“Welcome to the Jungle!” Analyzing Factors That Affect Musician to Enter the Music Industry in Indonesia

Faisal Dhiqsan Abdurrachman

Music Industry in Indonesia always has its own ‘groove'; ups and downs with interesting pieces of moments that grew since Indonesian people knew music until the music itself become the big industry with lots of players that have been around. The dynamics of industry have made it some of the interesting business industry in Indonesia, as the substances are made at least from musical art and creativity of the player. Musician, as the main player of this industry, holds the important role of how this kind of industry will become in the later years. Many start-up musicians find it difficult to enter the industry because of unclear ways or patterns that have to be undergone.

This paper aims to analyze factors that affect start-up musician to enter the Indonesian music industry in a better and comprehensive way. The method that will be used is in-depth interview with grounded theory foundation (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) to people that at least ever lived inside the industry, so hopefully they can share their experiences and the author will find the similarities using triangulation data. The respondents will be chosen from several Indonesian musicians or people that live in the industry (could be musician’s manager or supporting team) with their respective era to give the author about the industry’s dynamics as different era maybe gets different stories and treatments.

This study expects that even the factors may be different for each musicians, the results will show general ‘patterns’ about the clearer way for start-up musician to enter the music industry including basic knowledge, better perspectives and understandings about the flow of industry and barriers to entry. Therefore, it will be applicable enough for new musicians to get into the Indonesian Music industry.

Keywords: Music Industry, Start-up Musician, Qualitative, In-Depth Interview, Grounded Theory,

1. Introduction

1.1 History of Music Industry in Indonesia

Music Industry in Indonesia had been on a very long journey back then. Since the first day of it, everything has changed, either from the musicality, genre that majoring the era or the musician itself.

The historic moment of Indonesian music industry particularly started since the first day of Lokananta Studio in Solo, Central Java in 1956. Lokananta Studio’s primary purpose was to help RRI (Radio Republik Indonesia) in archiving traditional music across regions in Indonesia. The Music Recording Industry started with anonym musicians/singers that were being unknown other than the traditional music itself.

*Faisal Dhiqsan Abdurrachman, School of Business and Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia. Email: faisal.dhiqsan@sbm-itb.ac.id
In 1970's, the private music recording bloomed. Koes Bersaudara (led by Tonny, Yon, Yok and Nomo) later became Koes Plus (Nomo then substituted with Murry, the only member who was not from Koeswoyo Family) were the stars in this era, popularize pop and rock 'n roll genre in Indonesia. In this era, genre of Dangdut (traditional genre from Indonesia) had been popular too, with Rhoma Irama and Soneta Band as the star of Dangdut Musician.

The following decade, in 1980's, the mainstream of music in Indonesia had been gone through the "sad-melancholy" ballad pop. The key figures for this genre are Obie Mesakh, Pance Pondaaq and Rinto Harahap. That was the era of “heartbroken” music with slow tempo. Actually, there were musicians that still keep on their track and not follow the trending genre, for example Vina Panduwinata, Fariz RM and Arie Wibowo (with Bill & Brod).

After Minister Harmoko commanded the musician for not producing “sad-melancholy”, the popular genre of last decade was decreased slow but surely. The year of 1990’s was the decade of experimental, there weren’t any mainstream / major genre that dominated the playground. Some outstanding name had lived in this era, for example Nike Ardilla with slow rock genre, Doel Sumbang for pop-dangdut genre and numerous pop band that arguably being devoted as “some of the best music group of all time in Indonesia” like Dewa 19, Padi, KLa Project, Sheila on 7, Kahitna and Java Jive. One of the interesting phenomenons is Malaysian music started to enter Indonesia’s music industry, especially when Malaysian musician, Ami Search, introduced his popular song “Isabella” to Indonesia.

The year of 2000’s was the decade of group band phenomena in Indonesia. Peterpan (now NOAH), Samsons, Dewa (earlier Dewa19 with new members), Ungu, Ten2Five, Sheila on 7 and Maliq ‘n D’Essentials were some example of it, although there were still many popular soloist such as Glenn Fredly, Tompi, Rio Febrian with many genres that being brought. Another phenomena happened in the middle of this decade when pop-melayu genre “exploded” in Indonesia (around 2004). The popular musician who brought this genre were ST12, Wali and Kangen Band.

2010’s is the era when almost all genre that were brought by musicians have their own groove and market. New Korean Wave that started to globalize gave impact to Indonesian Music Industry so boy band and girl band fever bloomed here. The key figures were SM*SH and Cherrybelle. At the same time, Japanese Pop Culture had penetrated too, with the result of JKT48 as the popular girl band group that brought this musical style. Other than that, the growth of Indie Music has been increasing and being known by market. Tulus, the one that bring pop-jazz genre, becoming popular in this decade, arguably for bringing high quality Indonesian Music when people can’t get enough with pop-melayu genre. The other key figures are Raisa and Afgan for their pop upbringing. This decade also indicate bigger market for Jazz musician and enthusiast, one of the reasons is the annual Java Jazz International Festival that reached its 10th anniversary in 2014.

1.2 Current Condition

The always-changing trending genre and musical style that ever lived throughout the era in Indonesia made this industry quite tricky to enter, then to gain sustainability once the musician enter the music industry. There are many factors that sometimes make new musician confuse, one of them is the difficulty to determine the important factors to enter this industry, as the barriers to entry sometimes unseen but real.


2. Literature Review

Music
Music is an ancient and powerful language: from the prehistoric calls that imitated the animals we hunted and the lullabies that sent our children to sleep, to the stirring beats that rallied our troops to battle and the harsh fanfares that terrified our enemies. It is a short step from the sacred hymns that rose in the immense cathedrals built to glorify God to the pop music thundering in stadiums commanded by rock stars. (Smithsonian, 2013)

Inductive Research
In inductive research, there is no specific hypothesis. Instead, data collection is guided by a set of broad questions or issues, and the data are used to generate a theory (or hypothesis) once sufficient evidence has been collected to reveal what's going on. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

Observational Research
Observational Research is defined as research that involves observation alone rather than active intervention. Some observational research examines possible cause-effect relationships by focusing on a specific, naturally occurring change, whereas other observational research aims at in-depth description and understanding rather than explanation, and may not look at change at all. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

Comparative Case Study Design
Comparative case study design involves carrying out studies of two or more cases in parallel and then comparing them. Building a simple comparison into case study research is a very valuable way to structure the research; it means that rather than simply describing results for a single case, you can compare the results for different cases, which gives plenty of scope for analysis and interpretation and can generate interesting questions for further research. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

Qualitative Interviews
Qualitative interviews are conversations about the subject of research in which the researcher imposes varying degrees of structure and direction. Most interviews are conducted with a single respondent, although they can also involve groups of people. They are categorized according to the amount of structure that is imposed; thus there are informal interviews (chats with people you meet as you go about your daily business – a central component of participant observation), unstructured interviews (free-ranging conversations that you arrange in advance in order to explore some aspect of the research topic) and semi-structured interviews (where you use a written ‘interview guide’ to make sure you cover a pre-defined list of topics). All forms of qualitative interview involve discussion back and forth between interviewer and interviewee and therefore, to a greater or lesser extent, can take their own direction according to the issues that come up. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

Unstructured Interviews
An unstructured interview is an in-depth conversation, usually arranged in advance, about a specific issue. It is particularly useful at the start of a research project in order to gather...
Sample Size in Qualitative Research
The aim of the sampling design in qualitative research should be to make sure that enough data is gathered to give an accurate understanding of the issues under investigation and the different perspectives that are present in the study population. In participant observation and in components of research based on informal interviews, no sample size is set in advance of data collection and indeed, sample size is not usually addressed. In contrast, in research based on sets of semi-structured interviews or focus groups an initial target sample size is usually set in advance and then some initial processing and analysis may be carried out in order to determine whether more data are needed. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

The Principle of Saturation
The key principle in assessing sample size in qualitative data sets is the principle of saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, in Bryman, 2004: 305). Saturation is reached when you can ‘make sense’ of the data in terms of identifying areas of consensus or other patterns, and when collecting more data produces little important new information or understanding that is relevant to your research questions. The concept of saturation is closely linked to that of triangulation and involves reviewing the data collected up to a certain point in order to compare what different people (or methods) tell you. If everyone has given the same information on a particular issue, then there is no point in asking more people about that issue. In contrast, if different people have given you different answers, then you need to collect more data until some kind of pattern emerges. Of course, total saturation is rarely possible; more data will almost always reveal something new. The key skill is in being able to assess what is ‘important’ and when you have ‘enough’ to address your research questions. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

Triangulation
Triangulation involves ‘taking bearings’ on a certain item of information from different perspectives. Triangulation is at the heart of building up and analyzing a set of interviews and is closely connected to the concept of saturation in qualitative sampling, which is used to determine when you have gathered enough data. In much inductive research triangulation must be done throughout data collection. Thus process of checking for consistencies and inconsistencies between different sources allows you to follow up on what you find from one day to the next. (Newing, Conducting Research in Conservation: A Social Science Perspective, 2011)

3. Methodology
The aim of this research is to find the important factors for start-up musician in Indonesia, limited to singer that wanted to go solo. The methods that will be used are primary data with in-depth interview using qualitative method based on inductive research that do not include hypothesis. This method is chosen because the author wants to gather the clearer view of this phenomenon in music industry in Indonesia without any perception about it before (open-minded). The secondary data are gathered from many literatures that are carefully chosen and complemented to research, although it is difficult to find literatures...
about music especially music industry in Indonesia. Some of the data are from Rolling Stone Magazine Indonesia as arguably the best music magazine in Indonesia.

3.1 Sample

In order to gain high quality data in qualitative in-depth interview, the interviewee should be carefully chosen. People who are interviewed are directly involved in Indonesian music industry. To help overcome potential response bias and gain multiple perspectives, the use of multiple samples is preferred (triangulation). (Yin, 2003)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Length of Interview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ane Yuliantine</td>
<td>Arie Wibowo’s Wife (Famous “fun-pop” singer in 1980’s)</td>
<td>1:06:56</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Aria Muhammad Suprayogi</td>
<td>Arie Wibowo’s Son (Famous “fun-pop” singer in 1980’s)</td>
<td>31:22</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Astrid Naya</td>
<td>Music Director of MNC Channel, Manager of Abenk Alter (new soloist in 2014)</td>
<td>59:21</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Echo Santoso</td>
<td>Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta, Person In Charge of Soulvibe’s Social Media (pop group band)</td>
<td>29:38</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Bima Pramudia</td>
<td>Manager of HiVi! (pop group band in Indonesia, debuted 2012)</td>
<td>45:22</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Febrian Nindyo</td>
<td>Vocal/Guitar player of HiVi! (pop group band in Indonesia, debuted 2012)</td>
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4. Findings

From the interviews with several respondents, there are some factors that affect start-up musician to enter the music industry in Indonesia. There are:

a. Genre

Genre plays an important role in this dynamic industry. Every single musician has their own musical style, regardless of the era when the musician is active in producing songs. Genre selection for musician can give either benefits or disadvantages, in case of success in mainstream music in Indonesia or not. For example, in 2004 when pop-melayu genre
was majoring the industry, the other genre find it difficult to get the mainstream attention. However, the special case sometimes happen when unique genre can get people's attention and success. One of the phenomenon was based on Arie Wibowo's experience.

“In that era, popular singers are bringing “sad-melancholy” ballad pop, for example like Rinto Harahap and Obie Mesakh. Arie Wibowo brought new genre that was “fun-pop” to the industry. With funny lyrics and happy upbringing, his single, Madu dan Racun, was the only one in 1987 that could sell more than one million copy of his album.” Ane Yuliantine (Arie Wibowo’s Wife)

“(Madu dan Racun) had been such a huge hit and was remade in many versions, including the international language like Mandarin.” Aria Muhammad Suprayogi (Arie Wibowo’s Son)

b. Radio

Radio has been the important part of music industry in Indonesia, both for the musician or the sustainability of Indonesian music industry. Radio has been established as the important channel for new single from start-up musician to be known by the listeners, and then, by people nationwide.

“There are many kinds of radio with different vision and mission, particularly give impact to what kind of song to be played and what is the target market. In Jakarta, there are two general types of radio, the first one is Hits Player and another one is Hits Maker. Hits Player radio only wanted to play song that is popular or being known by people. Hits Maker radios are some that give new single from new singer to be played and heard by listeners. To conclude, if a song that is played in Hits Maker radio become a huge hit, eventualy Hits Player radio will start to play that song as well.” Echo Santoso (Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta)

Radio’s another advantage is giving the new musician to know many people in music industry, then help them to reach more important people.

“Before Arie Wibowo began his career as a musician, he worked in Prambors Radio Jakarta and then worked in recording industry, opened his way to enter the music industry.” Ane Yuliantine (Arie Wibowo’s Wife)

c. Café

Start-up musician needs to let his/her song be known by people. Beside online or digital version, the off-air performance is important to give “tester” to people in live version and get some connection to people in the industry.

“Since the beginning from Salatiga and then moved to Jakarta, Arie Wibowo performed in Café. The reception was quite good and motivated Arie Wibowo to create more songs and finally accepted in the whole country.” Ane Yuliantine (Arie Wibowo’s Wife)

“In order to help musician to market his/her song, both online or offline performance is needed. Offline performance like jam session in Café is important too. Just like if a salesman wanted to sell new coffee brand, he/she should give the tester free, right?” Echo Santoso (Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta)

d. Attitude

Even at the level of humankind, attitude is needed to get along well with people. Musician has to have good attitude in order to make his/her way to the music industry easier.
“Musician has to have good manner, good attitude. If musician doesn’t get along well even with his crew, it will create uncomfortable situation.” Astrid Naya (Music Director of MNC Music Channel, Manager of Abenk Alter)

“Musician should not be arrogant, especially to people outside his/her team. People will not appreciate the musician even if the song is good and easy listening.” Echo Santoso (Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta)

e. Team
Supporting factors like team (both musical team and operational team) plays a very important role in the sustainability of the musician. Musician cannot stand on his/her own because there are too many problems and challenges that are faced by musician and need to be shared by team.

“Musician cannot stand on his/her own, because of that the solid team is very important. In searching the team member, musician should be “clicked” to all team member, even the crew studio.” Astrid Naya (Music Director of MNC Channel, Manager of Abenk Alter)

f. Networking
Strong point in networking is a must in musician team. Good relation with people in music industry helps the musician to get more job and more channel to promote new materials.

“Good relationship with people in music industry will help the musician to get more job, on air or off air. Sometimes people that have the job, like EO people, will search for musician to perform at their event, and then sometimes they will offer the job to the person that they know first, before offering it to other musician. Even the second musician has better quality than the first.” Echo Santoso (Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta)

g. Social Media
Social Media can be a good thing to maintain relationship between the musician and fans. Good things that are shared can make good branding of the musician in people’s perspective. In the long run, it can gain more attention and sustain the musician’s popularity.

“Social Media can give fans information about the daily life of the musician, the date of concert or even just the small thing like greetings to fans and follower of the social media. Social Media for musician that later become artist, is like a tool to sustain their existence in music industry, even if the musician is not in the state of promoting their album or single.” Echo Santoso (Producer of Cosmopolitan FM Jakarta)

5. Conclusion / Implications

Based on the findings, there are several important factors that affect start-up musician to enter the music industry in Indonesia. The first one is Genre. Genre is important because it is the foundation of the musician’s faith in their music. Determining the mainstream genre in music industry and calculating the probability of start-up musician’s own genre to enter the music industry in Indonesia is a must to be done. The second one is Channel to enter this industry. The major channel of on air section is Radio. Radio is a start base for new single/song to enter the mainstream people. On the other hand, Café is the off air method to give “tester” to people in live about the musician’s new material. Good attitude is a must checked list for musician. This thing will lead the musician to get better connection and
then can recruit better team to help the musician survive in the industry. Finally for maintaining fanbase, Social Media is chosen as the better connection between musician and his/her fans.

Reference