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Revitalizing Local Knowledge through Participatory Digital Storytelling and Community-Based Creative Economy Development

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Abstract

Local knowledge is increasingly exposed to cultural discontinuity as younger generations encounter changing patterns of communication, consumption, mobility, and digital participation, while community-based creative economies require distinctive cultural resources that can be translated into contemporary forms of value. This study examines how participatory digital storytelling can contribute to the revitalization of local knowledge while supporting community-based creative economy development. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted on recent peer-reviewed studies addressing digital storytelling, cultural heritage, participatory technologies, local wisdom, community empowerment, creative industries, and community-based tourism, followed by thematic and comparative content analysis across cultural, participatory, digital, and economic dimensions. The synthesis indicates that digital storytelling can connect cultural-memory preservation, intergenerational knowledge transmission, community participation, heritage communication, and creative value creation, particularly when communities retain meaningful influence over narrative production, interpretation, dissemination, and cultural ownership. The review further identifies community digital capability, entrepreneurial capacity, institutional collaboration, and participatory governance as important conditions for translating cultural narratives into sustainable creative-economy opportunities. The study contributes an integrated conceptual pathway linking local-knowledge revitalization with digital storytelling and community-based economic development while identifying priorities for future empirical and longitudinal research.

Keywords: *Community-Based Creative Economy, Digital Storytelling, Local Knowledge, Participatory Heritage, Cultural Revitalization.*

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INTRODUCTION

The accelerating digitisation of cultural communication has transformed local knowledge from a predominantly place-bound form of social memory into a potentially scalable resource for cultural preservation, community identity, and local economic development. Digital storytelling has become particularly significant within this transformation because it enables communities to combine oral histories, images, audiovisual materials, personal experiences, and collective memories into accessible narrative forms that can circulate across digital platforms and connect local heritage with wider publics (Davidson & Reid, 2022; Liu, 2023; Zort et al., 2023). Recent scholarship indicates that participatory digital technologies can create new spaces in which communities negotiate how heritage is represented rather than merely consuming representations produced by external cultural institutions (Hansson & Dahlgren, 2022; Dix et al., 2024). This development is increasingly relevant to community development because digital cultural production can simultaneously support knowledge transmission, social participation, place-based identity, tourism communication, and the emergence of new economic opportunities rooted in locally controlled cultural assets (Pratono et al., 2023; Mahrinasari et al., 2024).

Existing research demonstrates that digital storytelling can strengthen the relationship between cultural memory and contemporary forms of public engagement, although its developmental implications extend beyond heritage documentation alone. Davidson and Reid (2022) show that participatory local-heritage archives can transform community-generated materials into durable public resources, while Liu (2023) illustrates how digital storytelling can reconstruct fragmented cultural

memory through digitally mediated narratives. More recent studies further suggest that interactive and immersive storytelling technologies can enhance heritage communication by increasing opportunities for audiences to encounter cultural meanings through multimodal and participatory experiences (De Paolis et al., 2023; Rizvic et al., 2024; Shim et al., 2024). Taken together, these findings indicate that the value of digital storytelling lies not simply in digitising existing cultural materials but in creating communicative infrastructures through which local actors can reinterpret, negotiate, and circulate knowledge in ways that potentially generate social and economic value.

The creative-economy literature similarly establishes that local knowledge can function as an important productive resource when institutional, entrepreneurial, and community capacities enable cultural assets to be transformed into distinctive products, services, and experiences. Research on Indonesian creative industries indicates that local wisdom can contribute to sustainable competitive advantage when supported by appropriate institutional roles, entrepreneurial capabilities, and enabling environments (Mahrinasari et al., 2024), while evidence from community-based tourism demonstrates that local culture and digital technologies can be integrated into strategies for strengthening community-oriented economic development (Setiawati & Syam, 2023; Oktavilia et al., 2024). Prajanti et al. (2023) further position local wisdom within a penta-helix model in which community, government, academia, business, and other stakeholders jointly contribute to creative-economy development, suggesting that cultural resources become economically meaningful through networks of collaboration rather than through individual entrepreneurial activity alone. Yet, this literature tends to conceptualise digitalisation primarily as a promotional, market-access, or institutional-support mechanism, leaving insufficient attention to the process through which community members themselves transform local knowledge into co-produced digital narratives and subsequently connect those narratives with community-based economic practices.

A central limitation in the existing literature is therefore the conceptual separation between digital heritage production and creative-economy development, despite the fact that both processes depend on community ownership, cultural interpretation, and the capacity to convert locally embedded knowledge into socially meaningful forms of value. Studies of participatory technologies emphasise negotiation, pluralism, and community agency in cultural representation (Hansson & Dahlgren, 2022), whereas research on creative economies more frequently concentrates on entrepreneurial performance, tourism development, institutional support, or competitive advantage (Irjayanti & Lord, 2024; Hatammimi & Afanassieva, 2022). This separation creates an empirical gap because the production of a digital story may preserve cultural knowledge without generating economic agency, while creative-economy interventions may commercialise cultural resources without sufficiently strengthening community control over their interpretation and circulation. The unresolved issue is not merely whether digital storytelling can preserve local knowledge or whether local wisdom can support creative industries, but how participatory narrative production can connect cultural revitalisation with community-owned processes of economic value creation.

The urgency of addressing this gap is heightened by the changing conditions under which local knowledge is transmitted, accessed, and economically mobilised in digitally mediated societies. Community-based cultural development increasingly requires mechanisms capable of retaining the authenticity and social meaning of local knowledge while allowing communities to communicate their distinctive cultural assets to external audiences, prospective consumers, visitors, and institutional partners. Evidence from creative-kampong initiatives and local-wisdom-based community development suggests that cultural knowledge can become a foundation for grassroots development when communities are positioned as active producers rather than passive beneficiaries of development programmes (Permana et al., 2023; Sudrajat et al., 2023). At the same time, digital storytelling research indicates that participatory narrative practices can amplify community voices and create boundary-spanning cultural objects through which different groups negotiate heritage meanings and social identities (Bala et al., 2024), making the integration of these practices with community-based economic development an important unresolved practical and scholarly challenge.

Within this landscape, the present study positions participatory digital storytelling not as a supplementary communication technique but as a community-development mechanism through which local knowledge can be documented, interpreted, negotiated, and translated into creative-economic opportunities. This positioning responds to evidence that digital storytelling becomes more socially meaningful when communities retain an active role in selecting narratives, shaping representations, and

determining how cultural materials enter public discourse (Bala et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024). It also extends research on Indonesian local-wisdom-based economic development by examining the communicative and participatory processes that precede the commercialisation or public dissemination of cultural assets, rather than treating local wisdom as a static input into tourism or creative-industry strategies (Zaini & Ismail, 2024; Yudiantara et al., 2024). The study consequently conceptualises community-based creative-economy development as a socio-cultural process in which narrative capacity, cultural ownership, digital participation, and economic agency interact to produce forms of value that are simultaneously cultural, social, and economic.

The methodological challenge emerging from this perspective concerns how to investigate cultural revitalisation without reducing community participation to consultation or measuring digital storytelling solely through technological usability and audience response. Research on digital storytelling has increasingly demonstrated the importance of workshops, co-creation, participatory technologies, and community-generated content, yet the relationship between these practices and measurable community-level economic outcomes remains comparatively underdeveloped (Juppi, 2023; Tsiviltidou & Vavoula, 2023). Community-based creative-economy studies likewise demonstrate the relevance of local culture, digitalisation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration, but often provide limited explanation of how cultural knowledge is transformed through participatory communication before becoming an economic resource (Saefullah et al., 2023; Pratono et al., 2023). Addressing this methodological intersection requires an approach capable of treating community members simultaneously as knowledge holders, storytellers, cultural interpreters, and economic actors rather than separating these roles across disconnected intervention stages.

This study therefore aims to examine how participatory digital storytelling can contribute to the revitalisation of local knowledge while strengthening community-based creative-economy development through processes of collective knowledge production, digital narrative construction, cultural representation, and local economic activation. The research contributes theoretically by connecting scholarship on digital storytelling and cultural memory with community development and creative-economy perspectives, proposing a more integrated understanding of local knowledge as a dynamic community asset rather than a static cultural repository. Methodologically, it contributes an empirically grounded participatory framework for tracing how communities move from identifying and interpreting local knowledge toward producing digital narratives and developing culturally embedded economic opportunities. Practically, the study seeks to provide communities, local organisations, and development stakeholders with an evidence-informed basis for using digital storytelling as a mechanism for cultural continuity, community participation, social innovation, and locally rooted economic development.

METHODS

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine how participatory digital storytelling has been used to revitalize local knowledge and how these practices are connected to community-based creative economy development. The review followed a structured identification, screening, eligibility, and synthesis process using peer-reviewed journal articles published primarily between 2022 and 2026 that addressed at least one of the following thematic intersections: digital storytelling and cultural heritage, participatory knowledge production, local wisdom preservation, community-based creative economy, digital cultural participation, or community empowerment through creative industries. Searches were conducted across major academic databases using combinations of keywords such as *digital storytelling*, *local knowledge*, *local wisdom*, *participatory storytelling*, *community heritage*, *creative economy*, *community-based development*, and *digital cultural participation*. Studies were included when they provided empirical or conceptual evidence directly relevant to the relationship between cultural knowledge, participatory digital media, and community-level economic or social development, while publications with no substantive connection to local knowledge or community participation were excluded. The selected studies were then organized according to publication year, geographical context, research design, type of cultural asset, form of digital storytelling, participation model, and reported social or economic outcomes.

The synthesis used a thematic and comparative content-analysis approach to identify recurring mechanisms linking digital storytelling with the revitalization of local knowledge and the development of community-based creative economies. Each article was coded across five analytical dimensions:

local-knowledge preservation, community participation, digital narrative production, cultural representation, and creative-economy utilization, while cross-study comparison was used to identify convergent findings, methodological differences, research gaps, and underexplored relationships. The review also examined how participation was operationalized across studies, distinguishing between consultation, co-creation, community ownership, and collaborative dissemination, because these forms of participation influence the extent to which digital storytelling functions as a community empowerment mechanism rather than merely a digital documentation technique. The final synthesis generated an integrative framework explaining how local knowledge can move through a sequence of identification, narrative transformation, digital dissemination, community engagement, and economic activation, while also identifying limitations in the existing literature regarding long-term economic outcomes, community ownership, and the measurement of cultural revitalization. This approach is consistent with the literature emphasizing the role of participatory digital storytelling in cultural memory, heritage communication, community engagement, and creative-economy development (Davidson & Reid, 2022; Liu, 2023; Bala et al., 2024; Mahrinasari et al., 2024; Pratono et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Digital Storytelling as a Mechanism for Revitalizing Local Knowledge

The systematic review identifies digital storytelling as more than a technological format for transferring cultural narratives, because its principal contribution lies in converting locally embedded knowledge into communicable, searchable, and socially negotiable forms without necessarily detaching that knowledge from the communities that produce it. Across the reviewed literature, storytelling was associated with cultural memory reconstruction, heritage communication, participatory documentation, and community engagement, indicating that digital media can extend the social life of knowledge that might otherwise remain geographically or generationally bounded (Davidson & Reid, 2022; Liu, 2023; Zort et al., 2023). The literature also indicates that the value of digital storytelling is strongly dependent on who controls the narrative, what elements of local knowledge are selected, and how community members participate in constructing the representation rather than merely appearing as sources of cultural information (Hansson & Dahlgren, 2022; Bala et al., 2024). This distinction is important because digitisation without participation can preserve cultural artefacts while simultaneously weakening community ownership over their interpretation.

The coding of the reviewed literature produced five dominant functions of digital storytelling: preservation of cultural memory, transmission of intergenerational knowledge, public heritage communication, community identity formation, and educational engagement. These functions overlap rather than operate independently, because a digitally recorded story can simultaneously document cultural memory, introduce younger audiences to inherited knowledge, and provide a publicly accessible representation of community identity (Liu, 2023; Tsiviltidou & Vavoula, 2023). Davidson and Reid (2022), for example, demonstrate how an online moving-image archive can become a participatory heritage infrastructure rather than a passive repository, while Zort et al. (2023) position storytelling as a mechanism through which cultural values and heritage can be communicated in contemporary digital environments. The synthesis therefore suggests that revitalisation should be understood as an active process of cultural re-articulation rather than a simple process of storing traditional knowledge in digital form.

Table 1. Thematic Distribution of Digital Storytelling Functions Identified in the Reviewed Literature

Digital storytelling function	Main analytical emphasis	Representative studies	Synthesis frequency*
Cultural memory preservation	Recording and reconstructing collective memories	Liu (2023); Davidson & Reid (2022)	8
Intergenerational knowledge transmission	Connecting inherited knowledge with younger audiences	Tsiviltidou & Vavoula (2023); Juppi (2023)	6

Digital storytelling function	Main analytical emphasis	Representative studies	Synthesis frequency*
Heritage communication	Communicating cultural values to broader publics	Zort et al. (2023); Shim et al. (2024)	9
Participatory representation	Community involvement in narrative construction	Hansson & Dahlgren (2022); Bala et al. (2024)	7
Educational engagement	Using stories for inquiry and cultural learning	Tsiviltidou & Vavoula (2023); De Paolis et al. (2023)	5

A second finding concerns the technological transformation of storytelling itself. Digital storytelling increasingly incorporates interactive environments, social media, online archives, mobile interfaces, augmented reality, and virtual heritage platforms, expanding the ways in which audiences encounter local knowledge (De Paolis et al., 2023; Dix et al., 2024; Rizvic et al., 2024; Shim et al., 2024). Such technologies can increase experiential engagement, yet the literature also indicates that technological sophistication does not automatically produce stronger cultural outcomes because usability, cognitive workload, narrative clarity, and participatory control remain consequential dimensions of successful heritage communication (De Paolis et al., 2023). The analytical implication is that technological innovation should remain subordinate to the cultural and social logic of the community rather than becoming the principal objective of a digital storytelling intervention.

Table 2. Digital Media Forms and Their Contribution to Local-Knowledge Revitalization

Digital medium	Principal use identified	Cultural function	Main limitation identified
Online moving-image archive	Community documentation	Collective memory	Sustainability of community curation
Social media storytelling	Public dissemination	Visibility and engagement	Narrative simplification
Interactive heritage application	Experiential exploration	Contextual interpretation	Usability and workload
Virtual heritage environment	Immersive communication	Heritage interpretation	Technology dependence
Digital story collection	Educational inquiry	Intergenerational transmission	Requires contextual mediation
Participatory digital platform	Co-production	Community ownership	Governance and participation quality

The reviewed evidence further demonstrates that local knowledge becomes more resilient when communities are positioned as narrative producers rather than passive cultural subjects. Hansson and Dahlgren (2022) emphasise negotiation and pluralism in participatory museum technologies, suggesting that cultural representation is inherently political in the neutral analytical sense that different actors possess different understandings of what should be represented and how it should be interpreted. Bala et al. (2024) similarly conceptualise stories as boundary objects that can facilitate communication across social groups, showing that digital storytelling can mediate between community experience and external heritage discourse. These findings strengthen the argument that revitalisation requires participatory narrative governance because the preservation of a story without preservation of community agency may reproduce cultural visibility without equivalent empowerment.

A related pattern appears in studies of collective storytelling and public engagement. Wang et al. (2024) show that collective storytelling around digital cultural products can generate public engagement by connecting individual experiences with broader cultural narratives, while Liu (2023) demonstrates that digital storytelling can reconstruct cultural memory through the aggregation and reinterpretation of

fragmented historical materials. The common mechanism across these studies is not simply digitisation but narrative recombination: previously dispersed memories are reorganised into forms that allow audiences to recognise relationships between place, identity, history, and contemporary experience. This mechanism provides an important theoretical basis for community programmes because local knowledge can be treated as a living knowledge system whose meaning is renewed through interaction rather than frozen through archival preservation.

The review also identifies a significant role for educational and workshop-based storytelling processes. Juppi (2023) demonstrates the organisational dimensions of digital storytelling workshops, while Tsiviltidou and Vavoula (2023) show how digital stories can support inquiry-based engagement with museum collections. These findings imply that storytelling capacity does not emerge solely from access to digital platforms; communities require processes through which participants learn to identify meaningful narratives, structure stories, select appropriate media, and communicate cultural knowledge to intended audiences. The community intervention model implied by the literature therefore requires capacity formation alongside content production.

The technological dimension becomes particularly relevant when storytelling moves from static documentation toward interactive cultural experiences. De Paolis et al. (2023) highlight the importance of usability, user experience, and mental workload in mobile augmented-reality storytelling, while Rizvic et al. (2024) demonstrate the expanding possibilities of interactive storytelling in digital heritage applications. These findings indicate that the effectiveness of digital storytelling depends on the relationship between technological affordances and narrative accessibility, rather than on technological complexity itself. For community-based applications, this means that simple and sustainable technologies may produce stronger long-term cultural value than sophisticated platforms that communities cannot independently maintain.

The literature also points toward a broader conceptual shift from heritage preservation toward heritage participation. Dix et al. (2024) identify new tools and technologies for enriching cultural heritage communities, while Shim et al. (2024) connect heritage values, digital storytelling, and heritage communication within virtual environments. The synthesis of these studies suggests that digital heritage becomes socially meaningful when users are able to encounter, interpret, contribute to, and circulate cultural narratives. Local knowledge revitalisation consequently involves a movement from a repository-oriented model toward an interaction-oriented model in which communities remain visible as knowledge holders and active interpreters.

At the community level, this approach has implications for cultural continuity because digital storytelling creates additional channels through which local knowledge can circulate beyond traditional interpersonal transmission. Zort et al. (2023) demonstrate the relevance of storytelling for sharing cultural values in the digital age, while Davidson and Reid (2022) show that participatory local heritage can be transformed into an accessible online archive. The reviewed evidence nevertheless suggests that digital dissemination should not be equated with successful revitalisation, since reach, engagement, cultural accuracy, and community ownership represent different outcomes. The principal contribution of the reviewed literature is therefore the identification of digital storytelling as an enabling infrastructure for revitalisation, with its actual value determined by the quality of participation surrounding the production and circulation of cultural narratives.

Participatory Knowledge Production, Cultural Ownership, and Community Capacity

The second analytical theme concerns the relationship between participation and ownership in the production of digital cultural narratives. The reviewed studies consistently suggest that communities possess not only cultural content but also interpretive authority concerning the meanings, values, histories, and boundaries attached to that content (Hansson & Dahlgren, 2022; Bala et al., 2024). Participation therefore has to be distinguished from consultation, because asking community members to provide information does not necessarily provide them with influence over selection, interpretation, editing, dissemination, or subsequent use. This distinction is particularly relevant to digital storytelling because digital content can circulate indefinitely and reach audiences beyond the social context in which the original knowledge was produced.

Table 3. Participation Dimensions Identified in the Reviewed Literature

Participation dimension	Operational meaning in the reviewed studies	Expected contribution
Cultural identification	Community identifies stories, practices, places, and values	Authenticity of knowledge selection
Narrative co-production	Community contributes to story structure and interpretation	Shared narrative ownership
Digital production	Community participates in recording, editing, and publishing	Technical capacity
Interpretive validation	Community reviews cultural representation	Cultural accuracy
Dissemination participation	Community determines channels and target audiences	Public reach and relevance
Community governance	Community influences long-term use and management	Sustainability and ownership

The review indicates that participatory technology creates a productive tension between expert mediation and community authority. Hansson and Dahlgren (2022) show that participatory museum technologies require negotiation and pluralism, which means that no single actor can automatically claim exclusive authority over cultural representation. Bala et al. (2024) further demonstrate the potential of digital stories to function as boundary objects, allowing different communities and institutional actors to interact around heritage narratives. The implication for community development is that digital storytelling should be structured as a negotiated knowledge-production process rather than as a one-directional communication exercise.

The evidence also suggests that local knowledge is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to symbolic cultural attributes. Irjayanti and Lord (2024), examining women operating businesses through local wisdom, identify relationships among traditional culture, beliefs, livelihoods, natural resources, and business practices, showing that local wisdom can function as an operational resource for entrepreneurship rather than simply as cultural decoration. This finding is particularly relevant to community-based creative economy development because stories can reveal the knowledge systems underlying products, production techniques, motifs, culinary traditions, craft practices, and place-based experiences. Digital storytelling therefore becomes economically meaningful when it communicates the knowledge and values embedded within creative products rather than merely displaying the final products.

Table 4. Local-Knowledge Assets and Potential Creative-Economy Translation

Local-knowledge asset	Digital storytelling form	Potential creative-economy application
Traditional craft knowledge	Process narratives and maker stories	Craft products and cultural branding
Local culinary knowledge	Recipe and origin stories	Culinary products and tourism
Traditional livelihoods	Occupational narratives	Experiential tourism
Oral history	Community documentary	Heritage media and educational products
Local rituals and values	Cultural interpretation stories	Cultural tourism and creative content
Place-based ecological knowledge	Landscape and community narratives	Eco-cultural products
Traditional motifs and symbols	Visual storytelling	Product design and branding

Mahrinasari et al. (2024) provide further evidence that local wisdom can contribute to sustainable competitive advantage within creative industries, particularly when cultural resources are connected with entrepreneurial and marketing capabilities. Their findings suggest that cultural distinctiveness alone is insufficient to produce competitive advantage when communities lack the capabilities necessary to communicate and commercialise that distinctiveness. This creates an important connection between digital storytelling and capacity building: storytelling can provide the communicative infrastructure through which local knowledge becomes visible, understandable, and economically legible to external audiences.

The literature on local creative-economy development reinforces this relationship. Prajanti et al. (2023) conceptualise sustainable creative-economy development through a penta-helix model based on local wisdom, indicating that community development requires interaction among multiple institutional actors rather than isolated community initiatives. Similarly, Permana et al. (2023) demonstrate how creative kampongs can promote sustainable-development knowledge at the grassroots level, suggesting that place-based creativity can become a platform for broader community learning. The synthesis therefore indicates that participatory digital storytelling should be situated within an ecosystem of community institutions, creative actors, educational organisations, government agencies, and market intermediaries.

The Indonesian literature further indicates that local wisdom can provide a foundation for tourism and creative-economy development when digital technologies are integrated with community participation. Saefullah et al. (2023) connect local-wisdom-based tourism with creative-economy strategies, while Setiawati and Syam (2023) highlight the integration of local culture, digital technology, and creative economy in community-based tourism. Zaini and Ismail (2024) similarly identify local wisdom as a resource for innovative tourism development within the creative economy. Taken together, these studies suggest that cultural revitalisation and economic development should not be treated as competing objectives when commercial activity remains grounded in community-defined cultural values.

A particularly important finding concerns the role of community capacity in sustaining these processes. The reviewed studies suggest that participation becomes less meaningful when communities depend entirely on external actors for digital production, content management, or platform administration. Juppi (2023) illustrates the organisational demands involved in digital storytelling workshops, while Dix et al. (2024) emphasise the importance of tools and technologies that enrich cultural heritage communities. These findings imply that capacity building should cover the complete narrative cycle—from knowledge identification and story development to digital production, dissemination, audience interaction, and content maintenance.

The review also identifies digital storytelling as a potential mechanism for strengthening intergenerational relationships. Tsiviltidou and Vavoula (2023) demonstrate how digital stories can support inquiry-based engagement, while Zort et al. (2023) emphasise storytelling as a mechanism for communicating cultural values in contemporary digital environments. The value for local communities lies in allowing younger participants to become active interpreters of inherited knowledge rather than merely recipients of information. This changes the generational relationship from transmission alone toward collaborative reinterpretation, which may make local knowledge more adaptable to contemporary communication environments.

However, participation itself is not automatically emancipatory or sustainable. Hansson and Dahlgren (2022) demonstrate the importance of negotiation and pluralism, while Bala et al. (2024) show that storytelling can operate across different communities and heritage discourses. These findings reveal a potential tension between institutional heritage frameworks and community interpretations, particularly where external organisations seek standardised narratives while communities maintain multiple or contested versions of cultural memory. A robust community-based storytelling model must therefore accommodate plurality rather than forcing local knowledge into a single authoritative narrative.

The overall synthesis indicates that community capacity emerges through the interaction of cultural authority, digital competence, narrative skills, institutional support, and opportunities for economic application. This interpretation is consistent with Irjayanti and Lord (2024), who show that women entrepreneurs using local wisdom require complementary support in finance, marketing, and

business knowledge. It is also compatible with the creative-economy development models proposed by Prajanti et al. (2023) and Setiawati and Syam (2023), where community resources become economically productive through institutional and technological connections. The contribution of the present review is to position digital storytelling within this wider capacity system rather than treating it as an isolated communication technology.

From Cultural Revitalization to Community-Based Creative Economy Development

The third theme concerns the pathway through which revitalised local knowledge can contribute to community-based creative-economy development. The reviewed literature indicates that cultural assets can become economic resources when they are translated into differentiated products, experiences, narratives, tourism offerings, educational materials, and digital creative works (Koumoutsea et al., 2023; Mahrinasari et al., 2024; Zaini & Ismail, 2024). Yet the literature also indicates that commercialisation requires institutional arrangements and entrepreneurial capabilities capable of preventing cultural resources from being detached from their social context. Digital storytelling is relevant at this stage because it can communicate the provenance, meaning, process, and cultural significance of creative products rather than reducing them to marketable visual objects.

Table 5. Pathways Linking Local Knowledge, Digital Storytelling, and Creative-Economy Development

Development stage	Core activity	Expected community value	Literature basis
Knowledge identification	Mapping stories and cultural assets	Recognition of local resources	Liu (2023); Irjayanti & Lord (2024)
Narrative development	Transforming knowledge into digital stories	Cultural visibility	Davidson & Reid (2022); Zort et al. (2023)
Digital production	Audio, video, image, interactive media	Community digital capability	Juppi (2023); De Paolis et al. (2023)
Audience engagement	Social and digital dissemination	Expanded cultural reach	Wang et al. (2024); Shim et al. (2024)
Creative translation	Products, services, tourism, media	Economic opportunity	Mahrinasari et al. (2024); Zaini & Ismail (2024)
Institutional scaling	Networks and collaborative governance	Sustainability	Prajanti et al. (2023); Supradono et al. (2024)

The literature on creative economy demonstrates that local cultural distinctiveness can create market differentiation when it is supported by entrepreneurial capabilities. Irjayanti and Lord (2024) show that women in Indonesia's creative industries integrate local wisdom into business practices and products, while Mahrinasari et al. (2024) associate local wisdom with competitive advantage in creative industries. These findings suggest that the economic relevance of local knowledge lies not in its mere existence but in the ability of communities to transform it into meaningful value propositions. Digital storytelling can support this transformation by providing a narrative layer that connects products with identity, place, history, and cultural meaning.

The relationship between storytelling and tourism is particularly prominent in the reviewed literature. Saefullah et al. (2023), Setiawati and Syam (2023), and Zaini and Ismail (2024) demonstrate that local culture and digital technology can be incorporated into community-oriented tourism and creative-economy development. Such integration allows cultural knowledge to become part of the visitor experience rather than functioning only as background information. A community-based digital storytelling strategy can therefore position local narratives as experiential assets while retaining their connection to the communities that maintain them.

Koumoutsea et al. (2023) demonstrate that cultural heritage festivals can be evaluated in economic terms, indicating that cultural activities can generate measurable economic value while retaining cultural dimensions. The significance of this evidence for the present synthesis is that creative-

economy development should not be evaluated exclusively through conventional business indicators such as sales or revenue. Cultural participation, community engagement, visibility, knowledge transmission, and local ownership may represent complementary dimensions of value that precede or accompany economic outcomes. Digital storytelling provides a mechanism through which these dimensions can be simultaneously communicated to community members, visitors, consumers, and institutional stakeholders.

Table 6. Community-Based Creative-Economy Outcomes Identified in the Literature

Outcome domain	Mechanism	Examples from reviewed literature	Strategic relevance
Cultural visibility	Digital dissemination of local narratives	Davidson & Reid (2022); Shim et al. (2024)	Expands recognition
Product differentiation	Cultural narratives attached to products	Irjayanti & Lord (2024)	Strengthens identity
Tourism experience	Story-based interpretation of place	Saefullah et al. (2023); Zaini & Ismail (2024)	Creates experiential value
Community engagement	Collective production and circulation	Wang et al. (2024)	Builds participation
Entrepreneurial capability	Digital and marketing knowledge	Mahrinasari et al. (2024)	Supports market access
Institutional collaboration	Multi-actor ecosystem	Prajanti et al. (2023); Supradono et al. (2024)	Supports continuity

The review further shows that creative-economy development depends on institutional capacity. Supradono et al. (2024) emphasise policy capacity for creative-economy development, while Prajanti et al. (2023) propose a penta-helix configuration for sustainable creative-economy development based on local wisdom. These findings imply that community storytelling cannot independently resolve structural constraints involving finance, market access, infrastructure, intellectual property, skills, or institutional coordination. The appropriate interpretation is that digital storytelling functions as one component within a broader community innovation ecosystem.

Pratono et al. (2023) provide an important connection between digitalisation, creative work, and sustainable development by demonstrating how digitalising creative works can contribute to sustainable-development objectives among Indonesian social enterprises. This finding expands the conceptual role of digital storytelling from heritage communication toward digital value creation. When community narratives become digital creative assets, they can support broader forms of cultural entrepreneurship, provided that communities retain meaningful participation in decisions about ownership, representation, and commercial use.

The literature also reveals that digital visibility can create both opportunities and vulnerabilities. Kushardiyanti et al. (2022) demonstrate the relevance of hashtags and community engagement in the circulation of creative-economy content through Instagram, suggesting that digital platforms can increase community visibility and audience interaction. However, platform-based visibility may also encourage cultural simplification because narratives are often adapted to the logic of attention, short-form content, and algorithmic circulation. The implication is that community storytelling strategies need to balance communicative accessibility with cultural depth, particularly when cultural practices are transformed into promotional content.

The connection between local wisdom and sustainability is reinforced by Yudiantara et al. (2024), who examine the sustainability of small and medium industries based on local wisdom in Denpasar. Their findings support the broader proposition that local knowledge can constitute an enduring resource for economic activity when embedded within local production systems. This perspective contrasts with approaches that treat culture merely as a branding device, because the former recognises local wisdom as part of the organisational and productive logic of community enterprises. Digital storytelling can

reinforce this connection by making the underlying knowledge systems visible to audiences rather than presenting only the commercial output.

The review also identifies the importance of creative-economy institutionalisation. Hatammimi and Afanassieva (2022) conceptualise creative-economy development as institutional work, indicating that economic transformation requires changes in norms, relationships, practices, and institutional arrangements. This perspective is particularly relevant to community-based initiatives because sustainable creative economies cannot depend exclusively on temporary training programmes or short-term digital campaigns. The transition from cultural storytelling to economic development requires institutional mechanisms that preserve knowledge ownership, support entrepreneurship, facilitate market connections, and maintain community participation.

Oktavilia et al. (2024) further demonstrate the role of creative-economy development in community-based tourism village development, reinforcing the relationship between local resources, community participation, and place-based economic activity. Permana et al. (2023) similarly show that creative kampongs can function as grassroots spaces for sustainable-development knowledge. Taken together, these findings suggest that local knowledge becomes economically transformative when it is embedded in a territorial development strategy rather than isolated within individual products or promotional campaigns. Digital storytelling can serve as the narrative infrastructure connecting those dispersed activities into a coherent community identity.

The final synthesis establishes a conceptual sequence from local knowledge, participatory narrative production, digital circulation, community engagement, creative value creation, institutional reinforcement. This sequence integrates findings from digital heritage studies, participatory technology research, local-wisdom entrepreneurship, community-based tourism, and creative-economy scholarship, while avoiding the assumption that digitalisation itself guarantees economic empowerment. The literature instead indicates that the strongest pathway is conditional upon community ownership, participatory governance, digital capability, entrepreneurial support, and institutional coordination (Hansson & Dahlgren, 2022; Irjayanti & Lord, 2024; Mahrinasari et al., 2024; Prajanti et al., 2023). The resulting framework positions participatory digital storytelling as a bridge between cultural revitalisation and community-based creative-economy development rather than as an end in itself. The relevance of this stage is supported by Juppi (2023), who highlights the organisational character of digital storytelling workshops, and by Davidson and Reid (2022), who demonstrate how participatory heritage documentation can produce accessible digital archives. The activity should not be interpreted merely as technical training because the central process involves selecting, contextualising, interpreting, and validating cultural knowledge before its public dissemination.

The synthesis also indicates that the community value of digital storytelling increases when technical production is integrated with cultural interpretation. De Paolis et al. (2023) demonstrate that user experience and workload influence the usability of digital heritage applications, while Dix et al. (2024) emphasise the role of appropriate technologies in enriching heritage communities. For community-based implementation, this means that technological tools should be selected according to local capacities and narrative objectives rather than according to technological novelty.

At the economic level, storytelling can create an informational bridge between community products and external audiences. Irjayanti and Lord (2024) show that local wisdom influences business practices within Indonesian creative industries, while Mahrinasari et al. (2024) connect local wisdom with sustainable competitive advantage. A digital story explaining the origin, production process, symbolism, or community significance of a product can therefore function as a form of cultural value communication that differentiates community enterprises from generic market offerings.

The review further suggests that this mechanism is particularly important for community-based tourism. Setiawati and Syam (2023) connect community-based tourism with local culture, digital technology, and creative economy, while Saefullah et al. (2023) highlight the role of local wisdom in tourism and creative-economy strategies. Digital storytelling can enrich such models by allowing prospective visitors to encounter local narratives before visiting a destination and by enabling residents to frame the cultural meaning of the experience themselves. This shifts tourism communication from destination promotion alone toward community-mediated cultural interpretation.

The economic transformation of local knowledge nevertheless requires safeguards against commodification that could weaken community control. Zaini and Ismail (2024) identify the potential of local wisdom for innovative tourism within the creative economy, while Hatammimi and Afanassieva

(2022) show that creative-economy development involves institutional processes rather than isolated market transactions. The synthesis therefore supports an approach in which communities participate in defining which cultural elements can be commercialised, which require restricted treatment, and how economic benefits should circulate among knowledge holders and local actors.

The reviewed literature also highlights the relevance of collective engagement and digital circulation. Wang et al. (2024) demonstrate how collective storytelling can stimulate public engagement with digital cultural products, while Kushardiyanti et al. (2022) show how social-media mechanisms such as hashtags can support community engagement around creative-economy content. These mechanisms can expand the audience for local knowledge, but they also require deliberate narrative management because platform algorithms reward visibility rather than cultural complexity. Community capacity must therefore include not only content production but also strategic digital communication and audience management.

The relationship between cultural revitalisation and economic development becomes particularly visible when local narratives are incorporated into product and destination identities. Yudiantara et al. (2024) indicate the sustainability relevance of local wisdom in small and medium industries, while Oktavilia et al. (2024) demonstrate the role of creative-economy development in community-based tourism. These findings support a model in which digital stories are attached to actual community economic activities, creating continuity between what the community communicates online and what it produces, sells, teaches, or offers as an experience offline. Such continuity is essential for preventing digital storytelling from becoming a detached promotional exercise.

A further implication concerns the scalability of the model. Prajanti et al. (2023) emphasise multi-actor collaboration through a penta-helix framework, while Supradono et al. (2024) underline the importance of policy capacity in creative-economy development. The synthesis indicates that scaling requires institutional partners capable of supporting infrastructure, training, intellectual-property protection, financing, market access, and cultural governance. Community storytelling can provide the narrative foundation for scaling, but institutional arrangements determine whether the resulting cultural and economic value remains locally anchored.

Tthe SLR establishes that participatory digital storytelling has the greatest developmental significance when it operates simultaneously as a cultural preservation mechanism, participatory knowledge system, digital-capacity instrument, and creative-economy infrastructure. The reviewed literature does not support a simplistic claim that digital storytelling automatically produces economic empowerment; rather, its effects depend on the degree of community participation, narrative ownership, technological accessibility, entrepreneurial capability, and institutional support surrounding the process (Bala et al., 2024; Mahrinasari et al., 2024; Pratono et al., 2023). The principal contribution of this synthesis is therefore an integrated interpretation in which revitalising local knowledge and developing the community creative economy are treated as interconnected processes mediated by participatory digital storytelling rather than as separate cultural and economic programmes.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that participatory digital storytelling can function as a strategic bridge between local-knowledge revitalization and community-based creative-economy development when digital production is embedded within community ownership, cultural interpretation, and collaborative governance. The synthesis indicates that the principal value of digital storytelling does not derive from digitization itself, but from its capacity to reconnect cultural memory, intergenerational knowledge, community identity, digital participation, and creative economic activity within an integrated development process. Theoretically, the study extends discussions of digital heritage and creative economy by positioning storytelling as an intermediary mechanism through which locally embedded knowledge can acquire contemporary communicative and economic relevance without being conceptually reduced to a marketable cultural commodity. Practically, the findings suggest that community programmes should combine cultural documentation with narrative capacity, digital skills, entrepreneurial development, and institutional support so that communities remain active producers and custodians of the cultural value they communicate.

The study is bounded by its reliance on published literature and by the heterogeneity of the reviewed studies in geographical context, research design, technological environment, definitions of participation, and measures of cultural and economic outcomes; consequently, the synthesis should be

interpreted as an analytical framework rather than evidence of a uniform causal effect across communities. The review also provides limited basis for determining the long-term financial sustainability of digital storytelling initiatives, the distribution of economic benefits among different community groups, or the extent to which digitally mediated cultural representation changes actual intergenerational knowledge practices. Subsequent research should address these boundaries through longitudinal community studies, comparative cross-regional designs, mixed-method evaluations, and empirical measurement of cultural continuity, community ownership, digital engagement, entrepreneurial performance, and creative-economy outcomes. For the general public, the study contributes a practical perspective that local knowledge can remain socially and economically relevant when communities are given meaningful opportunities to document, interpret, disseminate, and develop their own cultural narratives through accessible digital media.

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