

Maximizing Career Growth Through the Influence of Popular Culture: An Exploration of Qualitative Research

Sastra Rammadan^{1*}, Amanna Dzikrillah Lazuardini²

^{1,2} Faculty Of Business And Humanities, Universitas Nusa Putra, Indonesia

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Email Correspondence:

sastra.rrammadan_mn20@nusaputra.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Popular culture is a cultural form that develops in response to media exposure. That is, since the media can create cultural forms, people will accept them and turn them into cultural forms. Job development is the process of increasing one's capacity to work with the aim of pursuing a preferred occupation. The research was conducted using qualitative research methodology, as discussed in the research methodology sub-chapter. Qualitative research method is a type of research methodology that produces descriptive data through analysis of people's written or oral statements and observed behavior. Nasa Freak utilizes popular culture in his career development by marketing his work on several platforms that are often used by the community. The skills and knowledge gained through the experience of popular culture are such as making several combinations of songs or music that are rising in trend, then processed into several beats created by Nasa Freak himself. It can be concluded that there are specific skills and knowledge acquired by Nasa Freak itself through popular culture.

ABSTRAK

Budaya populer adalah bentuk budaya yang berkembang sebagai respons terhadap paparan media. Artinya, karena media dapat menciptakan bentuk budaya, masyarakat akan menerimanya dan mengubahnya menjadi bentuk budaya. Pengembangan pekerjaan adalah proses peningkatan kapasitas seseorang untuk bekerja dengan tujuan mengejar pekerjaan yang disukai. Penelitian dilaksanakan dengan menggunakan metodologi penelitian kualitatif, sebagaimana telah dibahas pada sub bab metodologi penelitian. Metode penelitian kualitatif adalah jenis metodologi penelitian yang menghasilkan data deskriptif melalui analisis pernyataan tertulis atau lisan masyarakat dan perilaku yang diamati. Nasa Freak memanfaatkan budaya populer dalam pengembangan karirnya dengan memasarkan hasil karya di beberapa platform yang sering digunakan oleh kalangan masyarakat. Keterampilan dan pengetahuan yang diperoleh melalui pengalaman budaya populer yaitu seperti menjadikan beberapa gabungan lagu atau musik yang sedang naik trend nya, Kemudian diolah menjadi beberapa beat yang diciptakan oleh Nasa Freak itu sendiri. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa terdapat keterampilan dan pengetahuan khusus yang diperoleh oleh Nasa Freak itu sendiri melalui budaya populer.



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INTRODUCTION

A new era in the music business has begun as a result of rapid technological advancements. Sudden changes happening quickly affect the original order and arrangement of everything. The music business once heavily relied on music sales through physical media, but that media has now transformed into digital. The shift from physical

to digital sales also impacts management, labels, as well as strategies and marketing techniques for independent musicians (Ramadhan et al., 2017).

Due to globalization, Western culture began spreading across the nation, including different music genres such as pop, jazz, blues, rock, and R&B. This growth led to the merging of international and local music. For example, dangdut music was created by combining Malay and Indian music (Robert & Brown, 2004).

A musician is someone with a particular taste in style and technique, highly talented and skilled in playing various musical instruments. Apart from these additional skills, a musician can play instruments, sing, play instruments in various other genres, and arrange music in different styles. A musician also often instructs music students to help them advance their careers as musicians (Parker, 2011).

Many music traditions influence the careers and creative expression of these players. Currently, the term "musician" describes a wide range of artists, including magicians, comedians, painters, psychics, and others, who use musical instruments in their performances. Therefore, this designation also includes those who have established themselves in the performing arts due to their special talents and abilities. One may even choose to pursue this career path after receiving formal training in one of the aforementioned professions (Ramadhan et al., 2017).

The career creation process involves self-analysis, deciding on a suitable professional path, and acquiring the necessary information and skills. People often seek various sources of inspiration and motivation in pursuing professional achievements. Popular culture is one such valuable resource as it can help individuals discover their interests and abilities (Nasution & Halim, 2023).

The creation and consumption of music have shifted from physical to digital formats with the advancement of time, mostly thanks to the internet. Physical record sales released by record labels have declined due to the presence of the internet and the shift in consumer habits. This is due to the widespread piracy of musical compositions and the accessibility of information technology, which allows for illegal online distribution and digital music downloads (Everts et al., 2022).

Amin claims that local musicians have a lot of potential and have demonstrated their ability to develop traditional and modern arts, thus giving them significant international negotiating power. The most important thing is the ability to improvise or accompany several songs. Improvisation is different from just playing. Improvisation is spontaneous. To be spontaneous, an understanding of basic theory is required, followed by practice using a metronome to always stay on the right tempo. Technical practice is also necessary, along with what is equally important, which is feel.

Despite this potential, comprehensive research and understanding of the effectiveness of using popular culture in career development in Indonesia are still lacking. Many factors continue to influence the career paths of musicians, including preferences and the level of music consumption itself, as well as the growth of popular culture, which prompts many competitors to become experts in the same music genre (Binadarma, 2020). Therefore, the

aim of this research is to investigate this potential, make a list of possible benefits, and examine any obstacles or difficulties that the community may experience when trying to exploit it.

Therefore, considering the context of the previously described issues, the author is motivated to conduct research that will be named "Harnessing the Power of Popular Culture in Enhancing Career Development (Case Study of DJ Nasa Freak)". The purpose of this study is to determine the role of popular culture for musicians in Sukabumi in improving career development.**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research was conducted on DJ Nasa Freak with a research focus on utilizing popular culture towards career development. To obtain research data, researchers conducted direct observations and conducted interviews with Nasa Freak as informants. After the observation, interview and data collection were completed, the researcher then validated the validity of the data by triangulating to compare findings from interviews with information from other data sources, such as archives or relevant literature. The research project management in this study involved a series of systematically structured stages. The initial stage began with meticulous planning, where the researcher detailed the steps, objectives, and timeline of the research. Next, the second step was to conduct literature research to have a thorough understanding of theories related to employee performance, work motivation, and contract work arrangements. This process became the basis for formulating a solid conceptual framework for the study. After obtaining a strong theoretical foundation, the next stage is to determine the appropriate research method. The type of research used is descriptive qualitative research. In conducting qualitative descriptive research, a case study or study approach is used as a research methodology. This study examines one item in great detail, using it as a case study. Rather than using numerical data, this study collects data through the use of words and visuals. In this case, the researcher's job is to watch the research participants, ask questions, and get fresh information from them.**RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

Results

From the research conducted with a case study utilizing interviews with some of the popular culture figures in Sukabumi, namely DJ Nasa Freak.

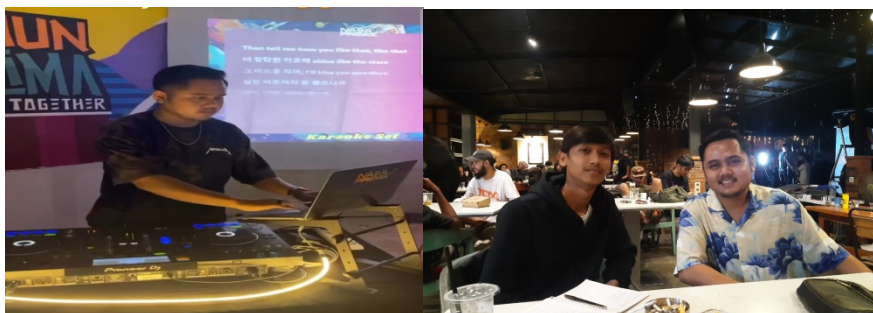


Figure 1. Documentation of interviews with respondents

Based on the interviews with Muqit, a member of DJ Nasa Freak, on September 24, 2023, and October 29, 2023, he stated that popular culture for Nasa Freak is interpreted as a culture that is easily understood and applied in daily life, known and liked by most people, and relevant to the needs of modern society.

"The important factor in Nasa Freak's success in the music business is popular culture itself. Because, Nasa Freak has always followed what is considered enjoyable and popular by the general public to use popular culture to advance his professional development. Therefore, I will always be interested in things related to popular culture for Nasa Freak's development."

According to Muqit, in DJ Nasa Freak's journey, there are also several influences from popular culture figures who always inspire in every work. Popular culture figures can help music artists gain access to more efficient distribution channels. For example, if the figure has their own media platform or strong connections with music distributors, artists collaborating with them can utilize these distribution channels to reach more listeners.

"in Nasa Freak's career journey, there is a role of a popular culture figure that inspires and influences Nasa Freak's career journey, namely DJ Angger Dimas. This is because Angger Dimas's career journey has developed rapidly, such as Angger Dimas entering the Australian record label Vicious Recordings in early 2009, his debut as "Duck Army" played by Tocadisco, Joachim Garraud, and Laidback Luke, among others. Dimas then collaborated with Vandalism and gained international support for their release - She Got It included in the Australian Ministry of Sound CD Annual 2010 and played by Sebastian Ingrosso as the opening song at the "Sensation" event on New Year's Eve in Melbourne. Angger also co-produced (remixed) for Linkin Park and Steve Aoki's single and Yellow Claw. Angger Dimas also ranked number 134 in DJ MAG 2015 and still maintains his position as number 1 in Indonesia and Asia so far. Therefore, Angger Dimas is one of the popular culture figures that motivate or inspire in every step of Nasa Freak's career journey."

According to Muqit, DJ Nasa Freak utilizes popular culture in the development of his career by marketing his creations on several platforms commonly used by the public. Skills and knowledge acquired through experiences in popular culture.

"Nasa Freak utilizes popular culture by creating combinations of songs or music that are currently trending, then processing them into several beats created by Nasa Freak himself. Therefore, there are specific skills and knowledge obtained by Nasa Freak himself through popular culture."

Muqit suggests that collaboration in the music industry is essential to produce a work. Starting from the song concept, technical abilities to play or manipulate beats, and also expanding connections to be known and recognized by the public. In this regard, Nasa Freak has also collaborated with Wisnu Santika as a local producer, resulting in excellent work enjoyed by music industry enthusiasts.

"Collaboration can affect the relationship between DJ performers. Because collaboration itself can expand the social network of those who collaborate with us. It's an honor for DJ Nasa Freak to collaborate with Wisnu Santika, known as a local producer, whose work is still evolving and enjoyed by the public to this day."

Muqit also expresses that the concrete benefit obtained from leveraging popular culture in Nasa Freak's career development is that popular culture can influence almost all

demographics, especially teenagers; it also serves as a benchmark in lifestyle changes and is an element in every career field, especially for DJs. Therefore, this greatly influences Nasa Freak's professional growth as an opportunity for job opportunities and public recognition.

"I think one of the clearest benefits NASA Freak has gained is a significant increase in visibility. By actively engaging in popular social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, NASA Freak has managed to attract more attention. For example, his videos collaborating with viral trends garner thousands of likes and shares, opening doors to be recognized by a large number of potential fans."

According to Muqit, the challenges faced by Nasa Freak in his career development include intense competition in the music industry's marketing and inconsistency in what has been started. Thus, Nasa Freak is only well-known by local residents of Sukabumi as a DJ who frequently performs at events, such as event organizers, coffee shops, or job invitations. Moreover, one of the obstacles in the career journey in the music industry is that there isn't always an event organizer inviting every week or every month, but despite that, career development must continue as it should.

"One of the main challenges we feel is the intense competition in the music industry today. Currently, there are so many talents and great voices out there, and competing to capture the audience's attention becomes increasingly difficult. That's indeed a significant challenge. We continue to strive to create authentic and unique music that sets us apart from others. But, of course, this requires continuous innovation and creativity to remain competitive at the desired level. Of course, it can be a bit stressful sometimes. However, we believe that challenges like this can also be a driving force to continually improve the quality of our music and become better as artists."

Discussion

The study was conducted using qualitative research methodology, as discussed in the research methodology sub-section. The qualitative research method known for producing descriptive data consisting of observed behaviors and statements from individuals in written or oral form. Popular culture for Nasa Freak is defined as a culture that is easily understood and applied in everyday life, known and liked by the majority of the population, and relevant to modern society's needs. Another important factor in Nasa Freak's success in the music business is popular culture. As a result, Nasa Freak follows what is considered enjoyable and popular by the general public to use popular culture to advance his professional development. Angger Dimas is one of the popular culture figures who motivates or inspires in every step of Nasa Freak's career journey.

Nasa Freak leverages popular culture in his career development by marketing his creations on several platforms commonly used by the public. Skills and knowledge acquired through experiences in popular culture include creating combinations of trending songs or music, then processing them into beats created by Nasa Freak himself. It can be concluded that there are specific skills and knowledge obtained by Nasa Freak through popular culture. Collaboration in the music industry is essential to produce a work. Starting from the song concept, technical abilities to play or manipulate beats, and also expanding connections to be known and recognized by the public. In this regard, Nasa Freak has also

collaborated with Wisnu Santika as a local producer, resulting in excellent work enjoyed by music industry enthusiasts.

The concrete benefits obtained from leveraging popular culture in Nasa Freak's career development include popular culture's ability to influence almost all demographics, especially teenagers. Popular culture also serves as a benchmark in lifestyle changes and is an element in every career field, especially for DJs. Therefore, this significantly influences Nasa Freak's professional growth as an opportunity for job opportunities and public recognition. The challenges faced by Nasa Freak in his career development include intense competition in the music industry's marketing and inconsistency in maintaining what has been started. Thus, Nasa Freak is only well-known by local residents of Sukabumi as a DJ who frequently performs at events, such as event organizers, coffee shops, or job invitations. Moreover, one of the obstacles in the career journey in the music industry is the lack of consistent invitations from event organizers every week or month. Nonetheless, career development must continue as planned despite these challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and extensive discussion presented in this study, the following conclusions emerge: Firstly, Nasa Freak adeptly utilizes popular culture as a cornerstone in his career advancement strategy. Leveraging various widely-used platforms, he effectively markets his creations to the public. His proficiency in merging trending songs or music and transforming them into unique beats showcases the skills and knowledge he has acquired through immersion in popular culture. Secondly, the role of popular culture in Nasa Freak's career trajectory proves immensely significant. Given its pervasive influence across demographics, particularly among teenagers, popular culture catalyzes lifestyle shifts, and sets benchmarks for societal trends. In professions like DJing, where staying attuned to current tastes is paramount, the impact of popular culture on Nasa Freak's professional journey cannot be overstated. It not only opens avenues for career opportunities but also enhances his visibility and recognition among the public. In essence, this study underscores the pivotal role of popular culture in Nasa Freak's career development, highlighting its power to shape his creative output, career opportunities, and public perception.

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