

## **Streaming Music and Millennials on Popular Culture Perspective**

**Vanesia Amelia Sebayang<sup>1</sup>, Asmyta Surbakti<sup>2</sup>**

Universitas Sumatera Utara

[vanesia.amelia@usu.ac.id](mailto:vanesia.amelia@usu.ac.id)

### **ABSTRACT**

Streaming music is an activity that are highly sought after by millennials in Indonesia but used in dysfunction. Streaming music is the activity of listening songs based on online applications such as Spotify and Joox. This phenomenon is a result of communication interruption between generations or surrounding environment. Cultural studies as English contemporary literary theory called this phenomenon as popular culture. Popular culture has four characteristics, they are most liked by people, types of low-level jobs, works done to pleased people, and build cultures just for themselves. Streaming music applications have weakened the millennials strength and caused them to remain comfortable in the capitalist entertainment which actually only demands profit. Cultural studies concerns on the negative impact of information technology, especially cultural linkages with the problems of social relations and everyday life. In facing education globalization and the 4.0 industrial revolution, it is necessary to reorient the curriculum and to anticipate the negative impacts of popular culture. The industrial revolution demands creativity, hard work, dynamic and innovative personalities and have to master a particular field of science, as well as the disruptive era mandate that is to become the current generation of reformers who create a future phenomenon.

**Keywords:** milenials, streaming music, 4.0 industrial revolution, disruptive, and popular culture.

### **Introduction**

Millenial and millennial generation are becoming the most discussed topics today. Throughout 2018, a lot of higher education and universities alike are known to carry out these particular topics in several scientific events. In the upcoming 10 years (2020 - 2030), the millennial generation is expected to be the most dominant productive age communities in the world. This generation is going to take over all aspects of life, starting from the social, culture, economics, security and defense to the government administration. As means of understanding the aforementioned term, one should pay more attention to its basic definition, also specific characteristics.

What are these millennial generation? The millennials placed as the fourth in the graphic of human generation in the world. It emerged after the traditionalists, baby boomers, and generation X. There are several important points that started the millennial generation in Indonesia, such as: (1) the ability to use technology; (2) the strong correlation of music and pop culture; (3) the act of high tolerance and liberty; (4) being smarter than average; (5) has a high appreciation of fashion; (6) tend to trust a user generated information (personal information) than a conventional history; (7) tend to choose cellphones than television; (8) keenly associated with social medias; (9) lack of conventional reading; (10) using cashless transaction. Compared to previous generation, the millennials are considered ethnically more diverse, more established (economically), and more educated than the latter. This generation includes global individuals (only

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0”*

socialize among the same school or workplace) that embrace the global way of thinking concept (Generational Differences Chart, 2017; Tanner, 2010).

The millennial generation is able to perform multitasking skills, especially in accessing the internet and music streaming. The majority of Indonesian millennials are known to surf the internet while opening a list of music streaming applications in a way of fulfilling their desire to rest or to spend spare time in public places, as well as limiting the communication among other individuals. Unfortunately, these activities would lead them to some disfunctional impacts. Moreover, these applications tend to make the Indonesian millennials into more sensitive, idle, slow, hallucinating, careless, and uncritical individuals. According to the perspective of pop culture, they are categorized as the subordinative group that unconsciously entering the grasp of the capitalists' power (Barker, 2009: 11).

Along with the new kind of civilization, this nation is experiencing a process of digital transformation, or also known as the industrial revolution 4.0. This industrial revolution encourages a system automation in all activity process and also promote that the world and human life have fundamentally changed. However, this kind of revolution might lead to need-to-be noted negative impacts. If one should fail in fulfilling its qualifications, then human labors will be replaced by machines. Therefore, it may increase the number of unemployments. Thus, the revolution itself is becoming the subject of popular cultural studies; where it is used as an arena of hegemonic ideas in operating the social control mechanisms (Ritzer, 2014: 501).

In an effort to face the globalization era, especially in the fields of education and the spirit of Industrial Revolution 4.0, Indonesia should perform a curriculum reorientation. The reason of this action is to prevent the negative impacts caused by the existence or continuity of popular culture to the Indonesian millennials. In addition, the Industrial Revolution 4.0 demands a quality generation that is balanced in the soft and hard skills; hard working, creative, innovative, dynamic individuals that are able to master more than one discipline.

## **Methods**

This article uses qualitative method that is supported with quantitative data. The data source is gathered from primary and secondary data. The data collection technique is using processes such as interview, observation, library research, online research. The data analysis is performed by using deconstruction theory and popular culture theory.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **The Potential of Indonesian Millennial Generation as Music Streaming Application Market**

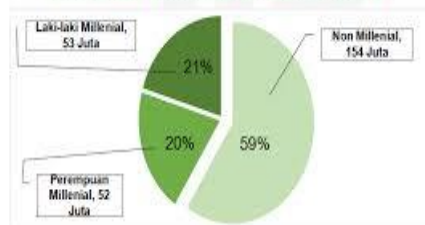
According to Alvares Research Center (2017); a research institute that focuses on contemporary issues; the urban middle class millennial generation have the most distinct characteristics in Indonesian millennials. These characteristics are furthermore described as 3C: Creative, Confident, and Connected. The Creative characteristic refers to the young creative Indonesian millennials that often think outside the box and also rich with

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0”*

ideas and suggestions. Meanwhile, confident points out to the ability of trusting their own capabilities, as well as expressing their thoughts without hesitation. The term Connected aims to their involvement in technological advancement, such as using the internet and gadgets.

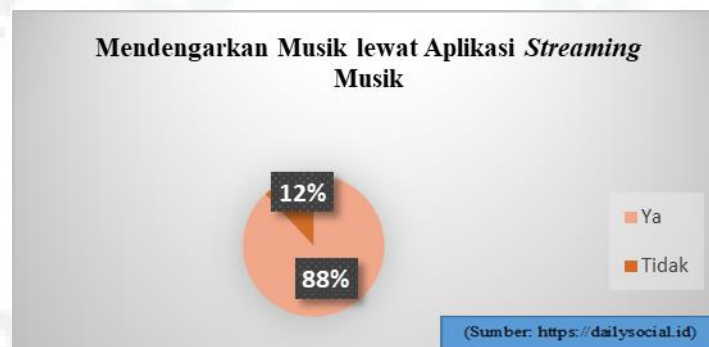
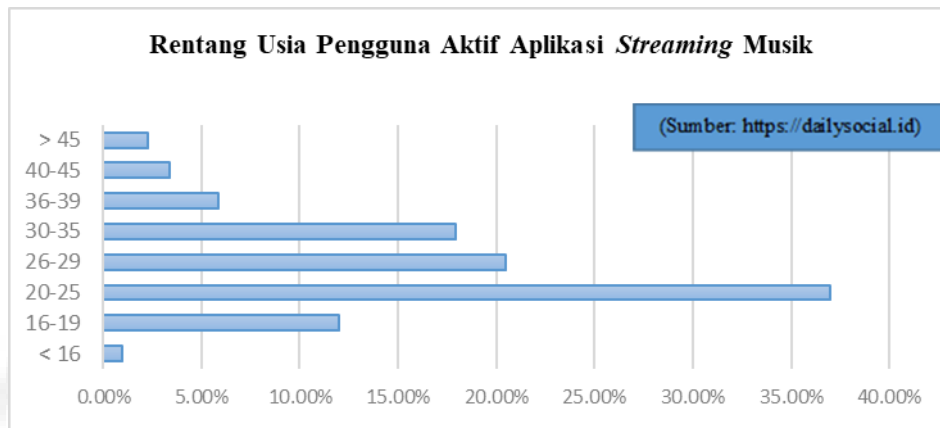
Between 2015 and 2018, the number of active internet users in Indonesia are significantly increased, in fact, they reach to the villages area. In the year 2015, it is reported that the number of users is approximately 96.5 million, followed by 104.2 million users in 2016, 112.1 million users in 2017, and 120.1 million users in 2018. The numbers are predicted to rise up to 144.2 million users in 2019 until 2021 with 300 minutes or 5 hours of average access duration. Moreover, the related survey is presented by metrotvnews.com, as follows:

Perbandingan Populasi Indonesia dengan Generasi Millennial di Tahun 2016

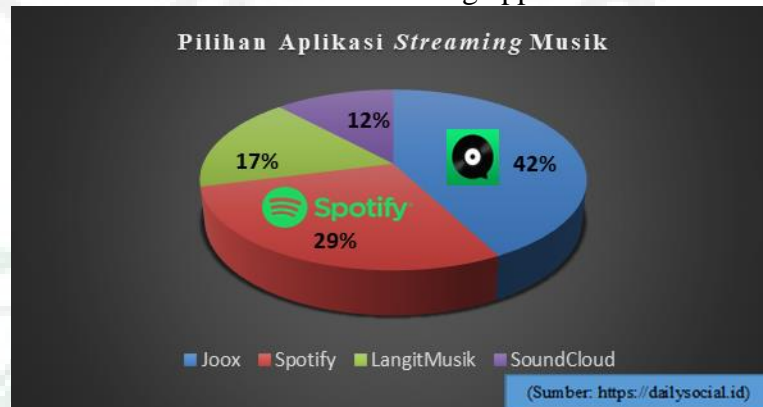


As viewed from the comparison between the Indonesia's population and the number of Indonesian millennials, it is confirmed that about a half of the total population are very active in accessing the internet. One of the most frequent activities is to stream music using the internet. In addition, listening to music is regarded as the millennials' favorite entertainment, in which are followed by watching movies and playing video games. Witkin (2003) states that the Indonesian millennials consider music as a way to change atmosphere, to suit their own taste, and to condition feelings or emotion about their social disconnection.

According to a survey done by dailysocial.id, in the first quarter of 2018, the age of active music streamers is ranging from 20 to 35 years old. Consequently, about 88% of the streamers are using platforms and mobile applications to access music. Below is the following diagram:



The next survey shows the list of music streaming application available to be chosen by the Indonesian millenials; namely Spotify, Joox, Langit Musik, SoundCloud, Apple Music, Melon, Deezer, etc. According to the respondents, Joox and Spotify are considered to be the most favorite music streaming application.



Spotify is a music streaming application than can be accessed using iOS, Android, Windows, BlackBerry, S60 (Symbian), etc. operating system. It is first released in 2006 in Stcokholm, Sweden, by Daniel Ek, Martin Lorentzon, and Maria Giovani Santosa. In 2017, the music streaming application company developed in various countries of the world ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)). Recently, Spotify application can be accessed in 57 countries including Indonesia using two different services: Spotify Free and Spotify Premium.

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution 4.0”*

Another Indonesian millennials' favorite music streaming application is Joox. Compared to Spotify, Joox can only be accessed using iOS, Android and Windows platform. The company is run by Shenzhen-China's Tencent Holdings Ltd. (as well as WeChat messaging application). It offers two million local and international songs and playlists to be streamed or downloaded offline for free. However, Joox is only available to countries such as China, Hongkong, Malaysia and Indonesia.

In order to attract the listeners, Joox facilitate its application with Top Charts feature. The feature contains a list of most frequently played songs by its active users. It is divided into 5 (five) segments: Trending Top Hits, International Top Hits, Indonesian Top Hits, New Single Top Hits, and K-pop Top Hits. These charts are created to suit the taste of Indonesian music listeners. In addition, this feature enable the Joox users to share and comment about the songs that are currently listened through Facebook.

The potential of the Indonesian millennial generation is being used by the music streaming application vendors. The habits of these Connected millennials are furthermore encouraged by the emergence of various music streaming applications that cooperate with cellular phones operators. In accordance with this issue, [www.wearesocial.com](http://www.wearesocial.com) states that Indonesia is the main target for the music streaming market because of its active users.

### **Music Streaming Application to the Indonesian Millennial Generation in the Perspective of Popular Culture**

Popular culture or mass culture is the inseparable from the growth of mass communication, mass media, mass production, and mass consumption. In the perspective of Critical Theory, popular culture is a culture that is shaped from culture industries that act to preserve the continuity of capitalism. Moreover, this culture (may include movies, cassettes, clothes, fashion, television, advertisements, the internet, pop music, etc.) emerge in demand of massive industrialization and commercialization that is oriented toward market profits as much as possible (Lubis, 2016). Thus, popular culture has 4 main characteristics, such as: liked by a lot of people, low class worker, is done to please people, and act as a culture built for themselves.

The phenomenon of Indonesian millennial generation related to the use of streaming music is caused by a social category that is present alongside families role grown from the capitalism progress. During the precapitalism communities period, families were always able to fulfill ones biological, economics, and cultural from social reproduction needs. Later, these individuals entered a transition stage (transition rites) from childhood to adult. However, in the capitalism period, communities are often especially treated, rational, and universal. Thus, it provokes a discontinuity among families and vast communities, in which are supposed to be filled by the transitional young generation. As a result, this young generation later forms a new culture, such as listening to music with smartphones in public places (Parsons in Barker, 2009).

The capitalism actors offers various products from shows, entertainments, and the internet to shape the character of their consumers in order to become worshippers, followers, and imitators. The realities of gadget and smartphone application usage among millennials are simply driven by their desires, not by their needs. These actors will always create very fast pseudo-needs to be transmitted to the broad mass (Lubis:

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0”*

2018). The music streaming applications emerge as if they shall encourage their consumers by their fast and easy services. At the same time, they acquire royalties and profits from users' monthly subscription, internet online duration and download fees.

The success of these capitalism actors as entertainment producers is inversed compared to the Indonesian millennials (consumers). In addition to having a positive impact, the use of streaming music applications, especially in public spaces, triggers hearing loss as well as mental disorders such as *Nomophobia* and *Addiction*. Hearing loss caused by the use of earphones / headphones is too frequent, especially if the volume setting is too high. In the field of medicine, *Nomophobia* is a condition where a person experiences extraordinary fear when losing his personal cellphone; whereas *Addiction* is a condition where a person will be less focused, lack of productivity, tend to be lazy, and lose his social life ([www.shopback.co.id](http://www.shopback.co.id)).

The occurrence of these popular culture products has somewhat weaken the potentials and capabilities of their consumers. The capitalists manage to keep the millennials comfortable in their newly created worlds in order to change them into a sensitive, idle, stagnant, careless, and uncritical generation. As a result, these millennials develop a language disorder or schizophrenia (Lacan in Sarup, 2008). The downside of this popular culture is one the main focus of cultural studies, in which how technology and its products influence the social relationship and society's daily lives. According to Foucault (in Lubis, 2006: 232), an intellectual will always be inseparable from democratic issues.

From the perspective of cultural studies, there should be an effort of provoking awareness movement toward the society, especially to the millennials from the fields of education services in the 12 General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) between Indonesian government and WTO. The awareness movement can be done by making an education curriculum reorientation that emphasize on morals and creativity, so that the millennials are no longer idle in their comfort zone; and once again able to become active, creative and innovative individuals through various scientific events.

These efforts are mainly used to remove the status of internet dependency (from being mere followers) in order to give rise to an intellectual, creative, visionary Indonesian millennials. By doing so, they will become able to participate in a global competition with other countries' millennials. According to Parray, ILO (2017); Schwab (2017):

*“Indonesia needs to improve the quality of workforce skills with digital technology and innovative”; “Technology disruption era is the combination of physical, digital, and biological domain”* (Kemenristekdikti, 2017).

It might be possible for Indonesian millennials to lead the digital entertainment industry in the future as producers, not only consumers. Therefore, the upcoming Indonesian millennial generation is expected to fulfill the disruptive era mandate: to become the current generation of reformers who create a future phenomenon.

## **Conclusions**

The Indonesian millennial generation lives in a social category that is present alongside families role grown from the capitalism progress. During the precapitalism communities period, families were always able to fulfill ones biological, economics,

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0”*

and cultural from social reproduction needs. Later, these individuals entered a transition stage (transition rites) from childhood to adult. However, in the capitalism period, communities are often especially treated, rational, and universal. Thus, it provokes a discontinuity among families and vast communities, in which are supposed to be filled by the transitional young generation. As a result, this young generation later forms a new culture, such as listening to music with smartphones in public places. The music streaming applications as a popular culture product creates millennial generation that is comfortable in their newly created worlds in order to change them into a sensitive, idle, stagnant, careless, and uncritical generation. As a result, these millennials develop a language disorder or schizophrenia in both cyber or real world.

Cultural studies as a discipline need to provoke a counter action toward the negative impacts from popular culture. The awareness efforts can be done by making an education curriculum reorientation that emphasize more on moral and creativity qualities. In accordance with this statement, in 2018 Kemenristekdikti has carried out a policy of socialization on Facing the Education Globalization and Industrial Revolution 4.0, in which the GATS sector is considered to be the main issues. These efforts are expected to remove the stigma of idle Indonesian millennials; so that they can become active, creative and innovative individuals once again. Furthermore, Indonesian millennials are required to change their consumer status into intellectual, creative, and visionary producers in order to participate in a global competition with other countries' millennials in near future.

### **References**

- Ali, H., dan Purwandi, L. 2017. *The Urban Middle-Class Millennials Indonesia: Financial and Online Behaviour*. Jakarta: PT. Alvara Strategi Indonesia.
- Barker, C. 2009. *Cultural Studies: Teori dan Praktik*. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana.
- Kemenristekdikti. 2018. "Kebijakan Kemenristekdikti Menghadapi Globalisasi Pendidikan & Revolusi 4.0". Jakarta: Kemenristekdikti.
- Lubis, A.Y. 2018. *Teori Budaya Kontemporer: Penjelajahan Tanda & Makna*. Yogyakarta: Aurora.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2016. *Pemikiran Kritis Kontemporer: Dari Teori Kritis, Culture Studies, Feminisme, Postkolonial, hingga Multikulturalisme*. Jakarta: PT. RajaGrafindo Persada.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2006. *Dekonstruksi Epistemologi Modern: Dari Posmodernisme, Teori Kritis, Poskolonialisme hingga Cultural Studies*. Jakarta: Pustaka Indonesia Satu.
- Ritzer, G. 2014. *Teori Sosiologi: Dari Sosiologi Klasik Sampai Perkembangan Terakhir Posmodern* (terjemahan). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Sarup, M. 2008. *Panduan Pengantar untuk Memahami Postrukturalisme & Posmodernisme* (terjemahan). Yogyakarta: Bandung.
- Tanner, L. 2010. *Who Are the Millennials*. Defence R&D Canada: Centre for Operational Research & Analysis (DRDC-CORA) TM 2010-284: Canada.
- Witkin, R.W. 2003. *Adorno on Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0-203-26067-8.

### **Online References**

*"Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0"*

[www.shopback.co.id](http://www.shopback.co.id) / Kenali Gangguan Mental dan Kejiwaan Akibat Kecanduan Internet, Posted on 2017; Accessed September 2018.

<https://dailysocial.id>

[www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

<https://metrotvnews.com>

<https://wearesocial.com>



THE  
*Character Building*  
UNIVERSITY

*“Emerging foreign language towards Industrial Revolution  
4.0”*