Dangdut Songs as Soundtracks for Content on TikTok

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Abstract

    This study aims to investigate how dangdut songs are used as background music for content on the TikTok application. This study employed descriptive qualitative method to examine the popularity of five selected dangdut koplo songs among its content creators. Data collection techniques involved direct documentation of available data within the application. The findings indicate that TikTok plays a significant role in shaping trends in content types and popularizing songs used as background music. Songs such as "Ngopi Maszeh," "Rungkad," "Mendung Tanpo Udan," "Ojo Dibandingke," and "Los Dol" are frequently chosen by TikTok content creators as background music. The choice of content types by creators is influenced by the stimulating or calming musical elements in the selected songs. Thus, TikTok not only serves as an entertaining social platform but also stands as a major force in influencing cultural trends and supporting the global music industry through innovative and inspirational means

INTRODUCTION

Dangdut music is a distinctive genre originating from Indonesia that has gained international recognition. In Indonesia, dangdut is extremely popular and beloved by music enthusiasts from various backgrounds. Targeting primarily the youth, dangdut music is characterized by its pulsating dance rhythms and its messages of populism, with both Islamic and secular variations (Frederick, 1982). The unique feature of dangdut, marked by the accompaniment of tabla and kendang, lies in its rhythm, which irresistibly encourages listeners to dance, regardless of whether the song's lyrics convey joy or sorrow.

Contextually, dangdut music serves as general entertainment for its audience. Textually, it can adapt and evolve with the times and other musical genres, which gives rise to new variations such as dangdut koplo, congdut, rokdut, and dangdut pop, among others. These variations hold an equal status with other forms of music (Muttaqin, 2006).

Dangdut music includes many sub-genres, such as dangdut koplo, which often features songs about heartbreak, everyday problems of young couples, and similar themes, popularized in the local music scene by Didi Kempot. Didi Kempot's success in introducing koplo music to the Indonesian music ecosystem has brought forth new names that have enriched and boosted the popularity of koplo music in the country, such as Orkes Musik Sera, New Pallapa, Happy Asmara, and Denny Caknan. The rising popularity of dangdut koplo songs is also closely linked to the growth of the TikTok mobile app, which is widely embraced by the public.

TikTok is a social networking application and audio-video platform from China, launched by Zhang Yiming in November 2017, after initially launching a similar app called Douyin in September 2016 for the Chinese market. This audio-visual-based social media platform is popular among various age groups. The duration of TikTok usage is influenced by age, with younger users having more limited usage due to parental supervision and school responsibilities (Chandra

Kusuma & Oktavianti, 2020). This app provides social satisfaction and entertainment to its users through user-friendly features. It serves as a platform where users can freely express themselves and share their creations for personal enjoyment, with close friends, or with a wider audience (Rahmanda & Benuf, 2021). It is a video-sharing social media platform which allows its users to create and share their videos on the platform to be viewed by the public via the internet. In Indonesia, TikTok is widely used for entertainment and focuses on personal content consumption (Hidayatullah et al., 2021). Recently, it has also gained popularity for educational and informational content (Nurdiansyah et al., 2021). This social media platform enables users to create videos up to three minutes long, which can then be uploaded to their accounts. These videos can be viewed by other users, and if they like the content, they can press a heart-shaped button to show their appreciation. To protect user privacy, TikTok offers options for users to choose who can view their uploaded videos, including options such as only the user, close friends, or the public.

The popularity of contemporary dangdut songs, which are frequently featured as trending content on TikTok, has sparked the researchers' interest in investigating how dangdut music is used as background music for content on this app. This inquiry led to this study titled "The Use of Dangdut Songs as Soundtracks for Content on the TikTok App," conducted using qualitative research method.

METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative method to examine the popularity of several selected dangdut koplo songs featured by content creators on TikTok. Qualitative research is used to study real-world objects in their natural state (Sugiyono, 2013). Data collection involved gathering direct documentation from the TikTok app, conducted from July 5, 2023, to August 28, 2023, and was continuously updated until May 22, 2024. The collected data consisted of five

dangdut songs that were most frequently used as background soundtracks in TikTok posts, sourced from the app's song recommendation feature.

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques, with supporting evidence presented. Data analysis involves organizing and sorting data into patterns, categories, and basic descriptive units, which allows for the formulation of working hypotheses suggested by the data (Astuti et al., 2022). Descriptive analysis is a research method that collects data as it is and then organizes, processes, and analyzes this data to provide an overview of the issues at hand (Sugiyono, 2008).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

TikTok as a Trend Mediator

TikTok is a global social media and video platform developed and released by Zhang Yiming. It was initially launched as Douyin in September 2016 for the Chinese market and rebranded as TikTok for the global market in November 2017, available on the Apple, Android, and Amazon app stores. Shortly after its release, the app has gained significant popularity among young people as a platform for self-expression and the promotion of their work through short, simple videos. With over one billion active users worldwide and a broad user base spanning various demographics, the platform's influence on pop culture and music trends is significant.

When first downloading and installing the TikTok app on a mobile phone, users are advised to create a new TikTok account, just like with other mobile apps. Users are also given the option to receive notifications actively or only when they open the app. Once registered as a new user, TikTok presents a page featuring different types of content based on user interests, such as music, sports, video games, dance, health, and various other content categories. After selecting their preferred content types, users are directed to a "For You" page, which displays a mix of content tailored to their interests and some popular videos from around them. The high volume of users viewing a particular type of content on TikTok creates a phenomenon known as trending, where specific content or search terms become extremely popular within a relatively short period. Content related to politics, celebrity news, natural disasters, and everyday humorous videos can gain significant popularity as TikTok users engage with and boost them to become trending.

A distinctive feature of TikTok is the "For You" feed, which serves as the main display of the app. It allows users to view one video at a time, swipe up or down to watch new or previous posts, and access a wide range of music and audio references that accompany each video. Users can support videos they like by pressing the heart button, commenting on the video, adding it to their favorites, sharing it with friends and family, or even reporting it and opting not to see similar content if they do not like it. In the lower right corner of each video, a spinning disc icon provides access to more information about the attached audio: videos that have used it, the song itself, or an option to add it to the user's favorites (Anderson et al., 2021). This process has led to the creation of popular content, trending challenges, and viral memes—both audio and video—that are continuously replicated, gaining significance, and adding meaning among user communities (Zulli & Zulli, 2022).

Dangdut Songs as Soundtrack Choices for TikTok Content Creators

TikTok is primarily driven by algorithms, which distinguish it from other social media apps that rely on the follow-and-follower concept (Anderson et al., 2021). Even videos from users with no followers can quickly gain user engagement and appear on other users' feeds by taking advantage of the popularity of the audio or hashtags used. In addition, these algorithms contribute to the success of artists who release music as audio on TikTok by boosting the popularity of their

songs through trending video content. This phenomenon has made TikTok an ideal platform for promoting new music, with songs frequently going viral and sparking new trends that captivate millions of viewers (Vizcaíno-Verdú & Aguaded, 2022).

The uses and gratifications theory reveals that social media users utilize applications to experience selective, efficient, and direct contact with others for their interpersonal communication satisfaction, and as a continuous way to seek approval and support from others (Leung, 2009). In addition, popularity in music refers to the level of recognition, acceptance, and widespread appeal of a song, artist, or genre among the public or a specific audience. It measures how well a musical work resonates with listeners and captures their attention and interest (Soares Araujo et al., 2019).

During the period from July 5, 2023, to August 28, 2023, data were collected from the TikTok app to examine how certain types of content influence the popularity of dangdut songs. The data were updated until May 22, 2024. Based on the song recommendation feature provided by the TikTok app, five dangdut songs were identified as the most frequently used as sounds for various types of TikTok content.

- Ngopi Maszeh- Happy Asmara
- Rungkad - Happy Asmara
- Mendung Tanpo Udan - Ndarboy Genk
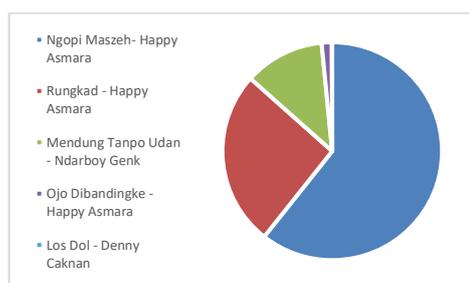- Ojo Dibandingke - Happy Asmara
- Los Dol - Denny Caknan

Figure 1. List of Dangdut Songs with the Most Usage on the TikTok App. Source: (TikTok Creative Center, n.d.) May 22, 2024

Dangdut has become an integral part of Indonesian music culture, with its presence increasingly reinforced by its role on social media platforms like TikTok. In this context, dangdut songs have become a popular choice for TikTok content creators to use as audio for their videos. For example, "Ngopi Maszeh" by Happy Asmara, with 4.2 million posts; "Rungkad" by Happy Asmara, with 1.8 million posts; "Mendung Tanpo Udan" by Ndarboy Genk, with 819,000 posts; "Ojo Dibandingke" by Happy Asmara, with 103,300 posts; and "Los Dol" by Denny Caknan, with 3,919 posts on TikTok, demonstrate how dangdut songs have flooded the platform as audio sources for various types of content. This phenomenon illustrates a mutualistic symbiosis between musicians and TikTok users, where musicians gain free promotion for their work, while TikTok users enjoy popular songs and emerging trends (see Figure 1).

Content Types Preferred by Users of Popular Dangdut Song Sounds

Through various challenges, lip-syncing, dance routines, and other creative expressions, songs by Happy Asmara, Ndarboy Genk, and Denny Caknan have brought excitement and joy to TikTok users from diverse backgrounds. These songs not only serve as a source of entertainment but also expand the reach and popularity of dangdut music among the younger generation who are active on social media. Figure 2 shows that the diverse content created and uploaded by creators can be categorized into two types: entertainment content and educational and informational content.

Education involves improving the knowledge and skills of individuals or groups through learning practices or presenting information in the form of data, design, facts, or other observational methods based on human experience or thought (Craven Ruth, Hirnle Constance, 2013). Educational and informational content refers to videos or content created with the goal of increasing viewers' knowledge and insight. In contrast, entertainment or recreation is a concept, idea, or outcome of human experience presented with the aim of providing

relaxation and enjoyment, typically in a setting that ensures the desired recreational experience (Spillane, 1987). Entertainment content, therefore, is created with the purpose of providing pleasure and relief to its audience.
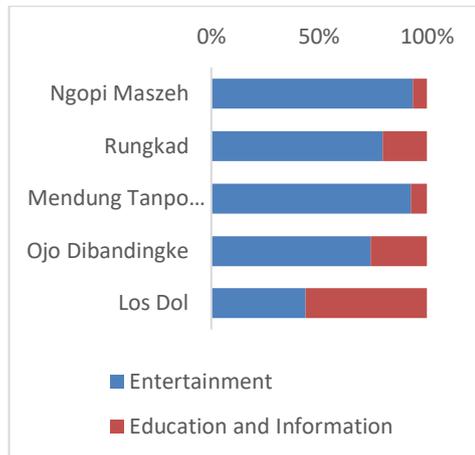

Figure 2. Most Popular Content Types for Dangdut Koplo Sounds on TikTok. Source: (TikTok Creative Center, n.d.) May 22, 2024

The core of TikTok's appeal lies in the ease with which users can create and share engaging short videos. Among the five songs selected for the data, it was found that entertainment content is much more popular among TikTok users compared to informational and educational content. This popularity is often driven by dance challenges set to catchy and danceable songs.

Video content from @ayutingting, @aureliehermansyahatta, @tinatoon101, and @esta.pramanita, featuring dance challenges, has significantly influenced the popularity of the song 'Ngopi Maszeh,' which makes it predominantly featured in entertainment content. In contrast, educational content for 'Ngopi Maszeh' is led by @orangmedan10. Similarly, the comedy sketch by @adamalhidayat and the lipsync video of 'Rungkad' by @attahalilintar have played a major role in driving creators to contribute to the 'Rungkad' trend with entertaining and humorous content. Among informational content, posts by @susiloparis757699 and

@masfeb28 are the most-watched. Meanwhile, the song 'Mendung Tanpo Udan' by Ndarboy Genk went viral after three members of the popular K-pop group NCT Dream featured the dance trend on their @official_nct account, which attracted hundreds of thousands of other content creators to use the 'Mendung Tanpo Udan' sound in entertainment content. In addition, tutorial videos by @rio_photolab and @buket_magelang_utara represent the most viewed educational content on TikTok. Furthermore, the TikTok account @anakcukong has been a major player in the surge of entertainment content using the 'Ojo Dibandingke' sound. Informational videos about college and work from @collegewitherik and @arfianamaulina are the most popular in the educational and informational category for 'Ojo Dibandingke.' Lastly, for 'Los Dol' by Denny Caknan, despite having significantly lower popularity compared to the other four songs, both entertainment and informational and educational content have balanced popularity, led by videos from @paten_motor and @sinyalkuatluas respectively (see Figure 2).

Musical Elements of Using Dangdut Songs as Soundtracks for TikTok Content

TikTok's algorithm plays a crucial role in enhancing the visibility of popular content. The platform promotes videos that generate high levels of engagement and interaction. This means that the more users engage with and share a particular dance video, the more likely it is to appear on other users' "For You" pages, thereby expanding its reach. In addition, stimulating musical elements typically feature unpredictable and relatively brisk tempos, varied textures, and unexpected accents, whereas sedative musical elements are usually characterized by a stable, consistent, and predictable tempo (Djohan, 2006).

When uploading videos on TikTok, content creators can choose background

music with durations of 30 seconds, 1 minute, or 10 minutes. The relatively short duration of these options encourages creators to select music segments that best fit their content. For entertainment content, creators typically opt for stimulating musical segments that are varied and engaging. In contrast, educational and informational videos often feature the more consistent and sedative segments of a song, usually found at the beginning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussion conducted on the use of dangdut songs as sound content on the TikTok application, it can be concluded that TikTok plays a significant role in directing trends and popularizing various songs used as background music for its content. TikTok continues to be a key player in the cultural shifts and the global music industry. Songs such as "Ngopi Maszeh," "Rungkad," "Mendung Tanpo Udan," "Ojo Dibandingke," and "Los Dol" are some examples of dangdut songs frequently used as soundtracks for various types of TikTok content.

Moreover, dangdut songs are widely used as background music not only for entertaining video content that brings joy to viewers but also for educational content aimed at enhancing knowledge and insights among TikTok users. The musical elements in the selected song clips determine the suitability of the song for the type of video content uploaded by creators. Stimulating music is used for fun and entertaining content, while soothing music is chosen to accompany informative videos. Thus, TikTok serves not only as a social platform for entertainment but also as a major force in shaping cultural trends and supporting the global music industry in innovative and inspiring ways.

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