

# The HipDut Phenomenon in the New Media Era: The Transformation of Dangdut Music Culture in the Digital Ecosystem

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## Abstract

The development of digital technology has changed the paradigm of human interaction and the production of cultural meaning. This study examines the phenomenon of HipDut (hip-hop dangdut) music as a new cultural product born from the new media ecosystem. The aim is to analyze how new media characteristics, such as interactivity and convergence, influence the production, distribution, and consumption of HipDut music, and how this phenomenon represents the cultural identity of the younger generation. Drawing on McLuhan's media ecology theory and Henry Jenkins' convergence culture, this study highlights the shift in the audience's role from passive consumers to active producers in a democratic digital space. The case study focuses on the song "Garam & Madu (Sakit Dadaku)" by Tenxi, Naykilla, and Jemsii, which gained popularity without going through the conventional recording industry. The analysis shows that HipDut is not just a passing trend, but rather a reflection of the collapse of boundaries between high and popular culture mediated by algorithms and collective participation. This research contributes to the still-limited study of local digital music, particularly in understanding the transformation of traditional music in the digital cultural space.

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## Introduction

The development of communication technology has transformed the way humans interact and produce meaning. McLuhan (1964) in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* explained that every medium is not simply a channel for conveying messages, but also shapes the way humans think and behave. This view emphasizes that the emergence of digital technology not only presents new forms of communication but also creates a new culture born from how society adapts to these media.

The concept of new media has evolved further with characteristics such as interactivity, participation, and content convergence. New media is a form of flexible, network-based communication system, where the boundaries between producers and consumers are increasingly blurred (Gane & Beer, 2008). This is also in line with Jenkins' (2006) view in *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, that media convergence refers not only to the merging of technologies, but also to the active involvement of audiences in the process of producing and disseminating messages.

The presence of social media like TikTok and YouTube demonstrates how society is now directly involved in the creation of popular culture. This phenomenon is evident in the emergence of the HipDut (hip-hop dangdut) music genre, a blend of modern hip-hop rhythms with elements typical of Indonesian dangdut. According to a report by detik.com



(2025), HipDut has become a popular music trend among the younger generation because it presents a fresh style and easily goes viral on social media. The song *Garam & Madu (Sakit Dadaku)* by Tenxi, Naykilla, and Jemsii is a clear example of how new media can build music popularity without going through the conventional recording industry (Angraini, 2025).

In this context, new media serves as a democratic and participatory space for cultural production. Taste and lifestyle are forms of expression of social identity influenced by cultural structures (Bourdieu, 1984). The HipDut phenomenon can be seen as a reflection of the changing musical tastes of digital society, which are no longer bound by the boundaries between "high" and "popular" culture, but rather are shaped through interaction, algorithms, and collective participation in the digital space.

However, the rapid development of popular culture in the digital space is often not matched by adequate academic attention. Many musical phenomena born from social media are initially understood as passing fads rather than objects of serious scholarly study. As a result, the cultural dynamics within them, including the relationship between technology, identity, and musical expression, often escape in-depth analysis.

Despite this, scientific research on HipDut remains very limited. Most research on digital music in Indonesia focuses on the phenomenon of dangdut koplo or DJ remixes, while HipDut presents itself as a new form of local music transformation within the digital ecosystem. Therefore, this research is crucial to analyze how new media shapes the production, distribution, and consumption of HipDut music and how this phenomenon represents the cultural identity of the younger generation in the digital space.

## Literature Review

Marshall McLuhan (1964), in his work "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man," introduced the concept of medium theory, emphasizing that a medium is not merely a channel for conveying messages but also shapes how people think and act. His famous phrase, "the medium is the message," asserts that the characteristics of the medium itself are more influential than the content of the message conveyed. The development of digital technology has further expanded the relevance of medium theory to the context of new, interactive, network-based media. In this space, users are no longer passive recipients but active actors directly involved in the production and circulation of cultural messages.

In the context of the HipDut phenomenon, social media such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram serve as media that not only disseminate music but also shape how the public enjoys, produces, and interprets dangdut music in digital format. Thus, the presence of digital platforms has become a major factor mediating changes in the tastes and consumption styles of popular culture among the younger generation.

Gane and Beer (2008) in *New Media: The Key Concepts* explain that new media has the main characteristics of interactivity, participation, networking, and convergence between platforms. New media allows audiences to act as both producers and consumers (prosumers), freely creating, sharing, and modifying content in the digital space. This creates a more fluid and open digital cultural ecosystem, where the boundaries between professional and amateur production are increasingly blurred. As a result, the legitimacy of cultural works is no longer solely determined by formal institutions, but rather by the response and participation of audiences in the digital space.

The HipDut phenomenon clearly demonstrates the characteristics of new media. Songs in this genre often emerge from collaborations between local creators through digital platforms, bypassing the formal music industry. Their distribution relies on algorithms and

public participation, with popularity being shaped through engagement and virality on social media.

Henry Jenkins (2006) in his book, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, explains that media convergence occurs not only in technological aspects but also in user behavior and culture. Convergence triggers a fusion of old and new media, where audiences actively play a role in the production and distribution of information. This change demonstrates that media consumption is no longer linear, but rather involves user interaction, adaptation, and creativity across multiple platforms. Thus, convergence becomes a meeting place between old cultural practices and new expressions shaped by the dynamics of digital media.

In the context of HipDut, convergence is evident in how elements of traditional dangdut music are combined with modern hip-hop, then disseminated through social media and digital streaming platforms. This process reflects a form of participatory culture, where the public directly participates in the creation and dissemination of popular culture through cross-media interactions.

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* highlighted that taste is not simply an individual expression, but rather a social construct influenced by class, education, and cultural environment. The concept of cultural capital is crucial for understanding how aesthetic preferences reflect one's social position.

In the digital era, cultural capital is undergoing transformation along with changes in the spaces of cultural production and consumption. Access to technology, digital literacy, and the ability to adapt to new media trends now determine how taste is formed and socially recognized.

The HipDut phenomenon demonstrates how young urbanites are constructing new tastes that no longer distinguish between high culture and popular culture. HipDut music is considered representative of a fluid, creative digital lifestyle that is not bound by conventional norms in the music industry. This demonstrates a shift in cultural capital, where popularity and engagement on social media have become new forms of legitimacy in the music world.

Several previous studies have highlighted changes in music culture due to the development of digital media. For example, Saiful Kiram's (2023) study, "Globalization of Dangdut Koplo Music Culture Through TikTok (A Cross-Cultural Communication Approach)," demonstrated that social media plays a crucial role in reviving the local genre through audience participation. Meanwhile, Michael H. B. Raditya's (2022) study, "Technology Negotiation in Dangdut Koplo's Ecosystem and Practices," discusses TikTok's role in accelerating the virality of local remix songs.

These findings confirm that digital media serves not only as a means of distribution but also as a space for negotiating local musical identity and creativity. However, the focus of studies, which has remained focused on dangdut koplo and remixes, suggests that the dynamics of new genres like HipDut have not received adequate academic attention.

However, to date, scientific studies specifically addressing the HipDut phenomenon are still very limited. This indicates a relevant research gap that merits further study, particularly regarding how new media shapes the consumption and production patterns of music culture among Indonesia's younger generation.

Based on the theoretical explanation above, this research is based on the view that digital media is not only a means of music distribution but also a space for cultural production that shapes tastes and social identities. McLuhan's theory helps explain the role of the medium in shaping communication behavior; Gane & Beer's theory explains the participatory characteristics of new media; Jenkins' theory highlights the dynamics of

cultural convergence; and Bourdieu's theory helps understand how changes in musical tastes reflect the social transformation of the digital generation.

This theoretical framework allows this research to view HipDut not simply as a musical genre, but as a cultural practice born from a specific social and technological context. This approach also opens up the analysis of power relations, legitimacy, and meaning formation within the digital music ecosystem. Thus, the HipDut phenomenon can be understood as the result of the interaction between technology, popular culture, and audience participation in the new media landscape, reflecting shifts in how young people construct their musical identities and tastes in the digital era.

## Methodology

This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-interpretive design, aimed at understanding how new media shapes the production, distribution, and consumption of HipDut music, as well as how this phenomenon represents the cultural identity of Indonesian youth in the digital space. A qualitative approach is considered most appropriate because it allows for a deep and contextual exploration of social and cultural phenomena that cannot be fully captured through quantitative measurements (Creswell, 2014).

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive-interpretive design, guided by the theoretical frameworks of McLuhan (1964), Gane and Beer (2008), Jenkins (2006), and Bourdieu (1984). This design enables the researcher to analyze the HipDut phenomenon not merely as a musical trend but as a complex cultural practice embedded within a specific technological and social context. The interpretive lens allows for the exploration of meaning-making processes among digital-native audiences and content creators.

The primary research object is the HipDut music genre, with particular attention to the song *Garam & Madu (Sakit Dadaku)* by Tenxi, Naykilla, and Jemsii as a representative case. This song is selected because it exemplifies how a locally produced music genre can achieve viral popularity through digital platforms without relying on the conventional recording industry. The research focuses on three interconnected dimensions: (1) the production processes of HipDut content in digital spaces; (2) the mechanisms of distribution and virality facilitated by social media algorithms; and (3) the patterns of consumption and audience participation that shape the genre's cultural significance.

Data for this research are obtained from online news coverage, social media content, academic literature, and platform analytics reports related to the HipDut phenomenon. Digital content, including user-generated videos, comment sections, and engagement metrics, are also analyzed as documentary evidence of audience participation and cultural production. Digital observation data (netnography) is applied to systematically observe and document HipDut-related content, user interactions, and discourse patterns across TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. This technique, as developed by Kozinets (2010), allows the researcher to examine online cultural practices in their natural digital environment. Besides, document analysis is employed to examine media reports, platform data, and textual content related to HipDut, providing broader contextual evidence to triangulate findings from interviews and digital observation.

Data analysis follows an interactive qualitative analysis model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three concurrent stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the condensation stage, raw data from observations and documents are systematically coded and categorized according to key themes derived from the theoretical framework. In the data display stage, categorized data are organized into thematic narratives and analytical matrices to identify

patterns and relationships. In the conclusion stage, findings are interpreted in relation to the research questions and the theoretical propositions of McLuhan, Gane and Beer, Jenkins, and Bourdieu, enabling a holistic understanding of how new media mediates the cultural dynamics of HipDut.

The research is carried out in four sequential stages. The first stage involves preliminary study and research design, including literature review, formulation of research questions, and development of data collection instruments. The second stage encompasses data collection through netnographic observation and document. The third stage involves data analysis, coding, and thematic interpretation in accordance with the analytical framework. The fourth and final stage consists of writing, peer review, and finalization of research findings. This systematic procedure ensures that the research is conducted rigorously and transparently, in alignment with qualitative research standards.

Overall, this methodology is designed to capture both the structural and experiential dimensions of the HipDut phenomenon, enabling a comprehensive analysis of how new media functions not only as a channel for music distribution but also as a transformative space for cultural production and identity construction among Indonesia's digital generation.

## Results and Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that HipDut (Hip-hop Dangdut) constitutes not merely a musical trend but a complex cultural practice produced through the intersection of digital technology, participatory audience behavior, and shifting taste structures among Indonesian youth. Analyzed through the theoretical lenses of McLuhan (1964), Gane and Beer (2008), Jenkins (2006), and Bourdieu (1984), the HipDut phenomenon demonstrates how new media has fundamentally transformed the logic of popular music production, distribution, and consumption in the Indonesian digital landscape.

HipDut emerged organically in mid-2024 through a steady accumulation of user-generated content on TikTok and YouTube Shorts. The genre combines traditional dangdut koplo rhythms with modern hip-hop beats and vocal flows, producing a sonic hybrid that resonated strongly with younger, digitally connected audiences. Its virality was not engineered by the formal music industry but arose through the recursive logic of social media: dance challenges, sound remixes, duet features, and meme adaptations collectively amplified its reach across regional and diaspora communities. The song *Garam & Madu* (Sakit Dadaku) by Tenxi, Naykilla, and Jemsii serves as a paradigmatic example of this dynamic, having achieved widespread popularity without conventional promotional infrastructure.

From a McLuhanian perspective, this phenomenon cannot be understood by focusing on musical content alone. The digital platform itself—particularly TikTok's short-video architecture—functions as the primary agent of cultural transformation. Consistent with McLuhan's (1964) proposition that "the medium is the message," the structure of TikTok shapes how music is created, consumed, and circulated: brevity, loopability, and visual synchronization become constitutive features of HipDut as a genre. Users are not passive recipients but active producers of meaning who dance, remix, and recontextualize songs within their own social frames. This mediation effect confirms that HipDut's cultural significance is inseparable from the platform conditions that gave rise to it.

This observation aligns with Gane and Beer's (2008) characterization of new media as fundamentally interactive, participatory, networked, and convergent. All four dimensions are evident in HipDut's trajectory. Interactivity is expressed through users' capacity to respond creatively—via duets, reaction videos, and remix covers—rather than merely receiving content. Participation drives virality, as the genre's reach is co-produced by the

cumulative contributions of ordinary users rather than institutional gatekeepers. Networking extends HipDut beyond regional boundaries, reaching Indonesian diaspora communities and international audiences drawn in by algorithmic recommendation. Convergence is manifest in the integration of audio, video, dance, and meme culture into a unified digital ecosystem. Taken together, these features indicate a structural shift in the logic of cultural production: legitimacy is no longer exclusively conferred by the formal music industry but emerges from the distributed engagement of a networked public.

Jenkins' (2006) framework of convergence culture further illuminates the cross-cultural and cross-platform dynamics at work. HipDut exemplifies what Jenkins describes as participatory culture, in which the boundary between audience and producer dissolves into the figure of the prosumer. Each act of reuploading, choreographing, or remixing constitutes a material contribution to cultural production rather than a merely derivative act of consumption. Moreover, the genre itself embodies a form of cultural convergence: the fusion of dangdut—a music form with deep roots in Indonesian working-class and rural identity—with hip-hop, a globally circulated genre originating from African-American urban culture. This hybridity does not represent the erasure of local identity but rather its renegotiation within a globalized digital context, producing a form of expression that is simultaneously local and transnational.

Bourdieu's (1984) theory of cultural capital and taste provides a complementary analytical dimension. Historically, dangdut has occupied a subordinate position within Indonesia's cultural hierarchy, associated with lower-class or rural tastes in contrast to genres perceived as more prestigious or "modern." The HipDut phenomenon disrupts this hierarchy by establishing new criteria of cultural legitimacy rooted in digital capital: follower counts, engagement metrics, virality, and algorithmic visibility. The younger generation that produces and consumes HipDut demonstrates that taste formation in the digital era is no longer solely determined by class origin or formal education but increasingly shaped by one's capacity to navigate and exploit the affordances of social media. This constitutes a meaningful, though not complete, transformation in the field of cultural production, wherein the democratizing potential of new media partially displaces—but does not eliminate—established structures of cultural distinction.

Collectively, these findings suggest that HipDut represents a significant case study in the broader dynamics of digital popular culture in Indonesia. The phenomenon reflects how algorithmic logic, participatory practices, and hybrid cultural forms interact to produce new configurations of musical meaning and social identity. The power of cultural production is increasingly distributed, yet this distribution is mediated by platform architectures that themselves exercise a structuring influence over which content gains visibility and legitimacy. Future research may productively examine how this tension between democratization and algorithmic control shapes the long-term trajectories of locally produced digital genres.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study has analyzed the HipDut phenomenon as a product of the complex interaction between new media technology, participatory culture, and shifting structures of musical taste in Indonesia. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of McLuhan (1964), Gane and Beer (2008), Jenkins (2006), and Bourdieu (1984), the analysis demonstrates that HipDut's emergence and virality are not incidental but reflect deeper structural transformations in how popular culture is produced, distributed, and experienced in the digital era.

Three key conclusions can be drawn from this research. First, digital platforms—

particularly TikTok—function not merely as neutral channels of distribution but as active mediating forces that shape the form, meaning, and reach of musical content. The medium itself constitutes a cultural message, as McLuhan's theory would predict. Second, the participatory and convergent characteristics of new media have enabled a grassroots logic of cultural production in which audience engagement, not industry endorsement, determines a genre's legitimacy and commercial relevance. Third, the HipDut phenomenon reflects a meaningful reconfiguration of cultural capital, wherein digital visibility and social media engagement emerge as new—though not unconditional—sources of cultural authority for the younger generation.

Theoretically, this research contributes to scholarship on digital popular culture, media theory, and cultural studies by demonstrating how globally circulating theoretical frameworks can be productively applied to locally specific phenomena. It also identifies a gap in the literature: while dangdut koplo and DJ remix culture have received growing academic attention, hybrid digital genres such as HipDut remain understudied. Practically, the findings carry implications for musicians and creative industry stakeholders, who may leverage participatory platform dynamics to expand the reach of local cultural production without dependence on conventional industry gatekeepers. For cultural policymakers, HipDut offers a model of how traditional music forms can be revitalized and made relevant to younger generations through digital mediation, warranting supportive frameworks for local creative content.

This study is subject to certain limitations. The analysis is primarily theoretical and case-focused, relying on publicly available content and secondary sources. Future research would benefit from systematic digital ethnography, audience reception studies, and quantitative platform data analysis to further substantiate and extend these findings. Examining dimensions such as gender representation within HipDut content, the role of specific algorithmic mechanisms in shaping virality, and the long-term sustainability of hybrid digital genres would constitute productive directions for subsequent inquiry. Such work would deepen understanding of the relationship between media technology, cultural identity, and popular music in Indonesia's evolving digital public sphere.

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