

Beyond Musical Talent: The Role of Professional Networks in Musicians' Career Development in Jakarta

Anastasia Enike Hanorsian,^{a*}, Dina Septiani^b, Febri Rizma Yunita^c, Kalingga Wenna Ferliqueena Paramitha^d, Nikmatul Bahril Wahdah^e

^{a,c,d,e}Human Resource Development Program, Postgraduate School, Airlangga University, Indonesia

^bCommunication Sciences Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Airlangga University, Indonesia

*Corresponding author e-mail: anastasia.enike.hanorsian-2023@pasca.unair.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the relationship between professional network utilization and career achievement among musicians in Jakarta's music industry, focusing specifically on competency development mechanisms through networking practices. The research is crucial given Indonesia's significant creative economy transformation and structural changes in the music industry, where networking has become vital for career sustainability amid evolving market dynamics. A qualitative methodology combining case studies and thematic analysis was adopted to enable in-depth exploration of networking practices and career development patterns. The study centered on a key informant; an experienced professional musician chosen for extensive involvement across various music industry segments. Data collection integrated semi-structured interviews, social media observation, and document analysis, guided by a theoretical framework combining Social Capital Theory and Systems Theory Framework. The findings reveal that musicians' career development follows a five-point evolution pattern, from initial formation through bonding capital to professional network optimization through bridging capital. The study identified three key mechanisms: strategic network formation, collaboration opportunity utilization, and industry dynamics adaptation. Professional networking contributes to career success through reciprocity principles, professional credibility, and adaptive capabilities. These findings offer practical implications for stakeholders. Musicians can develop strategic networking approaches, industry organizations can design mentorship programs, and educational institutions can enhance networking components in curricula. While limited by its focus on Jakarta and single key informant approach, this study uniquely contributes to understanding how professional networks operate in creative industries where boundaries between systems are fluid.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's creative economy sector shows promising growth projections for two thousand and twenty-four, with FAV (Film, Animation, and Video) leading at fifty-three percent expert predictions, followed by culinary at forty-six percent, and fashion at thirty-seven percent. While the music industry shows a more modest projection at eighteen percent, it demonstrates distinctive development opportunities through emerging trends and digital transformation. Among these transformative elements, two significant trends are reshaping the industry, retrofuturism and gig-tripping (Kemenparekraf RI, 2024). Retrofuturism is a contemporary artistic approach that reinterprets nostalgic futuristic visions through modern perspectives, creating new expressions rather than simply recreating past ideas (Barranco et al., 2022). Meanwhile, gig-tripping represents a new phenomenon where music performances evolve beyond traditional concerts into travel-worthy experiences, sparked by the massive success of recent global music tours that demonstrated significant economic and cultural impact on host destinations (MMGY Global, 2024). These trends, alongside increasing OTT streaming service users and the roles of influencers and content creators, are transforming how music is produced, performed, and marketed through social media (Kemenparekraf RI, 2024). Jakarta's position as the center of Indonesia's music industry (Paramasatya et al., 2020), is characterized by a dynamic and innovative music ecosystem. This condition is supported by the active roles of music entrepreneurs, proliferation of music performances, availability of alternative public spaces for music venues, and strength of community collaborations (Resmadi & Bastari, 2020). Among creative industries in Jakarta, the music sector leads with twenty-point ninety-eight percent market share, surpassing both FAV and performing arts sectors (Kementrian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi kreatif, 2020).

The influence of musicians extends beyond artistry, positioning them as essential drivers of creative economic growth. Traditional music career models are transformed into more flexible and entrepreneurial forms, where modern musicians take on multiple roles simultaneously, including composer, singer, instrumentalist, producer, and self-manager (Thomson, 2013). In Jakarta's context, independent musicians are recognized as significant forces in shaping the contemporary music landscape (Luvaas, 2009). This important role was further emphasized during the Covid-19 pandemic, where innovation was demonstrated through various new performance formats such as virtual concerts and musician podcasts (Putra & Soewarlan, 2022).

The dynamic nature of the music industry presents considerable hurdles for musicians in career development and maintenance. Research in the United States reveals that sixty-one percent of musicians report insufficient income for living expenses (MIRA, 2018). In Indonesia, issues concerning royalties and intellectual property rights have led many musicians to pursue alternative careers (Dirjen Kekayaan Intelektual, 2022). These challenges are further complicated by digital transformation that has altered methods of music marketing and fan interaction (Dewatara & Agustin, 2019).

Professional networks are identified as essential elements in addressing these challenges. Network roles are understood as crucial components in music industry dynamics, facilitating access to opportunities, collaborations, resources, and career development (Heur, 2010). Research demonstrates that professional success in music careers heavily depends on both structured and casual networking connections, which are essential for accessing jobs, booking performances, collaborating with other musicians, and securing assistance from industry players who can advance their careers (Musgrave, 2023). Long-term relationships with fans and industry professionals are emphasized as critical factors for career sustainability (Lathrop, 2003).

A significant gap is identified in understanding professional network utilization among Jakarta musicians. While professional networks are recognized as important career development factors, their contribution to musicians' competency improvement remains insufficiently understood. This understanding becomes crucial given the industry's dynamic complexity, where trends, technology, and market changes influence career trajectories. Recent observations indicate that new musicians face difficulties in accessing festival-scale performance opportunities, primarily due to industry focus on established artists (Dzakwan, 2024).

This research uses two theoretical frameworks that have been recognized in career development studies. Social Capital by Woolcock and Narayan (2000) emphasizes the network view, which focuses on the balance between internal bonds and external bridges in career development. Then, the Systems Theory Framework (STF) by Patton and McMahon (2015) discusses the dynamic interactions between individual, social, and environmental systems in career development.

The research aims to explore professional network utilization by Jakarta musicians in career development, and to identify network contributions to competency enhancement and career success. Three significant contributions are offered through enhanced understanding of career development dynamics, practical insights for stakeholders, and theoretical enrichment of social capital concepts in dynamic creative industries. This study's novelty lies in its integration of networking mechanisms with career development frameworks in Jakarta's unique music industry context.

RESEARCH METHODS

To examine musicians' use of professional networks for career advancement in Jakarta's music scene, this study implements qualitative methodology combining case studies and thematic analysis. This methodological approach was chosen because understanding professional networking in the music industry requires detailed exploration of personal experiences, career journeys, and relationship-building processes that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurements alone. Case studies enable in-depth examination of contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts (Yin, 2018), while thematic analysis provides systematic framework for identifying patterns and themes across participants' experiences (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This combination allows for both detailed individual case exploration and cross-case pattern recognition.

The research subjects are professional musicians residing and actively working in Jakarta with the criteria: (a) having accumulated no less than two years of music industry experience, (b) a track record of collaboration with other music industry practitioners, and (c) a verifiable portfolio of musical works. The selection of informants was conducted by considering the richness of information and experience they possess, with the data collection process continuing until a sufficient depth of understanding of the phenomenon being studied is achieved (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The key informant of the research, MP, is a professional musician with ten years of experience in the music industry, who has held various roles from café singer to vocal director. MP was chosen based on his extensive involvement in various segments of the music industry and his extensive professional network with various music industry stakeholders.

The exploration focuses on two interconnected aspects. The first aspect examines professional networks through: (a) bonding social capital, which refers to relationships with fellow musicians, and (b) bridging social capital, which involves relationships with other music industry players (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). The second aspect examines career development based on the dynamic interactions between: (a) the individual system, which includes the competencies and aspirations of musicians, (b) the social system, which encompasses interactions with the music community and industry, and (c) the environmental system, which relates to opportunities and challenges in Jakarta's music industry (Patton & McMahon, 2015).

Data collection used three main methods: (a) semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences and perspectives of informants, (b) participatory observation through social media to understand digital networking practices, and (c) document analysis of informants' portfolios and career tracks (Bryman, 2016). Data analysis employs thematic analysis following Clarke and Braun's framework (2017), which involves systematic coding and theme development process (Clarke & Braun, 2017). The validity of the research is strengthened through member checking, where the researcher's interpretations are verified by informants to ensure the accuracy of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 2013).

2. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Theoretical Framework. This research draws upon two major theoretical frameworks of Social Capital Theory and Systems Theory Framework (STF). Social Capital Theory, developed by Woolcock and Narayan (2000), emphasizes the network view, which focuses on the importance of balance between community bonds (bonding) and inter-community relationships (bridging). Bonding capital provides shared identity and collective goals, while bridging capital connects to broader external resources. This concept becomes crucial in understanding how musicians develop and utilize their professional networks.

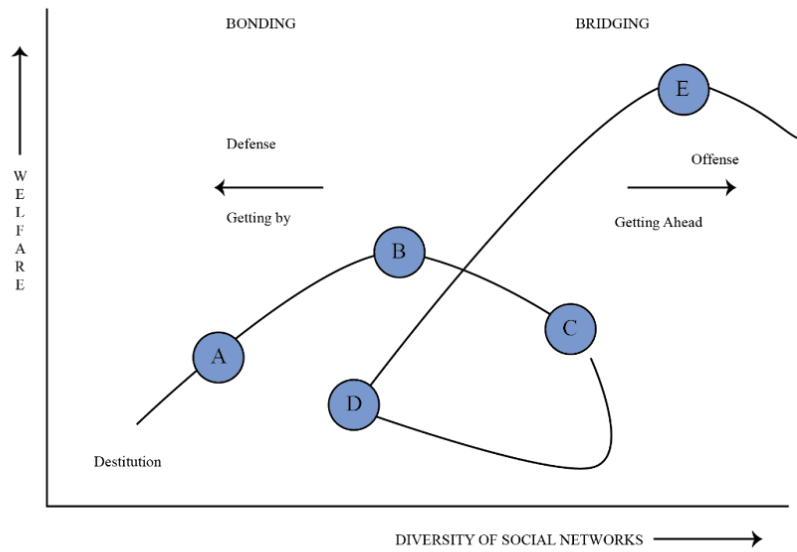


Figure 1. Social Capital and Poverty Transitions

Source: Woolcock & Narayan (2000)

Career development, according to Patton and McMahon’s Systems Theory Framework (STF), emerges from the interplay of individual, social, and environmental elements. Their framework conceptualizes career evolution as an intricate network of mutual influences among these systems, departing from traditional linear perspectives. In the context of the music industry, this approach helps understand how internal factors including competencies and aspirations, social factors such as networks and mentors, and environmental factors like industry trends and opportunities interact in shaping musicians' career trajectories.

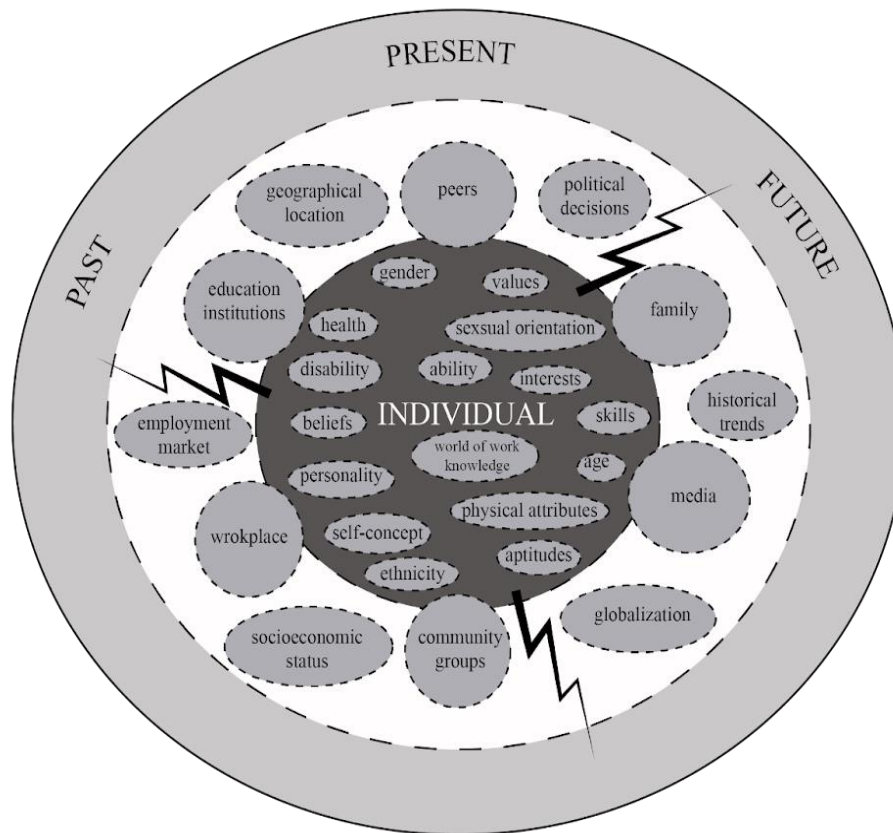


Figure 2. The Systems Theory Framework of Career Development

Source: Patton & McMahon (2015)

The integration of these two theoretical frameworks enables comprehensive analysis of how professional networks contribute to musicians' career development in Jakarta. Social Capital Theory provides insights into network dynamics, while STF offers a framework for understanding how these networks interact with various aspects of career development. The thematic analysis conducted in this study revealed five major themes related to the role of professional networks in musicians' career development in Jakarta. These themes, along with their sub-themes and key findings, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis Results of Professional Network in Musicians' Career Development

Themes / Sub-themes	Key Findings
Theme 1: Social Capital Evolution	
Getting by	Initial networking through church community and limited performance venues.
Growth Limit	Comfort zone dilemma in regular venues and wedding circuits.
Network Pressure	Competitive pressure in Jakarta music industry as change catalyst.
Transition	Strategic expansion into broader professional networks.

Getting Ahead	Professional networks optimization through strategic career progression (Live Music, TV Shows, Wedding Singer, Backing Vocalist, Vocal Director) and transformation of connections into productive collaborations.
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Theme 2: System Dynamics

Individual System	Musical competencies, professional experience, attitude, career orientation.
Social System	Mentors and role models, peer collaborators, industry partners.
Environmental System	Venue diversity (cafes to concerts), digital platforms, music industry ecosystem.

Theme 3: Professional Networks

Intenal Structure	Specialized roles (Vocalist, Band Members, Sequencers, Music Directors, Producers).
External Structure	Non-musician stakeholders (Venue Owners, Labels, Management, Production Crews).
Network Maintenance	Reciprocal relationships and professional attitude maintenance.

Theme 4: Career Development Mechanisms

Strategic Formation	Proactive networking through live performances and collaborative projects.
Opportunity Utilization	Leveraging connections for diverse performance opportunities.
Adaptive Capabilities	Development of multiple professional roles and industry adaptability.

Theme 5: Success Factors

Reciprocity Principles	Maintaining mutual benefit relationships in professional networks.
Professional Credibility	Building trust and reputation through consistent performance quality.
Adaptive Capabilities	Ability to develop multiple roles and adapt to industry changes.

Source: Thematic Analysis Results (2024)

The following sections discuss each theme in detail, examining how these elements interact and contribute to musicians' career development in Jakarta's music industry.

Social Capital Framework in Musicians' Career Development. Social capital in the career development of musicians in Jakarta follows the pattern described in the theoretical framework by Woolcock and Narayan (2000), but with unique characteristics that reflect the dynamics of the music industry. The analysis shows that the transition from bonding to bridging social capital is not only a linear process but also involves the transformation of professional identity and strategic repositioning within the music ecosystem. The theory of social capital is both an actual and virtual resource for individuals or groups that aims to get to know each other and provide mutual recognition in career development (Sutopo et al., 2017).

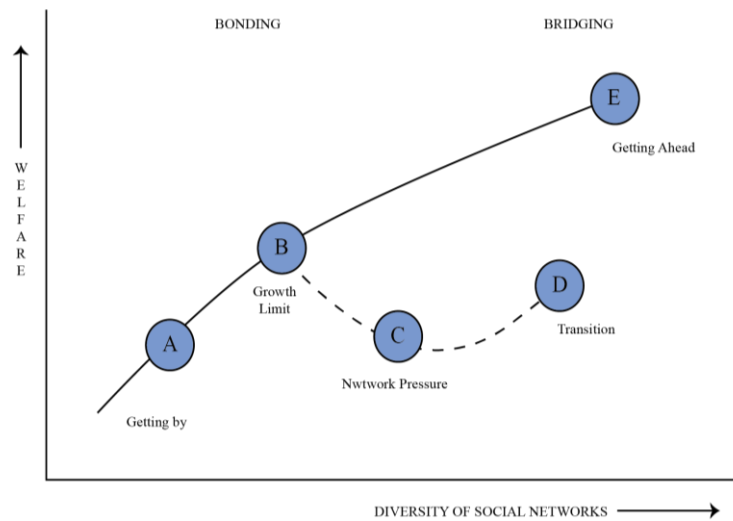


Figure 3. The Social Capital Framework in the Career Development of Musicians in Jakarta

Source: Adapted from Woolcock & Narayan (2000)

Based on the analysis results, there are five critical points in the evolution of social capital among musicians in Jakarta:

Point A (Getting By): Initial Social Capital Formation Phase. In this phase, musicians start their careers by relying on networks from their closest communities, facing dual challenges of maintaining these initial networks while developing professional connections. As the informant stated:

"Actually, my background is as a church singer... At first, I didn't know anyone. I started promoting my work through singing at cafes. Starting with a makeshift, limited songlist..."

This phase reveals complex challenges in network maintenance. While community networks, like church provide initial support, maintaining these connections becomes challenging as musicians begin pursuing commercial opportunities. Musicians must balance community expectations and commitments such as regular church performances with their growing professional engagements at cafes. The limited songlist mentioned by the informant reflects not only technical constraints but also the challenge of maintaining credibility in both community and commercial settings. This delicate balancing act often creates tension, community networks expect continued participation and loyalty, while professional development demands time and energy investment in new directions. The phrase "didn't know anyone" suggests not only the isolation in new settings but also the risk of disconnecting from original support networks if not carefully managed.

Point B (Growth Limit): The Comfort Zone Dilemma. This phase is marked by the dilemma between comfort and career growth. As the informant stated:

"There are musicians who are content just playing regular gigs. There are musicians who are

content just singing at weddings. Don't want to develop that..."

This quote reveals several crucial dilemmas. First, there is the tension between financial stability and growth opportunities. Regular gigs and wedding events offer stable and predictable income yet can limit opportunities for broader career development. Second, there is the contrast between technical comfort and artistic challenge. Familiar repertoire and audience provide comfort, but they may inhibit musicians' artistic growth.

This phenomenon reflects the "lock-in effect" in social capital theory, where over-reliance on a single network can actually restrict access to new opportunities. As evidenced in the informant's case, who eventually broke free from this comfort zone by joining The Voice competition and becoming a Vocal Director, demonstrating the importance of risk-taking for career development.

Point C (Network Pressure): Catalyst for Change. The competitive pressure in Jakarta acts as a catalyst that prompts a reevaluation of networking strategies. As the informant noted:

"The biggest challenge for a singer or musician pursuing a career in Jakarta... is actually an important connection..."

This phase demonstrates how musicians undergo "creative destruction" in their networking approach, a process that significantly impacts their long-term career trajectory. Musicians must carefully consider the trade-offs between developing numerous new connections and maintaining meaningful relationships with existing networks. For instance, while pursuing new opportunities with various venues might increase exposure, it could potentially weaken established relationships with regular performance spots that provide stable income and reliable platforms for artistic expression.

The pressure to expand networks, while essential for growth, requires musicians to develop sophisticated relationship management strategies. As explained by Wilks (2011), social capital connects individuals with different communities for mutual benefit (Wilks, 2011), but maintaining these diverse connections demands careful attention to relationship quality. Musicians who successfully navigate this phase typically find ways to leverage new connections while preserving key established relationships, ensuring sustainable career development rather than just short-term gains.

Point D (Transition): Reconfiguration of Social Capital. This transition is marked by a more strategic expansion of professional networks, where musicians begin to face the challenge of entering new markets:

"Like us as musicians from Jakarta, not everyone has direct links to cafes automatically. And cafes, sorry, and cafes often don't believe it when we offer our own band directly to those cafes."

This process reflects the concept of "structural holes" (Burt, 2022) where musicians begin to fill gaps in the social network to create new opportunities.

Point E (Getting Ahead): Optimization of Professional Networks. The evolution of professional roles illustrates effective career development strategies, as evidenced by this musician's journey:

"..I started singing in cafes, then joined The Voice 2016, then I seriously worked as a wedding singer... then I also got involved as a Vocal Director until now."

Research findings indicate that success in Jakarta's music industry heavily relies on professional connections, as one participant notes:

"You could say that as a professional musician or singer in Jakarta, about 90% of it depends on connections."

This aligns with industry research showing how music production involves complex relationships between organizations, professionals, and resources. Career progression in music relies heavily on building networks that bridge professional and personal spheres, fostering sustainable industry relationships (Watson, 2012). The informants' experiences reveal that success in the music industry does not only depend on the accumulation of social capital but also on the strategic ability to transform social capital from mere connections into productive collaborations. Contemporary research emphasizes that networking not only creates collaboration opportunities but also strengthens the exposure of musicians, which is crucial for their career development in the music industry (Crossley, 2023).

Development of Musicians' Careers Within the Systems Theory Framework (STF). As conceptualized in Patton and McMahon's (2015) Systems Theory Framework (STF), Jakarta's music professionals' career paths illustrate the sophisticated interplay of various systemic elements. Analysis of informants' experiences reveals how individual, social, and environmental systems interact to shape career trajectories in the music industry.

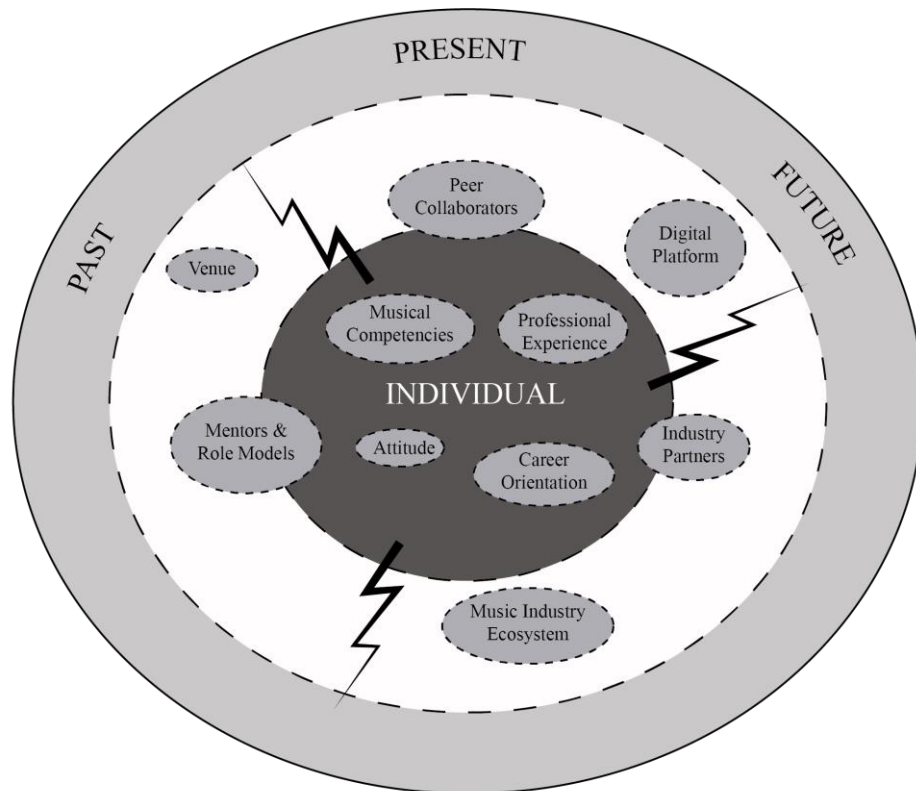


Figure 4. Framework for Musician Career Development in Jakarta

Source : Adapted from Patton & McMahon (2015)

At the individual system level, which is in the inner circle, the research findings reveal significant transformations in musicians' competencies and professional identities. The individual system encompasses four core elements: musical competence, professional experience, attitude and personality, as well as career interests and orientation. The informant emphasized that the development of skills occurs as an adaptive response to industry demands :

"Automatically, we will also improve our abilities, in singing, our songlist references will become broader. We are like being pushed to develop in this regard."

The social system, positioned at the core of musician career development, manifests through three main components. First, the roles of mentors and role models become significant not only in the transfer of knowledge but also in the process of professional socialization. Second, collaborators consisting of fellow musicians form a horizontal network. Third, clients and partners, including artist management and entertainment, open vertical access to a broader industry. The environmental system in the outer circle shows three key elements in the context of Jakarta's music industry. Venues represent performance spaces from cafes to concerts. Digital platforms reflect the transformation of how music is consumed and marketed. The Jakarta music industry represents a macro ecosystem that encompasses labels, competition, and industry trends. The boundaries between systems, depicted with dashed lines (recursiveness) indicate the permeable nature of each system. As expressed by the informant when they successfully

entered the mainstream industry. This shows how the permeability of the system allows movement from one level to another:

"When I started appearing on TV for The Voice... It eventually influenced my career journey up to today."

The role of chance, depicted as a flash of lightning, appears at three critical points in the development of a musician's career. First, between the individual and social systems, such as an unexpected meeting with a mentor:

"And then you might also meet at work... usually meeting some musicians, who eventually get to know each other there because they end up working together by chance."

Second, between the social and environmental systems, such as when getting the opportunity to perform on TV. Third, within the environmental system itself, such as changes in industry trends that open new opportunities. The dimension of time (past, present, future) encompassing the entire system shows the dynamic nature of career development. The informant's past experience as a church singer forms the initial foundation. Current networking activities are paving the way towards more diverse roles. While adapting to industry trends reflects a future orientation:

"Trends are bound to change. Music also definitely changes. But, musicians and singers are also required to remain relevant when the music has already rotated."

Analysis through STF reveals that the career development of musicians is a highly dynamic process with strong recursiveness characteristics among the three systems. Dynamic interactions within the industry manifest through temporal adaptations to emerging opportunities and obstacles. This research extends STF theory by revealing distinctive music industry characteristics, enhanced system boundary fluidity, amplified impact of chance encounters, and accelerated recursive patterns stemming from dynamic industry evolution. These findings enrich the understanding of how the STF operates within the context of the dynamic creative industry, which heavily relies on professional relationships.

Characteristics of Professional Musician Networks. Analysis of the characteristics of professional networks in Jakarta's music industry reveals a complex and multidimensional structure. The findings show that success in the music industry does not only depend on musical ability but also on the ability to collaborate with various specializations (Cattani & Ferriani, 2008).

The networking framework of professional musicians comprises both internal and external dimensions. According to informant testimonies, the internal network demonstrates clear specialization and role distinction:

"Yes, of course, the vocal role, not just the vocals, but also the role of the band members, there are the personnel, the drums, guitar, bass. Then there are also music friends, and there is also

someone called a sequencer, who is the person behind the laptop, continuously running several music tracks to be played during live music.”

Furthermore, the internal network includes technical roles in music production:

"Then there are also roles for recording, we have a music director or music supervisor, or a music producer. Then there are also songwriters, and there is also a vocal director like me for recording. Then there are the mixing and mastering parts..."

Within the broader music ecosystem, external networks of non-musician actors provide vital professional support:

"Oh yes, of course. We have connections, and those connections are important because they are not only needed by the musicians. But there are also people who are not in music... we also need connections with café owners, label people, artist management, bar people."

Developing and sustaining professional connections demands persistent strategic engagement over time:

"Ah, forming it can actually be said to be both easy and difficult, because this is key, in music, I think the key to developing is to have a good network..."

Maintaining professional networks is characterized by a strong principle of reciprocity:

"If it were me, I usually give mutualistic symbiosis... when we need their services for a performance... I will definitely invite them too. They, when they have work, will also invite me."

These findings reinforce the research by Bennett & Hennekam (2018), which shows that membership in professional networks is crucial not only for obtaining jobs but also for maintaining career sustainability in the music industry (Bennett & Hennekam, 2018). Kang et al. (2022) also confirm that success in the contemporary music industry heavily relies on collaborative networks, where the number of collaborations and the quality of professional networks are strong predictors of musicians' career achievements (Kang et al., 2022).

An important aspect of maintaining a network is attitude and interpersonal skills:

"Attitude is really important, how we stay cool while making music together, that's more important in my opinion..."

This analysis reveals that the characteristics of professional musicians' networks in Jakarta are multidimensional, dynamic, and built based on reciprocity. Watson (2012) emphasizes that the formation of professional networks is a continuous process in which musicians actively build and maintain relationships with various parties. Success in building and maintaining networks not only depends on musical competence but also on the ability to manage complex professional relationships (Watson, 2012).

Mechanism and Factors of Success in Career Development Through Networking. Analysis of the experiences of musicians in Jakarta reveals the integral relationship between strategic network optimization and career development mechanisms. Success in the context of Jakarta's

music industry is characterized not merely by network breadth, but by the strategic transformation of connections into productive collaborations. This is evidenced by how musicians define success beyond just networking, as expressed by an informant:

"Being a musician, whose abilities are reliable, a person who can be depended on in their field, trusted. That makes a successful musician... There are also those who say that a successful musician is one who creates with their heart."

There are three main mechanisms in network-based career development. First, the formation of strategic networks, where musicians develop a proactive approach in building connections, starting from direct interactions in music performances:

"The places where they play live music, for example, if there is a musician, we see who is really good. We go to the place where he plays, in that café, for example. Or that place, we go there. Then we started to muster the courage for a jamming session, and then we began to introduce ourselves..."

Then, project-based work such as wedding events also becomes a strategic platform for networking:

"Then you can also meet in work, for example, because I am a singer, who is also hired by Wedding Entertainment, usually meeting with several musicians, who eventually get to know each other there because of working together unintentionally."

Second, regarding the utilization of opportunities for collaboration. In this case, professional networks serve as a catalyst that opens access to various career opportunities:

"When we are given the chance to collaborate, make music, work together with these people, we connect there, we give our best... let's do our best, showing the best quality is important."

Third, having the ability to adapt to industry dynamics such as changing trends and demands:

"Trends are definitely changing. Music is also definitely changing... I really like R&B and Jazz, but how can I also listen to other types of music... you don't have to like them, but at least you have to know them, like rock music, blues, or music that will be relevant for the Indonesian pop music industry."

Akkas (2023) explains that networking skills are very important for achieving career success because they help build beneficial relationships, increase visibility, and open up opportunities (Akkas, 2023). In this context, identifying network-based success factors reveals three key elements: the principle of reciprocity, professional credibility, and adaptability. The principle of reciprocity relates to maintaining a professional network based on mutual relationships:

"For me, I usually give mutualistic symbiosis... when we need their services for a performance... I will definitely invite them too. They, when they have work, will also invite me."

Professional credibility involves reputation and trust, which are key in obtaining opportunities:

"As long as we meet just once, it means they already know what MP is like, what the capabilities are, and ideally, after that, they should be able to sort out the jobs that are suitable for me when they have work available."

Adaptive ability is the readiness to develop multiple roles in the music industry:

"This industry is not just about singing on stage; it's actually much broader... We can become vocal directors, we can be backing vocalists for artists behind the scenes, we can be jingle singers... we can even become songwriters."

Success in the Jakarta music industry requires a holistic approach that integrates career development mechanisms with success factors. The informants' experiences show that success is not only determined by the extent of one's network but also by how that network is utilized to support sustainable professional growth:

"Everyone has the same opportunity to create, everyone has their own struggles to create... making music in Jakarta or in big cities or in Indonesia also talks about how we enjoy the process."

Research Implications. This study's findings offer valuable practical insights for diverse music industry participants. For professional musicians, the research findings emphasize the strategic development of professional networks beyond mere connection accumulation. The findings highlight the importance of transforming networks into productive collaborations, developing multiple professional roles, and maintaining sustainable industry relationships. Musicians need to focus on both technical competencies and networking capabilities, while continuously adapting to industry trends through lifelong learning. Considering the comprehensive scope of music sector operations, this research underscores the importance of developing programs that facilitate strategic collaboration among musicians and structured mentoring systems. The industry needs to build a mechanism that support cross-sector partnership and create pathways for emerging musicians to develop effective professional networks.

Building upon these insights, this study suggests specific actionable recommendations for key stakeholders. Local governments can support industry development through establishing creative industry zones with subsidized performance venues and developing public-private partnerships for music events in public spaces. Music organizations can foster inclusive growth by developing structured mentorship programs and organizing cross-genre collaboration workshops that connect musicians of different experience levels. Venues can contribute through implementing regular "new talent showcase" nights and creating opening act opportunities for emerging musicians to perform alongside established artists. These targeted initiatives aim to create a more inclusive and sustainable music ecosystem that supports both established and emerging musicians while promoting diverse artistic expression and professional growth.

From the perspective of music education, the implications of the research point to the importance of integrating both traditional and digital networking aspects into the music education

curriculum. Learning frameworks should strengthen their commitment to developing interpersonal and cooperative talents, while also emphasizing digital literacy and online presence management. Students need to understand how to effectively utilize digital platforms such as social media, streaming services, and content sharing platforms to build their professional networks and reach global audiences.

The curriculum should include practical training in leveraging digital tools for career development. This includes strategies for building engaging social media presence, optimizing streaming platform profiles, and creating compelling content just for content distribution, but as networking tools that can facilitate collaborations and industry connections. For instance, platforms like Spotify for Artists and SoundCloud can serve as portfolio showcases while simultaneously offering opportunities for discovering and connecting with potential collaborators.

Professional networking development should now encompass both offline workshops and digital strategy sessions, while internship programs should include exposure to digital marketing and online audience engagement. These programs need to emphasize how traditional networking skills can be amplified through digital platforms, creating a comprehensive approach to professional development in today's digitally connected music industry. This digital integration is particularly crucial in Jakarta's music ecosystem, where digital platforms have become essential bridges connecting local musicians with global audiences. The city's high digital engagement rate and growing streaming market provide unique opportunities for musicians to expand their reach beyond traditional geographical limitations. Through strategic use of digital platforms, Jakarta-based musicians can now showcase their work to international audiences, participate in global collaborations, and build professional networks that extend far beyond local boundaries.

The implementation of these implications is expected to encourage the creation of a more inclusive and sustainable music ecosystem in Jakarta. A holistic approach to the career development of musicians must emphasize long-term sustainability through three key components. First, strategic relationships management, where musicians learn to maintain and nurture professional networks beyond initial connections, ensuring continuous value exchange and growth opportunities. Second, comprehensive career planning that integrates artistic development with business acumen, including financial literacy training, revenue stream diversification, and strategic brand development. Third, adaptive capacity building that enables musicians to pivot their careers in response to industry changes, whether through developing new skills, exploring emerging market opportunities, or reimagining their artistic offerings.

This comprehensive approach to career sustainability, which considers networking, financial management, and adaptability as integral components, will not only benefit individual musicians but also contribute to strengthening the music industry. By emphasizing long-term career viability alongside creative development, stakeholders can formulate improved industry growth strategies that support sustained success rather than just short-term achievements. Musicians

who develop these combined competencies such as networking, financial literacy, and adaptive planning are better positioned to build enduring careers that can weather industry changes and evolve with market demands.

The urgency of this research is also becoming increasingly relevant considering the dynamics of Jakarta's music industry, which continues to evolve and become more competitive. As revealed by the informant's experience:

"Many musicians from the regions come, they play well, they have good skills, but when they get here, they have to start from scratch. It's not their skills that are at zero, but their connections that have to start from zero."

These findings underscore the importance of building support systems and development programs that not only focus on enhancing musical competence but also on establishing effective professional networks. Thus, this research serves as an important foundation for the development of policies and programs that can facilitate the growth of a more inclusive music ecosystem, support both new and established musicians, and encourage broader collaboration within Jakarta's music industry.

3. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

Conclusion. This research produces two main conclusions that address the problem formulation regarding how musicians in Jakarta utilize professional networks and the extent of their impact on career advancement. In terms of utilizing professional networks, the research reveals that musicians follow a pattern of social capital evolution through five critical points. Starting from the initial phase that relies on bonding capital, facing the dilemma of the comfort zone, responding to competitive pressures, reconfiguring networks, and finally achieving the optimization of professional networks through strategic career progression and transformation of connections into productive collaborations. Effective utilization mechanisms are needed, which include the formation of strategic networks, the utilization of collaboration opportunities, and the ability to adapt to industry dynamics.

Studies reveal that musical career advancement stems from interrelated system dynamics. Individual factors like competence and professional identity merge with social elements of collaborative networks while responding to environmental industry opportunities. These systems maintain fluid interconnections rather than rigid boundaries. Factors for network-based success include the principle of reciprocity in maintaining professional relationships, the development of professional credibility, and adaptive ability in developing multiple roles. These findings affirm that the contribution of professional networks lies not only in building connections, but also in strategically transforming those connections into productive collaborations that advance musicians' careers.

Suggestion. Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made. For musicians, it is important to develop a networking strategy that balances bonding and bridging capital, inte-

grating both traditional and digital approaches for competency development. For the music industry, it is necessary to develop structured mentoring programs and collaboration platforms that facilitate network building for musicians at various career stages. For music education institutions, it is important to integrate networking aspects and soft skills development into the curriculum, alongside practical industry exposure. Further research can explore the impact of digitalization on musicians' networking patterns, the effectiveness of professional networking development programs, and strategies for sustainable career development in the contemporary music industry era. Such research would contribute to a deeper understanding of networking practices in the evolving music industry landscape.

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