



Virtual Keroncong Music Performances As An Effort To Maintain Their Existence During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on various sectors of the creative industry, especially in the performing arts. The prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused activities in the performing arts sector such as performing arts and music concerts which are usually held regularly to be unable to run. To maintain its existence, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam held a virtual keroncong music performance through social media platforms. The purpose of this study is to identify and describe the use of social media platforms in organizing virtual keroncong music performances as an effort to maintain the existence and media promotion of musical works. This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Data collection techniques were done through observation, interviews, and document studies. Triangulation was carried out to test the validity of the data obtained before being analyzed using the stages of data collection, data presentation, data reduction, and conclusions. The results show that O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam uses social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram as a medium to organize virtual music performances as a promotion and introduces works and maintains their existence. Social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram are very effective, practical, and efficient promotional media because information uploaded through YouTube and Instagram accounts can be conveyed easily and can be reached and accessed quickly and easily by people around the world using smartphones, laptops, and computers connected to the internet.

INTRODUCTION

Keroncong is one of the music that has grown and developed in Indonesia since the early 1900s and has experienced various dynamics until now (A'yun & Rachman, 2019; Fauziah & Rachman, 2017; Putra et al., 2021; Rachman et al., 2019, 2022). Keroncong music is a type of traditional string musical instrument game which is played arpeggio (*resqueado*-Spanish) and causes a “crong-crong” sound which then becomes a characteristic of the music itself, and the term keroncong arises (Ganap, 2020; Harmunah, 1987, 1996).

The journey and development of keroncong music in Indonesia are very rapid. It can be seen from the interest of today's young generation who start to listen a lot to want to practice keroncong music. This can happen apparently because there are strong factors that push it, one of which is because of the very intense publications on social media so that large concerts or events of keroncong music are held in Indonesia (Arhamni & Rachman, 2021; Asriyani & Rachman, 2019; Muhammad & Rachman, 2020; Rachman et al., 2022; Sokhiba & Rachman, 2021; Zilmi et al., 2021). Many keroncong music concerts are held in several big cities, ranging from weekly and monthly to big annual concerts, which are quite prestigious, especially among young people. In the city of Semarang, there are several concerts regularly held by HAMKRI Semarang, such as “Bunga Rampai” at RRI Semarang (Rachman & Pribadi, 2019), “Rabu Keroncong” at Taman Indonesia Kaya, and “Sing Penting Keroncong” at RRI Semarang (Rachman, Abdul; Utomo, 2018; Rachman et al., 2022).

In addition, there are also big concerts that are highly awaited by the community, including the young and old generations, namely “Pasar Keroncong Kotagede” and “Solo Keroncong Festival (SKF)”. Pasar Keroncong Kotagede is held in Yogyakarta, while Solo Keroncong Festival is held in Solo where each grand event has its characteristics. Pasar Keroncong Kotagede uses the concept of ancient times to evoke reflective nostalgia

(Standiford, 2018). Meanwhile, Solo Keroncong Festival (SKF) is characterized by a magnificent performance stage set against the backdrop of the Vastenburg Fort, presenting conservative and innovative keroncong music from various keroncong music groups throughout Indonesia (Koswara, 2019). The two big concerts are eagerly awaited by the public every year. The existence of keroncong concerts held in various cities has shown that keroncong music still exists in Indonesia.

The Covid-19 pandemic has harmed various creative industry sectors, especially in the performing arts sector. The Covid-19 pandemic has hit economic activity due to the policy of implementing regional quarantine and social distancing or physical distancing. The prolonged impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused activities in the performing arts sector, such as art performances and music concerts usually held regularly cannot be carried on (Devindriati Kusuma, 2020). Septiyan (2020) states that music culture has evolved due to adjustment to new circumstances and conditions. Musicians are trying to overcome this by holding virtual concerts instead of offline performances.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is felt by all circles in the world of music performances, including keroncong music, both nationally and locally. As experienced by the local keroncong group in the city of Demak, namely O. K (OK) Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam. He was forced to experience delays and even cancellation of all scheduled performances. This certainly has an impact on their economic condition, which results in a lot of material losses. In addition to the economic aspect, in terms of existence, it also experienced a decline because no events could be followed.

However, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam strives to maintain their existence and consistency during the current covid-19 pandemic. With the support and commitment of a solid team, adequate facilities, and a common vision and mission within the team, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam is increasingly

active in their work. However, due to restrictions on activities that cause crowds due to the COVID-19 pandemic, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam utilizes various social media platforms to hold virtual keroncong music performances as well as promote their keroncong music works.

Along with the rapid development of technology, people are now using electronic marketing strategies through internet networks. Before the internet, mass marketing was done through traditional media, such as television, radio, and print media. According to Anggoro (Ayesha, 2008), producers are no longer confused by the high cost of promotion to advertising in mass media. The presence of internet technology makes it very easy for producers to do marketing by utilizing internet media to promote products.

Dewatara's (2019) research discusses how digitalization in the music industry impacts music marketing. This has a major impact on the music marketing industry players and consumers or music lovers. Streaming service influences in the digital era. The music industry can no longer depend on physical products, and music lovers are now more selective in enjoying music. In addition, Muhammad and Rachman (2020) research illustrates the development and advancement of information technology, which continues to increase, increasing social media users. Digital technology opens opportunities in various industries, including the music industry. It can be concluded that in today's all-digital, it is important for artists to understand the promotion of musical works through social media so that their musical works still exist and can be enjoyed by the wider community.

Based on the description above, the authors are interested in examining the implementation of virtual concerts by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam to maintain their existence and promote their musical works.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach.

Phenomenological research focuses on finding, studying, and conveying the meaning of phenomena, events that occur, and their relationship with ordinary people in certain situations (Sugiarto, 2015). The research was conducted in Demak Regency, precisely at Hotel Citra Alam, Jl. Bhayangkara No. 11, South Petengan, Bintoro, Demak Sub-district, Demak Regency.

Data collection techniques used direct observation, interviews, and document studies. The authors observed the activities and strategies of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam in utilizing social media in carrying out virtual keroncong music performances. Interviews were conducted with the founder, manager, and personnel of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam. Document studies were carried out to obtain documents in writing, notes, pictures, and photos.

The data validity technique used in this study was the criteria for checking the degree of confidence in the data and triangulation. Then the data that has been collected was analyzed by interactive analysis, which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and concluding/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Virtual Keroncong Music Performances by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Social media is an internet-based media that can be used as a means of promoting a product, service, work, idea, and thought so that the wider community can know and be able to enjoy the product or service being marketed (Lontoh et al., 2020; Vernia, 2017). In this case, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam uses various social media platforms to promote their musical works so that the wider community can easily enjoy the musical works created. To fulfill a promotional work, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam uses media. Media is a tool that can convey messages in either video, images, or audio. Media use in a marketing effort is the most effective solution because

everything will need a tool or media to help facilitate promotional and communication activities (Indika & Jovita, 2017; Muhammad & Rachman, 2020; Puspitarini & Nuraeni, 2019).

Social media is interactive and free. Interactive means people can interact directly with the media content they consume or choose. They can actively choose media content and provide feedback on the media content directly (Rachman & Pribadi, 2019; Sahar, 2014). The efforts made by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam in promoting works using social media are by making virtual concerts through YouTube and Instagram.

Virtual Keroncong Music Performance Through the YouTube Platform by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam

YouTube is a site that functions to upload videos and watch collections of videos uploaded from all over the world and can be watched anywhere using communication tools connected to the internet such as smartphones, laptops, computers, and other digital communication tools (Reino & Hay, 2011; Faiqah et al., 2016).

Although offline music concerts cannot be held during the pandemic, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam can still hold virtual keroncong music performances through YouTube as a streaming platform for a virtual concert. This virtual concert during the Covid-19 pandemic can become a medium of entertainment for every community and maintain the existence of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam.

Several virtual keroncong music concerts were held through the YouTube platform during the Covid-19 pandemic, including “Konser Amal Peduli Demak” (Demak Cares Charity Concert), “Pergelaran Keroncong Orkestra Remaja Jawa Tengah 2020” (2020 Central Java Youth Orchestra Keroncong Performance), and “Pesta Rakyat Grebeg Keroncong” (Grebeg Keroncong People’s Party) and “Pentas Seni Demak” (Demak Art Performance).

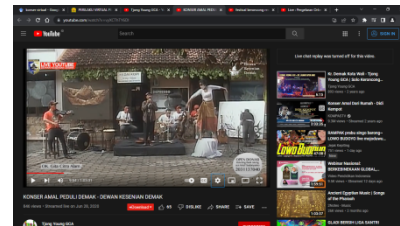


Figure 1. Demak Cares Charity Concert
(Source: YouTube Account of Tjong Young GCA)

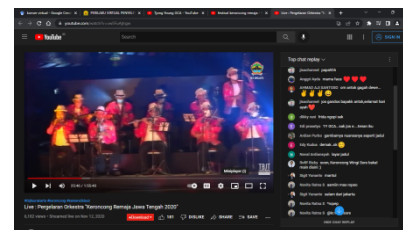


Figure 2. Orchestra Performance “Keroncong Remaja Jawa Tengah 2020”
(Source: YouTube Account of Tjong Young GCA)

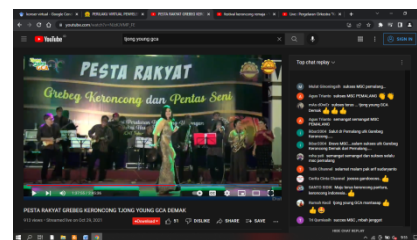


Figure 3. Grebeg Keroncong People’s Party and Demak Art Performance
(Source: YouTube Account of Tjong Young GCA)

The virtual keroncong music performance through the YouTube platform is very interesting for the public, which can be proven by a large number of viewers and also the enthusiasm for interaction in the comment’s column. Watching virtual keroncong music performance seems to be an alternative for someone as entertainment in restrictions on social activities.

There are several indicators of success in running promotions through YouTube, including viewers, which indicate the number of YouTube site users who have watched the uploaded video, indicating the existence of the video in the virtual world of YouTube. Subscriber data

is audience data who subscribe to watch every video uploaded by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam, while like and dislike are one of the facilities on YouTube to facilitate viewers to respond to a show on YouTube by pressing the like or dislike on the video they have watched.

Virtual keroncong music performances through YouTube are a very effective, practical, and efficient promotional media, with financing for all people with capitalized works produced in the form of song content, videos, and any information conveyed by online media can be reached and accessed. People worldwide quickly use smartphones, laptops, and computers connected to the internet. This is in line with Andhika's (2019) opinion that the use of the YouTube platform to promote a certain product is considered more effective than other media such as brochures and leaflets because the dissemination of information via social media is more efficient and can broadcast widely and in real-time. So that the use of social media such as YouTube can quickly disseminate information about O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam's musical works and their activities through the content of creative videos that have been made.

Virtual Keroncong Music Performance Through the Instagram Platform by O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam

Instagram is an application that provides the facility to share photos, take photos, apply digital filters, and share them to various social networking services, including Instagram (Salleh, 2014; Yasundari, 2016). Everyone can participate in Instagram accounts to share photos and videos, take photos and videos, and look for reference sources in any case as long as they do not contain harmful content.

The function of Instagram in O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam is as a means of promoting the musical works of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam and sharing information on gigs and daily activities in the form of video footage that is 1 minute or 15 seconds long for stories

and has facilities that can be connected to YouTube that has been created.

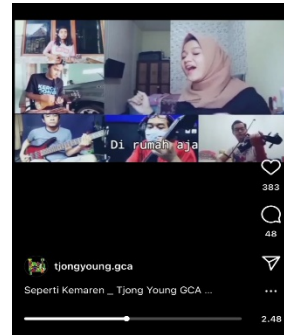


Figure 4. Video Song “Seperti Kemarin” by Tjong Young GCA
(Source: Instagram @ok.gitacitraalam_ent)

Figure 4 is one of the works of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam with a virtual concert concept uploaded to their Instagram. The work talks about the conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic that has not yet improved. Through this work, O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam invites the audience to stay at home, following all government recommendations so that the pandemic will end soon.

The Instagram account of O. K. Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam has many followers, which shows the community's enthusiasm for enjoying their works. Followers who follow account @ok.gitacitraalam_ent as many as 522 people and this continues to increase daily. O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam continues to promote through each person's social media to increase followers. Apart from the number of followers, the researcher also saw the response of followers in the comments column and the number of likes on each post. The comments on each post are very positive and constructive by encouraging, and the likes on each post must always be above 200 likes, which means the existence of O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam is still very well maintained even during this Covid-19 pandemic.

This shows that virtual keroncong music performances through the Instagram platform have also proven

effective, which can be indicated by a large number of followers, viewers, and comments available in the comments column on the Instagram platform. This is in line with the opinion of Khairani et al. (2018) that the promotion of a product through the Instagram platform has proven to be effective, meaning that the promotional activities carried out can generate attention, interest, and feedback (desire), and some do activities to buy products from followers. In addition, Maulana and Alamsyah (2014) also argue that digital platforms are very effectively used as promotional media in this millennial era. Media that serves to share photos or videos is very effective in supporting promotional purposes. The Instagram account owned by the music group O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam functions as a promotional media and information media for daily activities and events. It can be connected to YouTube to attract a mass audience. With the internet, all kinds of promotions are greatly helped in the use of social media such as YouTube and Instagram that can quickly disseminate information about O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam musical works including photos and audio-visual works that they upload. Seeing this condition, inevitably, they must follow in the footsteps of modern society so that the market share they control can survive or even increase.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussion results, it can be concluded that there are various strategies for artists or musicians to promote musical works and maintain their existence during the Covid-19 pandemic, namely by holding virtual music performances through social media platforms. Social media as a means of promoting musical works utilizes the internet as access so that the wider community can know and enjoy the products or services being marketed while maintaining health protocols without meeting in person. O. K Tjong Young Gita Citra Alam organizes virtual keroncong music performances through various social

media platforms to promote their musical works so that the wider community can easily enjoy the musical works created. Virtual keroncong music performances through social media platforms have proven more effective, practical, and efficient. They can maintain their existence amidst restrictions on music performance activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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