus, the creative economy is seen not only as a source of economic growth but also as part of a more sustainable development strategy.

In addition to the sustainability dimension, this study also shows that economic and financial aspects are crucial to the creative economy discourse. Keywords such as finance, commerce, and ASEAN indicate that several studies have begun to discuss financing mechanisms, market development, and regional economic integration in supporting the growth of the creative sector. For creative industry players, access to financing and markets is a key factor in business development and increasing competitiveness. Therefore, various studies emphasize the importance of developing an inclusive financing system and strengthening regional economic cooperation to support the expansion of the creative industry in Southeast Asia.

The overlay visualization also shows a shift in research focus over time. Early on, research focused primarily on the relationship between the creative economy and economic development and the cultural industry. However, in recent years, research attention has shifted to more specific issues such as creative industry competitiveness, public policy, and the development of specific creative subsectors like animation. This shift demonstrates the shift in creative economy research from conceptual studies to more applied, sector-specific research.

An analysis of the collaborative network of authors and institutions also shows that research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia involves cross-border academic collaboration. Several institutions from the Southeast Asian region collaborate

with academic institutions in Europe, such as those in Germany and Spain. This collaboration demonstrates that the topic of the creative economy has global relevance and attracts the attention of researchers from various countries. This international collaboration allows for knowledge exchange, a wider variety of methodological perspectives, and strengthens the quality of research in the creative economy field. However, the relatively limited collaborative network also indicates that the development of creative economy research in the region still has room for expansion. Several countries in Southeast Asia are still under-engaged in international research collaboration. Therefore, increasing research collaboration among ASEAN countries could be an important strategy to enrich the literature and generate a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of the creative economy in the region. Broader collaboration could also help build stronger research networks and encourage innovation in creative economy development.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of a bibliometric analysis of publications on the creative

economy in Southeast Asia during the period 2013–2024, it can be concluded that research in this field shows increasing development with an increasingly diverse and multidisciplinary thematic structure. Mapping using VOSviewer shows that the topic of economic development is a center of attention in the literature, connecting various important issues such as sustainability, commerce, finance, policymaking, and cultural industries. Furthermore, the analysis results also reveal the existence of research collaborations across countries and institutions, although the collaborative network is still relatively limited. Thematic trends show a shift from the initial focus on economic development to more specific studies such as public policy, the competitiveness of the creative industry, and the development of creative subsectors such as animation and cultural industries. Research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia continues to develop as a strategic field of study that not only contributes to academic understanding but also provides important implications for policy development, industrial innovation, and sustainable economic development in the region.

#### REFERENCE

- [1] I. Meilani Fajarsari, "The Mindset of Msme Actors Towards Online Loan Application (Using The Rubicon Model Perspective)," *Am. J. Econ. Manag. Bus.*, vol. 2, no. 7, pp. 253–258, 2023, doi: 10.58631/ajemb.v2i7.47.
- [2] FTI Azhana, M. Setiawan, L. Susanti, MR Zakaria, RRAK Syafaat, and N. Agustiniingsih, "Concept of Social Entrepreneurship in the Development of Creative Economy Tourism in Indonesia (Case Study: Cirende Village)," in *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, IOP Publishing, 2024, p. 12073.
- [3] L. Kong, "Ambitions of a global city: arts, culture and creative economy in 'Post-Crisis' Singapore," in *Cultural Policy in East Asia*, Routledge, 2015, pp. 19–34.
- [4] C. De Beukelaer, "The UNESCO/UNDP 2013 creative economy report: perks and perils of an evolving agenda," *J. Arts Manag. Law, Soc.*, vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 90–100, 2014.
- [5] JM Muchira, "Digital media and creative economy potential on youth employment in Kenya: a grounded theory perspective," *Inf. Learn. Sci.*, vol. 124, no. 5/6, pp. 168–193, 2023.
- [6] NA Wibowo, EJ Wahyudi, L. Ismawati, A. Hermawan, and LW Wardana, "Opportunities and challenges of digital transformation for creative economy development: Study literature review," *Int. J. Business, Law, Educ.*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1369–1380, 2024.
- [7] H. Gao, "The Impact of Digital Economy Development on the Performance of Digital Creative Enterprises," *Financ. Res. Lett.*, p. 107761, 2025.
- [8] Y. Mayasari and T. Chandra, "Social capital for knowledge management system of the creative industry," *J. Enterprising Communities People Places Glob. Econ.*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 481–494, 2020.
- [9] DN Kusumaningrum, "Creative Economy: Reviewing Global Political Narratives," *J. Islam. World Polit.*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 46–61, 2024.

- [10] M. Aria and C. Cuccurullo, "A brief introduction to bibliometrix," *J. Informetr.*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 959–975, 2017.
- [11] S. Cheah and Y.-P. Ho, "Coworking and sustainable business model innovation in young firms," *Sustainability*, vol. 11, no. 10, p. 2959, 2019.
- [12] MP Leadbetter, "The fluid city, urbanism as process," *World Archaeol.*, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 137–157, 2021.
- [13] HB Saydaliev and L. Chin, "Role of green financing and financial inclusion to develop the cleaner environment for macroeconomic stability: Inter-temporal analysis of ASEAN economies," *Econ. Chang. Restruct.*, vol. 56, no. 6, pp. 3839–3859, 2023.
- [14] JD Luger, "When the creative class strikes back: State-led creativity and its discontents," *Geoforum*, vol. 106, pp. 330–339, 2019.
- [15] H. Liu, *The political economy of transnational governance: China and Southeast Asia in the 21st century*. Routledge, 2021.
- [16] S. Martin-Iverson, "The value of the underground: Punk, politics, and creative urbanism in Bandung, Indonesia," *Cult. Stud.*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 110–135, 2021.
- [17] NT Mai Anh, L. Hui, and VD Khoa, "Emerging Economies of Southeast Asia: Achieving and increasing radical innovations through collaborating with buyers and suppliers by fostering trust: the Case of Viet Nam," *J. Business-to-bus. Mark.*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 357–372, 2018.
- [18] M.-H. Chou, T. Erkkilä, and J. Mölsä, "Crafting innovation hubs: Future cities and global challenges," *Br. J. Polit. Int. Relations*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 694–717, 2024.
- [19] L. Lim and H.-K. Lee, *Routledge handbook of cultural and creative industries in Asia*. Routledge London, 2018.
- [20] V. Streitferdt, S. Chirarattananon, and P. Du Pont, "Lessons learned from studying public initiatives to support energy efficiency finance in Thailand from 1992 to 2014," *Energy Efficient.*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 905–923, 2017.