Indie Music Counterculture towards Indonesia Pop Music Domination
(A Literature Review)

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Abstract

Music is a communication instrument which is emphatically affected by culture of the place where the music grows. While learning certain language particularly involves the knowledge of the language's culture, music is likewise. Music reflects life and daily features such as joy, suffering, and frustration. It generates both human intellectuality and feelings, while music has become integral part of humankind across the centuries. Music is created from men's affection towards life and based on their life's memories. Music first originated as human beings took place. Indie Music is born from the boredom and rebellion towards mainstream culture on music industry, while giant recording labels only offers market-oriented music and highly-profitable music products, resulting to the sacrifice of creativity of musicians and related-artists.Talking about Indie Music, it becomes part of subculture created from the boredom and the antithesis towards mainstream culture in music industry, whereas recording labels or companies will only create music products which are widely marketable and commercially profitable for the companies; and it results to the homogenization of creativity by commercial purposes. What so-called "mainstream" band groups cannot freely identify themselves any longer with their particular music genres. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, when they would like to perform in media such as radio, TV and recording labels, they often have to exchange their musical idealism with popularity in culture industry. Subculture is culture derived from dominant culture and also an entire movement towards dominant cultural resistance. This movement and resistance is not an armed movement, yet featured with fashion, music, ideology and life style while subculture is a place to attain pleasure, desire and attention.

Introduction

Payung Teduh with the song akad was topped the charts in Indonesia, the lyrics are simple but quite comfortable to hear the reason for the acceptance of indie bands in the community of Indonesia. *Payung Teduh* is well-known for its simplicity on lyrics, becoming one of reasons why the band can comfort for Indonesian listeners. *Payung Teduh* and other Indie band, *Efek Rumah Kaca* – with top song "*Lagu Cinta Melulu*", have played an ace card in destructing the homogeneity of mainstream Indonesian music industry. Music has become human communication media for self-actualization, and there is no any human's activity which excludes music. Monthy (2002) says that Music is communication tool that is emphatically affected by culture of the place where the music grows. In addition, Seeger said that music is a traditional form of communication which incorporates interactions and engagements between singers, songwriters / composers and listeners (Seeger, 1962; Ulusoy, 2018). While learning certain language particularly involves the knowledge of the language's culture, music is likewise.

Music is the source of the most intimate personal experience which can be enjoyed personally and collectively, for example, in public events and concerts where the music is performed. Music can also collaborate historical and cultural features. Publicly, musical involvement can become one source of experiences which significantly affects and likely inspires to think and make something different; therefore, music is ordained as the universal language which transgresses the cultures, ethnicities, ages and social classes (Clarke, 2015).

Music reflects daily things such as joy, suffering and frustration. It stimulates both intellectual and feeling aspects of human beings, while it has become an integral part of human life across centuries. Music is created from human's affection towards life and based on their life's memories. Flashing back to the initial period of music, the musical creation will likely be equal to the period where human beings began. The musical taste is convinced to be functioned as the badge of social identity which likely develops in harmony with the stereotyped adjustment towards ourselves (Lonsdale & North, 2017).

Now, Indonesian music has become a host in its own homeland, while listeners enjoy more national musicians' works than foreigners' ones. However, although being supported recently by TV stations' broadcasts, Indie Music has only recently brought into its growing popularity, whereas Indonesian bands with genres of Malay Pop, Boy Band dominates Indonesian music charts with their similarities and homogeneity. While music has become a competitive and highly interesting business, musical commodification infiltrates musical pieces, as the music artists seek only for profit, business-order oriented and highly dictated by recording labels. Due to market-based directives, it

results to the people's indirect indoctrination to be project of mass-product industry, passive orientation and pseudo-freedom of expression.

Here are Indonesia Indie band groups with their genres and establishment year:

Table 1. Indonesia Indie band groups with their genres and establishment year

No	Indie Band	Genres	Established at year
1.	PAS band	Rock,hip hop, punk	1990
2.	Pestol Aer	Punk	1992
3.	Pure Saturday	Pop	1994
4.	Naif	Pop	1995
5.	Burgerkill	Progressive Rock	1995
6.	Superman is Dead	Alternative Rock	1995
7.	Rocket Rockers	Punk Rock	1998
8.	Mocca	Pop	1999
9.	The Upstairs	Pop	2001
10.	efek rumah kaca	Pop	2001
11.	Gugun and The Blues Shelter	Alternative Rock	2004
12.	The S.I.G.I.T	Rock and Roll	2005
13.	Payung Teduh	Fusi, Folk, keroncong	2007

Some of the aforementioned bands have ever organized or performed in international stages, such as:

1. Mocca Band have collaborated with a Japanese recording label, Excellent Records, and organize a concert in Okinawa, 2004; where currently Mocca is based in South Korea;
2. The S.I.G.I.T has become the headlines of some music media Australian Music News after its feature with Dallas Crane in a concert in 2007.;
3. Burger Kill has been invited in one of privileged musical occasions in Australia in 2009;
4. Superman is Dead (SID) has organized an international tour to the U.S. (Vans Warped Tour) in 2009;

5. *Gugun Blues Shelter* has been performed as the opening band for the Music Legend's Bon Jovi in a concert named Hard Rock Calling, held in London, 2011;

6. *Payung Teduh* has been invited to perform in Kick Shimokitazawa Cafe, Tokyo, on January 2013, as the collaboration of Ivy League Music and Café Kick on the promotion of Payung Teduh's Album titled *Dunia Batas*;

7. *Efek Rumah Kaca* (ERK), has been invited to perform in *South* By South West (SXSW) Texas Music Festival on March 2018, in USA.

This paper uses literature review study, how are Indonesia indie musician doing breakthrough towards the hegemony and standardization of relatively stagnant and homogenized in Indonesian entertainment music industry, particularly until the emergence of indie bands such as *Payung Teduh*, Mocca, ERK and so on as the counterculture towards the mainstream popular music. Punaji (2010) says that literature study shall summarize and concisely re-explain the relevant sources of certain topics as found in books, scientific papers and journal articles.

Literature Review
Definition of Culture

As social creatures, human as individual will be determined by group which grows to be society, which will be based on values, norms, and behaviors incorporating to be a particular culture. Taylor an anthropologist adds in his book entitled Primitive Culture, said culture is a whole of complexity which contains sciences, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and other abilities which are summarized by human as the society member (Ranjabar, 2006). In Toomey's definition, culture is the system of meaning which can be learned and stimulate identity share within certain community, which based on traditional patterns, beliefs, norms, symbols, and meanings which shared within various levels in community (Ting Toomey, 1999; (Gudykunt, 2005). Culture is also perceived as the common system of meanings, and inherited through socialization process within groups, which interpersonally require symbols, ideas, knowledge and values from one to one generation (Fischer, 2009). Every culture consists of communities and groups which will create meanings and understandings towards common set of the way of life, as culture will be shaped by many groups with common values (Weinberg, 2003).

Definition of Indie Music

In general, Indie Music was born from the boredom and rebellion towards mainstream culture on music industry, while giant recording labels only offers market-oriented music and highly-profitable music products, resulting to the sacrifice of creativity of musicians and related-artists. Moreover, media hegemony supports narratives which promote advantages for giant recording labels (Haynes, 2018). Youngsters symbolically possess ability to establish such certain active, creative and productive relations which shapes their culture (Barker, 2004). Subculture resulting from

performances often controverts with traditional community concept, which perceives Indie community as an underground community, antagonism, and violence-associated group (Stiffer, 2017). Indie as independence within a particular subculture or genre starts from the identification towards subculture of *underground pop* in the UK which evolved between the Punk and Post-Punk era from 1977 to 1986. UK in 1977 was featured by the emergence of Sex Pistols' single titled "Nevermind the Bollocks, while in 1986, *New Musical Expresss* (NME) Magazine released its edition with C86 Compilation Cassette as its bonus (Naldo, 2012).

The term of Indie, shortened form of Independent, is derived from the UK youngsters who like to cut certain words to be easier used in informal conversations, such as Distribution to be Distro, British to be Brit, and so on. Since that period, the new meaning of discourse on Independent was associated with indie music, where the music has the main vision to be independent from global production of music market (Beal, 2009). Looking into music industry perspectives, Indie label refers to the type of music produced and distributed by individuals or enterprises which are unaffiliated with giant music companies such as Warner Music Group and Sony Music (Nelson, 2018). Another typical Indie music is that it creates autonomous efforts from music artists away from mass marketing and giant companies (Hesmondhalgh, 1999; Houston, 2012). Indie is not a newbie in music world, since started in the UK in 1970 following Punk Music emergence, the spirit of D.I.Y (Do it yourself) spread among the society, including in the way of producing music recordings, and this phenomenon drove to the emergence of independent music, or Indie music movement as we know later. While these values of the Punker's spread globally; however, in Indonesia's cases, the culture on work ethics and culture of the Punkers are not really adopted, yet only fashion styles are imitated. The idea of DIY is used to create an alternative room where musicians, artists and people with shared ideas can create autonomous sphere for political as well as artistic things built from community and identity (O'Connor, 2008; Threadgold, 2017). DIY practices provide freedom for Indie musicians and band in avoiding production and distribution model of music industry. Musicians may create their career paths and thoroughly maintain their control for their music pieces (Jian, 2018).

Unfortunately, the term Indie is inappropriately associated with the bands and musicians who play mainstream music but record and release their songs independently. It cannot be categorized as Indie music because their music is not Indie music even though their production patterns are similar to Indie music. The production patterns of Indie music is later well-known as Distro. Therefore, Indie actually adopts features of Punk's resistance culture, even though the artists are not Punk-fashioned. Sometimes, Indie music uses "closed-roled system," which means the system for eliminating alternative number of roles actors. The roles are determined and the people within the system are assessed. The understandings on who and how people will behave create basic general knowledge in the group. Therefore, broader language is not required and

learned (Littlejohn, 2009). People participating in indie ethos often express the mockery against dominant culture which humiliatingly serve to status and awards (Drew, 2011). Indie music is defined and identified as the musical originality, while the musical crietion are formulated by knowledge on music world, genre, and region (geography) to produce an authentic music work and its dissolved borders are supported by networking (Kruse, 2010). Internet has created huge opportunities while an enormous number of musicians and artists can gain thousands listeners everyday, and it is used to counter music hegemony and mainstream music producers (Nevue, 2003; Haynes, 2018). Then, adjusting with international esthetics and adopting other musical pieces as their own works, indie musicians mainly work for implementing middle-class project (Liechty, 2003; Luvaas, 2009) For example, in 1992, *Puppen* started their career with death metal music, and in 1993, *Koil* served industrial rock music.

Definition of Pop Music

Popular music, commonly known as pop music mainstream, cannot separate market logic and music mainstream, while collaboration of both things has implicated to the ideology formation for their listeners. According to Horkheimer and Adorno, pop music is the beginning of cultural industrial logic movement which emerges as the homogenization of taste's project as it unconsciously inhabits within the human subconscious. In concrete, the trend occurs from homogenized behavior, style, and mindset construction; and this has represented their collective culture. In the culture coverage area, pop music industry covers two potential aspects, which are economic and cultural power. Due to two main powers which mainly situate within differences between economical and cultural value, pop music listeners taste is difficult to be controlled (Storey, 2007; Khadavi, 2014). Pop Music has also similarities in certain aspects. According to Adorno, as pop music is standardized both from its musical and lyrical patterns, pop music's songs can easily be exchanged with other pop songs, while pop music are mainly mechanical which means that certain detail can be replaced from one to other songs without real effect on their musical structure due to their standardized patterns. Music pop is often associated with modern and instant styles, emotional intention in creating music to find pleasure and better state of mind (Dolfsma, 2004). Pop musicians are formed through frames which shaped by media and music industry (Venrooij, 2011).

Indie Music as Part of Subculture

Subculture concept covers long historical accounts in social sciences, while the concepts tries to define and describe deviated behavior as well as to communicate cultures shaped by youth in case of resistance and smashing established norms in the society's structure. Subculture is often associated with the silence barometer in expression and the basis of cultural transformation in human life (Blackman, 2014;

Johansson, 2017). Subculture always develops in line with time (Muggleton &Weinzierl, 2003; Ulusoy, 2016). Due to placement and response towards subculture between affirmation and rejection to commercialization, resistance, rebellion and compatibility, subculture cannot automatically be related to societal structure which has been originally established (Hebdige, 1988; Johansson, 2017).

Subculture is culture derived from dominant culture and also an entire movement towards dominant cultural resistance. This movement and resistance is not an armed movement, yet featured with fashion, music, ideology and life style while subculture is a place to attain pleasure, desire and attention (Johansson, 2017). In subculture, culture refers to the whole ways of life or map of meanings where this world will be understandable before their cultural membership. "Sub" is connoted as specific condition which different from predominantly mainstream society, therefore, authentic subculture depends on the binary set of mass-reduced and unauthentic dominant culture and mainstream culture (Barker, 2004). Generally, subculture is coherent and non-homogenized, which can mean a liquid and finite process. On the other hand, mainstream culture or common culture are complex and continuously transforms under market directives. Individual subculture may determine views, ideology and personal lifestyle in order to establish group identity among society (Ulusoy, 2016). The intensively growing information and communications technology has played role in globalizing mass media as well as entertainment, transport, financial, business and economics; while human behavior and lifestyle becomes more critical and sensitive towards changes (Moelyono, 2010). Subculture is perceived as one of deviated expression or symbolic reaction response from dominant social values. In theoretical perspectives, we often indicate intrinsic differences between subculture and mainstream culture – while accumulated subculture can be consumed by mainstream culture; however, the relationship between sub- and dominant- culture tends to less accommodate subculture contributions (Hebdige, 1979; Hodkinson, 2002; Johanson 2017). Indie has been a movement and part of subculture established on creativity identified by musical perspective differences (mainstream and non-mainstream) and intends to be independent from dominant culture. Indie musicians and artists realize their socially-marginalized situation in society (Shaw, 2013).

Findings and Discussion

Culture industry tends to mark things with similar identification, while a system of entire uniformity is shaped by music, film, radio and magazine (Adorno, 2014). By this view, product diversity is an illusion which provides all people's needs and does not leave people without their coverage, while disseminated meanings spread towards society and create cultural dimensions. In addition, culture product in arts and entertainment is a reflective communication form which marks global changes and development, which

facilitate society to examines inherent values, find extended questions on ongoing issues and distribute them to society.
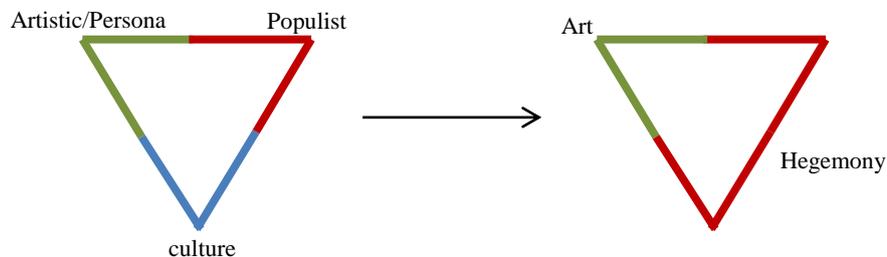

Figure 1. Music Industry Standardization According to Adorno (Naldo,2012)

Cultural Product may introduce new ideas and challenge existing values by offering novel perspectives about the world where they live. Arts and entertainment indirectly affect physical and spiritual life, as well as pleasure which supports better state of mind. This experience has widely provided certain values where society gains a collective identity, as explain with following figure 2 where indie music has become a form of counterculture towards pop music.
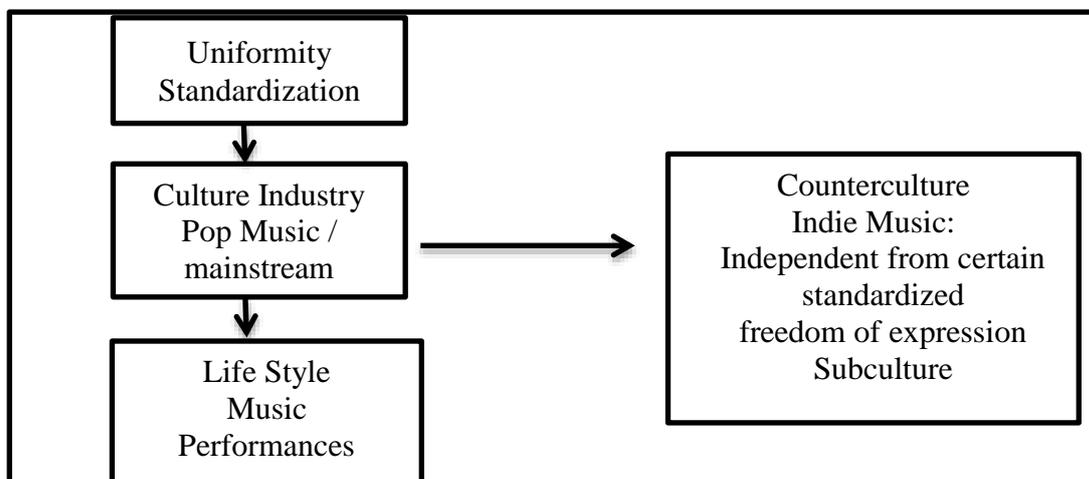

Figure 2. Indie Music: Counterculture from culture industry

In modern society, according to Adorno and Horkheimer, individual freedom is consciously slaved by capitalized society, even though individual freedom can be perceived (Poespowardojo, 2016). This results to conservative tendency in maintaining existing value and imposes society to conform through cultural value, while music industry has been trapped in commercialism paradigm, which refers to certain free-trade rules, mass-produced contents and their consequences, and relationship between suppliers and media consumers (Mcquail, 2010). In Indonesia, Indie Music has

successfully resisted the domination of market-oriented pop music. 1n 1999 in Bandung, Fast Forward (FFWD) Records generates indie music taste, while its partner's Mocca Band has successfully seized the most remarkable achievement among Indonesian Indie community by releasing its first album "My Diary," selling 150,000 disk and organizing tour to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Japan (Luvaas, 2009). In current millennium era, band popularity is not determined by the number of album selling any longer yet depends on its YouTube viewers. For example, *Payung Teduh's* single "Akad" has 76 million viewers and attained the highest numbers of Youtube viewers among indie artists. Another example is PAS band, as they started traditions to make recordings in indie methods and they could sell the Album "Four Through the SAP" by 5,000 copies. Referring to PAS Band's achievement, a number of rock and metal bands adopt indie methods. In the beginning of Indonesia's Indie music, we may acknowledge *Puppen, Koil, Burger Kill, Rotten To The Cure*, and some others (Sudury, 2014). In Bandung, the emergence of indie was noted as the Band *Pure Saturday* first and independently released their recordings in 1996, and they produced 1,000 disks through mail-service marketing of music magazine in Jakarta (Zakaria, 2012). In Jakarta in 1995, Stepping far into 2017, the phenomenal indie Band *Payung Teduh* gained artistic award for music category from Indonesian National Magazine *Tempo*, as they are notably known with songs "*Akad*," "*Sedang dalam Pelukan*," and "*Angin Pujaan Hujan*" (Safitri, Dewi, 2013). The figure have proven that indie music has been widely acepted by Indonesian society.

Whereas subculture is culture of dominant and mainstream trends and movement on dominant culture resistance, uniformity across cultures and arts becomes artificiality which serves profit-oriented capitalists and leaves the music consumers have indifferent references. According to Adorno, standardization has created culture industry which then creates pop music as well as pseudo-music, life and performance styles. Indie music has confronted Pop Music and created counterculture. Indonesian Indie band performances in international stages has thoroughly proven that indie music has significant influence and achievement as well as international recognition without the intervention of giant recording labels and market-oriented capitalists which always drive uniformity of pop music.

Conclusion

An irony, Indonesia is a country that has a wealth of culture it seems poor culture, resulting from the uniformity of music pieces which broadcasted in mass media and homogeneity of music themes. Rich-content songs with sophisticated composition and mesmerizing cultural features has been abandoned due to market-oriented capitalism and standardizations in music industry. While there is also initiative in private TV broadcasters to revive local ethnic music and cultural music, this is a beneficial opportunity for Indonesian musicians to dominate their national music landscape – however, the music quality does not seem as critical matter and uniformity is more

promoted rather than uniqueness. In that arid desert of national music landscape, Indonesia has some oases coming from indie band such as *Mocca, ERK, The SIGIT, Superman Is Dead, Burger Kill* with their international exposes, and *Payung Teduh* with their notable achievement in on-line publications. Referring to the significance of information and communications technologies, Indie music artists and stakeholders have to collaborate and utilize all the social, technical and economical modality to play role in the counterculture towards mainstream pop music industry which stresses only for commercialization and uniformity. Indonesia indie band performances in a number of international stages has broken the domination and standardization of Indonesian pop music in entertainment industry. By these achievements, Indie Music in Indonesia has been quite successful to survive from hegemony of capital-dominated music industry structure.

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