

Urban Toys as a New Alternative Media to Promote Indonesian Culture

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ABSTRACT

There is a phenomenon in Indonesian society which is currently more interested in popular culture, such as from Korea, Japan, USA and other developed countries. This is also the impact of aggressive promotions from developed countries' popular culture through film, music, drama and other media. One of the popular culture products that also entered Indonesia is urban toys. In the midst of urban toys, the emergence of an Indonesian urban toy designer who joined the community with the name IAT (Indonesian Art Toys) has placed idealism on their artworks to promote Indonesian culture through urban toys. By bringing the culture in the mirror theory, supported by the concept of promotion mix, toy literature and communication, and using qualitative methodology, this research aims to analyze and explore the position, strength and weakness of urban toys as a new alternative media for promoting Indonesian culture. The results show that urban toys hold the position as products as well as a media for cultural promotion. The strength of this culture of media promotion lies in the combination of visualization of traditional cultural artifacts with packaging of pop culture, so that it has added value and opens up new market segments. However, currently the work of urban toys has not been produced on a mass scale by producers, because it is still produced by artists individually. This study concludes that urban toys can play a role as a new alternative media for the culture of visual communication and bring national cultural identity.

Keywords : *Urban toys, communication, alternative media, promotion, culture.*

INTRODUCTION

At present the exposure of foreign cultures in Indonesia has increasingly widespread, from conventional media such as television, radio, to access to information also through social media. Some information channels offer foreign cultural content or even offer popular culture. The impacts that have finally emerged as social phenomena and problems are more and more people who like popular culture from other countries rather than Indonesian culture. The real forms of entry of foreign cultures in Indonesia are through music, drama, artists, infotainment, food and several others. Besides that the development of popular culture is also increasing in line with the increase of capitalism in the entertainment world. With various treats the community is made to like and even follow foreign cultures. The element of cultural degradation was seen when asked about the historical heritage or heritage icon of the Indonesian state, the fewer Indonesian people who knew it.

The background of this research is to see the phenomenon where the elements of Indonesian culture are increasingly eroded. The development of popular culture products such as film, drama, music, clothing, food, and urban toys has flooded the Indonesian market, and Indonesian people tend to consume these products massively (Kuwado, 2017). The government has difficulties in stemming the global flow of information and it is difficult to keep the public from being concerned and proud of these culture. Several times the government carried out cultural campaigns, it is sometimes considered to be something less

interesting in the point of the public. If we look at the research problem, it appears that the direction of communication is not synchronized between people's interests and the method of disseminating cultural communication. Previous studies have shown that, some developed countries such as USA, Japan, and Korea are able to package their culture in the concept of popular culture (Sumartono, 2013). Thus not only the country is proud of its culture but other countries including Indonesia also like and adopt that culture.

One of the popular culture products that are starting to be loved by some people is urban toys or known as designer toys or vinyl toys (Benecditus, 2018). With the toys movement at the end of 1999 in early 2000, Atilgan (2013) stated that urban toys are not just a consumer product for children but are consumed by adults. Since then there have been new changes in concepts and paradigms in the pattern of selling toys. Urban toys not only have new values but also has risen in terms of sales prices. Urban toy makers are also very popular and have become famous artistes.

Quite a lot of Indonesians collect urban toys and willing to pay hefty prices with the cost ranging from affordable to very expensive (Yusrini, 2017). Artists making urban toys abroad such as from the USA, Hong Kong and Japan also become idols and their works are hunted and bought by Indonesians (Soca Editorial, 2018).

The current conditions of Indonesian society which are easily influenced by popular culture and foreign culture can contribute to a dynamic creative industry. Handicrafts and traditional products can be used as a form of cultural preservation. But still, the shape of Indonesia's creative industry, is still considered very conventional and not good in aspects of packaging design. This study saw a gap between the products of Indonesia's creative industry in communicating local culture to the public and that the perception of the Indonesian people who feel that the quality of Indonesia's creative work is still low.

On the one hand this research also saw interesting developments in one of the creative industries in Indonesia, with the emergence of local urban toy artists (Indonesian artists). Initially Indonesian urban toy artists also carried popular themes or concepts, but over time with the growth of Indonesian artists influencing changes in the ideology of artists has boosted Indonesian culture. An example is one of Indonesia's urban toy artists who made platform toys by creating works inspired by rare Indonesian animals, namely the Javan rhinoceros as shown in the picture below.



Figure 1: Urban toys with the themed Indonesian culture (source: toysrevil.com).

In addition, several Indonesian artists have also begun to take part in overseas events, as in previous studies that convey data that Indonesia is one of the participants in the DIY (Do It Yourself) project, where the activity is a participatory activity in urban toys

and the table below states that Indonesia joined and participated in the DIY International project.

Table 1: Distribution of country of designer toys participants .

Country	Number of participant
USA	74
UK	23
Australia	13
Germany	8
Brasilia	9
Spain	6
Canada, Italy, France,	5
Holland, Mexican	4
Russia, Indonesia, Swiss,	3
Thailand.	
Turkey, Ireland, Poland,	2
Singapore	
Not mentioned	1

Source: (Atlgan, Toy as an object of prosumption and designer as a craft consumer, 2013).

This research also departs from the existence of previous research, which stated that urban toy artists could carry their respective ideologies in the concept of urban toys that they make. Not only in Indonesia, the phenomenon of this creative industry, especially in urban toys, has also developed in other countries both of as a popular toy and becoming a tool of criticism in the development of existing conventional media. The following quote showed that urban toys are a form of alternative media in the practice of the creative industry:

This article continues to show how designer toys, critical and creative change some of the basic principles of this practice, advance criticism of merchandising characters through the material object itself. In this era of circulation, the case of designer toys shows how material artifacts can be a significant criticism site (Steinberg, 2010).

The previous research statement confirms that there has been a paradigm shift from urban toys artists. At present, in Indonesia, urban toys do not only bring popular themes, but can conceptualize social issues by bringing in domestic cultural concepts.

In Indonesia itself, urban toy communities emerged and began to care and incorporate elements of culture in their work. In accordance with the development of urban toys in Indonesia, a community emerged which named themselves the Indonesian Art Toys (IAT). IAT was founded in 2012, starting as a creative industry community driven by artists in the field of toy designers. In their journey, they incorporated the theme of Indonesian culture into the concept of the toys made. Not only as a production process, they also tried to promote Indonesian culture through their works, and began to be exhibited both domestically and abroad.

By looking at the problems and phenomena that are developing in Indonesia, the background of this research is to focus on urban toys as a medium of promotion and also cultural communication. This study seeks to describe the alternative function of cultural promotion delivered by urban toy artists in a communication perspective, and leads to the

research question of how the position of urban toys as an alternative media to promote Indonesian culture? This research was conducted by focusing on the exploration related to the innovation of Indonesian culture promotion through urban toys by local Indonesian artists. This study has several objectives:

- a. To analyze the position of urban toys as an alternative medium in promoting Indonesian culture.
- b. To analyze the strength and weakness of urban toys in promoting Indonesian culture in a communication perspective.
- c. To analyze the implications and relation of urban toys related to cultural communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW OR RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Cultural in The Mirror Theory

This research brings the cultural in the mirror theory which offers a new way of seeing culture as well as the process of making meaning in relation to cultural messages. Besides that, the theory also offers a process of developing cultural interpretations with basic skills (Pettersson, Information Design 1. Message Design, 2015). This theory illustrates and places how Indonesian artists convey culture with the basic skills suggested by this theory. These basic skills are also conveyed as four cognitive strategies in conveying cultural aspects. These skills include perception, Imagination, conceptualization and analysis (Pettersson, 2015).

The assumption of cultural in the mirror theory suggests that culture is basically displaying culture itself, one example is the form of art, the existence of culture itself is part of imagination, and culture at the stage of conceptualization and understanding of examples are ideology, religion, and philosophy from the culture itself. So that the process of shaping culture is a reflection of the culture that emerges, as in this case when there is a culture, there is an imagination and conceptualization of the culture forming.

Not only offering at the cognitive level, other elements are used to display culture, including media skills and cultural context. These three aspects start from basic skills in presenting culture supported by media skills. Based on the four strategies, we distinguish four types of media including: a. Body parts of Perception (no perception without a body); b. Artifacts Part of Imagination (no artifact without imagination); c. Language part of Concept (no concepts without language); d. Graphic media (no structure without graphics) (Heusden, 2013). Cultural in the mirror theory is also an anthropological study that not only sees how one displays culture with the skills, but explains how culture is a reflection of its maker (reflection of the concept and ideology).

In the context of culture, culture can be learned, not just inherited. New cultural elements in society can also be develop. The cultural elements of one culture borrowed and included in the recipient culture are called diffusion. The process of diffusion and acculturation brings several types of cultural changes or cultural shifts. This statement can be an illustration of the literature that urban toys in Indonesia have begun to change and shift culture and that the emergence of popular culture has an acculturation with traditional culture (Showkat, 2017).

Promotional Mix Concept

This research brings several elements from the concept of promotion. Promotio. includes advertising elements, public relations, sales promotion, personal sales and direct marketing. Some literature also states that event and sponsorship marketing are promotional tools to promote products / services. The development of digital media led to the presence of online-based promotional tools such as Internet marketing / interactive marketing through social media and database marketing. Today its also known as a promotion tool for the era of digital technology and information such as blogs, pod casting, branded entertainment and influencer marketing (University of Pretoria, 2015).

With the advent of social media, there is a new promotional tool, one of which is known as the influencer marketing term. Influencer marketing is an individual or artist who has many followers on social media as an alternative in promoting certain products. Influencers can be endorsers or third parties that shape the attitude of the audience both through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media channels. Social media influencers can create content that serves to promote certain products with the aim of persuading purchases or awareness of a product (Glucksman, 2017). This research looks at what promotional tools are used by artists and communities in marketing urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture. Forms and variations in the use of promotional tools are also seen as unique findings of cultural promotion through urban toys.

Toys and Communication

Urban toys are termed as toys with urban concepts win which they are three-dimensional shapes based on the design and characteristics of certain artists or collectivist graphic designers (artist groups). Designer toys are 'limited edition' and usually have relatively expensive prices that are intended both for certain segments of society and toy collectors. Usually toy designers integrate 'art, graphic design, and visual communication to create unique characters that emanate from the artistic feelings of individual artists, rather than conventional media. In delivering their work, toy designers also incorporate elements of idealism and concepts of work, so that each artist will have a distinctive and different values (Steinberg, 2010).

In line with the development of creative industries, toys or urban toys today are not only seen as aspects of entertainment, but urban toys are currently being studied from various scientific disciplines such as psychology, art, culture and communication sciences. Some works are sometimes not just a display or a children's toy, but urban toys segmentation reaches out to adults. If we look at reviews from a section of the book entitled toys and communication, currently urban toys or toys can include production processes as well as interpretations to communicate an idea. The following quote states that toys can now be seen from the aspect of communication:

Toys and their meanings in play can be seen as aspects of communication and transmission of culture. Giving and receiving toys reflects and imparts cultural practices and beliefs. Forms of play, such as parent-child play or block play, are directly related to language and communication skills (Goldstein, 2018).

By looking at that statement, toys are not only an entertainment medium, but are included in the realm of communication such as delivering ideas and interpreting concepts. Nowadays urban toys have been considered to improve function, as a tool to convey messages and cultural themes. Urban toys could adopt cultural icons, as a concept offered to urban communities to recognize and recall Indonesian cultural heritage.

Today, various types of contemporary toys become cultural adaptation tactics. The existence of research on toys is sampled, categorized and analyzed both in terms of design characteristics and production processes. The results of the study show that cultural adaptation is formulated, namely translating the functions and aspects of culture that are displayed, transliteration, hybridization and conceptualization (reproduction). There are interesting findings now that there are toy companies that facilitate elements of traditional culture, popular culture, and global culture. So it was also stated that making toys with cultural concepts became a tactic for developing new products (Avsar Gurpinar, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a constructive research paradigm, which is trying to explore and reconstruct reality and phenomena in the perspective of communication science (Donsbach, 2006). In the context of this research, trying to describe and analyze how a community creates its idealism in combining local products with pop art packaging and aims to communicate Indonesian culture. While the approach taken in this research is to use qualitative methods to obtain in-depth and specific data findings. The scope of this study brings macro studies and leads to contextual aspects of cultural studies in Indonesia.

Data collection was carried out by conducting in-depth interviews with the chairman of the Indonesian Fine Arts Community (IAT), and several senior artists who were members of the IAT. In addition, this study also uses secondary data to support this research, such as analyzing several publications and IAT social media tools and documentation about the promotion and publication of IAT activities.

After collecting data, the analysis was carried out using the stages of qualitative analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman, namely 1) Data Collection, 2) Data Reduction, 3) Data Verification / Conclusion (Norman K. Denzin, 2009). To ensure the reliability of this research data, data triangulation is used to check the primary data of interviews with secondary data evidence (Fielding, 2012).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Position of Urban Toys as a Promotional Media

Based on the results of this research, we found several findings related to urban toys as a medium for promoting Indonesian culture. Urban toys are positioned as products as well as media for cultural promotion. Positioned as a product because urban toy is a work that is sold or offered to the public. While urban toys are positioned as media because it is a place to put the concept of the artist who made it. So that urban toys are considered as a place to convey messages and cultural themes in the form of colors, paintings, carvings or prints with cultural nuances.

In producing urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture, there are two forms of production categories, both of Original: where pure urban toys are made by Indonesian artists ranging from the concept of forms, to toys made by Indonesian artists and also Customize: urban toys made based on the popular urban toys platform then custom made by Indonesian artists in the form of Indonesian cultural themes. In both categories of work,

both original and custom, urban toys can be a communication medium for Indonesian culture, because the concept of work is placed on these urban toys.



Figure 2: The original works of Indonesian urban toys artist (Source: plasticculture.toys).



Figure 3: The custom works Indonesian based on dunny platforms (Source: IAT Instagram).

Urban toys represent the idealism of Indonesian urban toys artists. Currently there is a new paradigm in some Indonesian artists to desire and start incorporating elements of Indonesian culture. The existence of the community makes the artists join and have a common vision and mission in producing urban toys, one of which is promoting and introducing Indonesian culture. The choice of the theme itself is usually discussed from the results of brainstorming conducted regularly at gathering events and in the IAT whatsapp community group. From the making of cultural theme concepts, finally it gives birth to the work of urban toys in the community as a media for promoting Indonesian culture. Some artists will follow a big theme and produce works of urban toys in accordance with their wishes and references. This is as stated by one of the informants (I1):

There are similar themes for every concept of Indonesian culture held every month. For the execution of the work depends on the style of each artist.

This statement was also confirmed by informant (I2) when the respondent said:

...each artist has his (or her) own style, even if there is the most standard such as No SARA (Tribe, Race, Religion), it is understandable that in Indonesia it is still a sensitive matter like that.

Informant (I3) added that:

For the techniques and methods submitted to the artist, because each of them has a working technique, each of which is usually a theme, if this is a joint event there is usually a mutually agreed theme, but if it is a personal project the artist is free to choose the theme according to his/her wishes.

Previously IAT had made more pure urban toys, where toys were made based on the creativity of the community members, but in line with the idea and development of concepts, IAT finally tried to put cultural ideology into several works of the urban toys created. IAT utilizes urban toys as a visual communication media to communicate Indonesian culture through several Indonesian cultural heritages. Among the choice of cultural themes made by the IAT includes Indonesian superhero, Indonesian rare animal, Indonesian culture character, and Indonesian cultural artifact pattern.



Figure 4: Urban toys themed Indonesian superheroes (Source: IAT Instagram).

The background of determining the theme is based on the existence of Indonesian artist ideologies such as one of the thoughts that, nowadays people are more fond of superhero works and creations from developed countries, even though Indonesia also has superheroes that can be promoted abroad. Other themes chosen such as rare animals and unique characteristics of Indonesia are more aimed at preserving and reintroducing Indonesian culture. The content of idealistic values and cultural communication aspects make urban toys position itself as a media for transmission of ideology and cultural messages.

The strenghts of urban toys as a media for cultural promotion

One interesting finding in this research is urban toys can be a media of transformation from products of popular culture to bringing cultural or custom themes into traditional themes (cultural mixing). As a media that has the aspect of mixing traditional visualization that is packaged through pop culture products, it has an impact on the value of promoting Indonesian culture. Through urban toys which are currently favored by a number of people, it can be an alternative promotion of culture through the packaging of pop art, the public will be more receptive and interested in revisiting Indonesian culture.

In addition, through urban toy products of Indonesian culture tend to increase in value and price. The increase is because the urban toys themselves have entered the popular product market, so the price range is high (expensive).

Urban toys in promoting culture has strength in three-dimensional elements. IAT as an urban artist community, makes urban toys as visual communication to display miniature artifacts and cultural heritage of Indonesia. IAT considers that through urban toys, it can show Indonesian culture not only with two dimensional communication mediums such as sketch or articles of culture, but urban toy has three dimensions form so it can be enjoyed physically. Urban toys is considered to be a combination of cultural promotion publications, in promoting the culture of urban toys supported by a brief narrative of traditional stories or the caption of Indonesian culture. Through this brief narrative, the artists can communicate the concept of his work while explaining the cultural elements that are being promoted. The appearance in the publication of the concept of the artist's work from the IAT is also a cultural promotion, because each work will be supported by a narrative of its cultural symbols. This can be seen in the sample publication below :



Figure 5: Indonesian urban toys publications and promotions (source: IAT Instagram).

There are findings that show enthusiasm from the Indonesian people to buy urban toys with Indonesian cultural themes. There is a positive response from the community even though it is not too big . This has begun to give appreciation to the work of local artists. The urban toys from Indonesia can open new market segments. The initial segmentation is the Indonesian people. This segment is targeted because they are more familiar with Indonesian culture. With this segmentation, IAT intends to revive awareness of Indonesian culture. But along with the widespread promotion carried out, it turns out that reaching a wider market in a market of foreign community is also a possibility. Some countries that have purchased urban toys with Indonesian cultural themes come from the United States, Singapore, China, Hong Kong, and also in Europe. This is as stated by the head of the IAT community, t (I1) who stated that:

The response of the Indonesian people about the work of the IAT itself is already good, even though the dominant ones are still from the other countries giving awards or appreciation.

So that foreign consumers are also new segments that are considered potential buyers of urban toys with an Indonesian theme. Aside from being a cultural reminder program for domestic communities, the segmentation of foreign communities has the prospect of promoting and introducing Indonesian culture to foreign countries. Overseas, urban toys have a number of specific target market segments such as urban toy collectors, foreign toy artists, toy manufacturers, and the general public. Thus urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture can make it possible to consume one of the four segments. Interestingly, if Indonesian urban toys are in demand by foreign toy manufacturers, it can be mass produced.

It is also found that one of the strength of urban toys as a medium for promoting culture is utilizing the activeness of artist makers in publications through social medias. Not only do they promote artworks, but indirectly artists can promote Indonesian culture through narratives or captions from urban toys made. In addition, artists can also participate in exhibitions both nationally and internationally so that they can indirectly bring products and cultural missions at national and international levels. The benefits obtained are a form of promotion of Indonesian culture that is more active and widespread. Following are some events that involve Indonesian artists not only to promote their products, but indirectly promoting Indonesian culture through urban toys.

Table 2: Events that urban toys indonesia artists have followed.

Name of Event	Scope of Event	Host Country
Pop Con Asia	National	Indonesia
Indonesia Comic Con	National	Indonesia
Battle of Toys	National	Indonesia
Toys and Comic Fair	National	Indonesia
Urban Toys Stage	National	Indonesia
STGCC	International	Singapore
New York Comic Con	International	Amerika
Thailand Toys fair	International	Thailand
Shanghai	International	Shanghai
Custom Art Exhibition	International	Korea

Source: Secondary data 2018.

Then, the existence of a famous Indonesian urban toy senior artist, made urban toys unique of their own value. Seeing the unique findings in urban toys, every artists who has many followers will become producers and influencers to influence the community in buying urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture.

Another form of the potential power of urban toys as a medium for cultural promotion, can be seen from foreign media coverage or toy reviews that cover works that are considered unique and good. Through foreign media and foreign toy reviewers, the concept of Indonesian culture can be conveyed more broadly. Here are some reviewers of toys that have covered Indonesian urban toys.

Table 3: Media and toys reviewer.

Name of Media/ Reviewer Toys	Country Home base
The toys chronicle	United Kingdom
Toysrevel	Singapore
Spangkystokes	America
Jawapos	Indonesia
Local Magazine	Indonesia

Source: Secondary data 2018.

The Weakness of urban toys as a media for cultural promotion

Based on the results of the interviews, there are some people in Indonesia who are not familiar with urban toys, so sometimes they are more judging from the aspect of size, or the materials of the concepts offered. In addition, the Indonesian public's perception of foreign products is still dominant, as said by the head of the IAT or informan (I1):

The response of the Indonesian local community to foreign toys is higher than the local toys. Although local toys are no less better than foreign or branded toys.

Currently, the Indonesian people are still strong with the mindset that quality toys come from abroad. So now when IAT has exhibited its work abroad or participated in international exhibitions, Indonesians tend to be interested in Indonesian urban toys. This was stated by informant (I4):

The Indonesian market still buys many urban toys from abroad and is not yet high in appreciating local works, sometimes they finally want to admit after local works have been thrown out of the country, and at the same time domestic buyers want to buy the work.

Also found from the results of this research is that in cultural promotion activities, IAT and artists felt that they did not regularly produce urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture. IAT itself in urban toy production activities has not fully entered into cultural promotion. Some artists who are members of the IAT still tend to make popular works that appeal to the public or who sometimes still choose themes based on hobby and artist preferences. In this matter, the promotion of culture through urban toys has not been produced sustainably and still depends on special editions or certain events.

Another findings related to the weakness of urban toys is due to limited quantities of works and homemade production. Only a few artists try to market in large quantities (mass product), this is because Indonesia itself does not have a producer that is capable of producing large quantities of urban toys such as in Hong Kong and Thailand.

There is no special promotions for urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture through special creative industry events. So far they are only using social medias such as Instagram and Facebook to promote Indonesian urban toys. Currently the promotion of urban toys is more through participation in exhibitions such as Popcon Asia, Comic Con, and there has been no special event made either by the IAT or the Creative Economy Agency of

the government. Special events that promote urban toys with cultural themes have not been carried out thoroughly, so they have not penetrated a significant domestic market.

Another important finding is that according to senior artists from the IAT community, there are still obstacles in cultural promotion through urban toys. According to some sources, currently there is a lack of adequate shipping access from government regulations. Sometimes artists find it difficult with the shipping process to buy materials or when selling abroad. The works with the theme of Indonesian culture are in demand and tend to be bought by overseas buyers, but when it comes to sending these items they are constrained by the high cost of shipping. This is something that may affect buyers in their purchasing decisions. Athis was conveyed by informant (I1):

...obstacles from outside are usually the problem of shipping to go abroad.

and this was supported by other artists such as informant (I3):

The obstacle faced is the difficulty in marketing the work where the fees charged are quite high besides the difficulty of entering goods or materials purchased from abroad.

If we refer to the statements above, it is felt that there is a need for the government to be to make rules and regulations relating to the shipping process related to the sale of urban toy works with the theme of Indonesian culture. This will allow the opening up of opportunities for increasing the creative industry sub-sector and becoming a channel for promoting culture through urban toys abroad.

The implications of urban toys as a medium of cultural communication.

It could be analyzed that this research shows the existence of a new function of urban toys as an alternative media in visualizing Indonesian culture especially in aspects of culture that are almost extinct or no longer known. The paradigm shift that Indonesian artists previously made more urban toys with pop art themes has now been mixed with traditional concepts. The existence of the communication process allows the expression and the interpretation of national cultural values. This is what makes urban toys a medium of cultural communication. As stated in the culture in the mirror theory, a work will present the culture itself. Artists initially tried to create popular works but nowadays they appear to bring ideology to re-communicate the nation's culture through urban toys. In the context of the culture in the mirror theory, Indonesian artists have gone through several work stages as per the following:

- a. Having a new perception (new paradigm) that with the advent of popular products that enter Indonesia, it can be adapted and customized with traditional nuances,
- b. Mixing imagination to realize the concept of perception. For example in the aspect of finding cultural references, interpretations and internalisation on the urban toys concept.

- c. Developing conceptualizations starting from the process of arranging creation ideas, making two-dimensional designs to communicate the message of visual urban toys to the level of making, sculpting and promoting the urban toys in three dimensional.
- d. For now what artists have not done is the analysis phase. Analysis of how to build a comprehensive cultural promotion of artists such as the need for socialization for creative economic bodies, market analysis, analysis of urban toy standards as a medium of cultural communication, and continuity in the production of works. This will reposition the fact that urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture are not only products sold by units but in the form of mass products on their own platforms. It is expected that urban toys can have a unique position to arrive as a counter to foreign popular culture.

Looking at the theory in a more practical way, the artists has been focused on the message production process through the work of urban toys made by referring to the function of cultural transmissio aside from the ability to change the paradigm of thinking in bringing a message of culture. Artists are also considered capable of thinking creatively in making urban toys as a medium for delivering cultural messages. As in one of the advanced skills in the theory of cultural in the mirror theory which is the need for media skills, Indonesian artists are seen to have communicated their work culturally in a non-verbal manner or more in the form of cultural artifacts.

Whereas from another communication perspective, it is seen that for now, urban toys as a medium for conveying cultural messages have implications that it may lead to message distortion. This is because the interpretation of the work with cultural themes depends on the extent to which the cultural references are made by the artist. If the artist is not emphasizing for details about the elements of traditional culture, then it is possible to have weak communication, or just the general and dominant visualization of his artwork. This implication is considered a weakness and a challenge for artists within the community. There is a need to be able to conduct in-depth analysis and discussion about the making of urban toys with Indonesian culture themes so that the resulting work can truly represent a process of transmitting values or cultural messages.

This study looks at findings that illustrate the new paradigm in the process of putting the nation's ideology into urban toys. In the context of the Cultural in The Mirror Theory, this research contributes to concrete examples that have been applied by Indonesian artists in producing and packaging cultural messages through urban toys. Through the cognitive characteristics of the strategy in this theory, the Indonesian context has been applied and there are many benefits such as functions, impacts and opportunities as a media for promoting Indonesian culture.

In associating with the four media strategies contained in this theory, it relates how Indonesian urban toys artists function as a medium of cultural communication. The creation of works in the form of media artifacts have gone through the process of artist's imagination, communication and cultural language. This is conveyed through concepts and designs made through a two dimensional sketch. By applying these four strategies, urban toys artists have fulfilled the characteristics as a form of alternative media in delivering cultural themes.

Referring to the concept of promotion, urban toys have a distinctiveness in the process of cultural transmission. The promotional functions is required as a reminder of Indonesian local culture and preserving culture that is almost extinct. The promotion also introduces Indonesian culture to foreign countries and provides awareness of local art. The findings of this study emphasize the existence of alternative media in conveying cultural messages. Urban toys have some power to promote culture such as the existence of a cultural combination (mix culture) that raises the attention and interest of the audience.

The artists themselves have promoted urban toys directly and indirectly. The form of direct promotion of cultural themes is carried out through direct marketing and personal sales, which are usually carried out by artists through their social media accounts or through community accounts. Another direct form of promotion is carried out by attending events both nationally and internationally. So the impact is not only on urban toy sales, but the ideology and opinions of artists in communicating the message of Indonesian culture conveying urban toys products as a cultural form.

On the other hand, a form of indirect promotion of urban toys is on the role of the artists being an influencer. They can carry out the function of public relations in publishing messages and awareness to the public related to Indonesian culture. Another form of indirect promotion is through reviews made of urban toys by foreign media. Urban toys with the theme of Indonesian culture could get greater exposure and read by many peoples. Thus this is an important promotion path and expansion of Indonesian cultural communication. As stated in the literature, blogs (reviewer), pod casting, branded entertainment and influencer marketing aspects are commonly referred to as promotional tools (University of Pretoria, 2015). This research describes the flow of cultural promotion through the urban toys in Indonesia as follows:

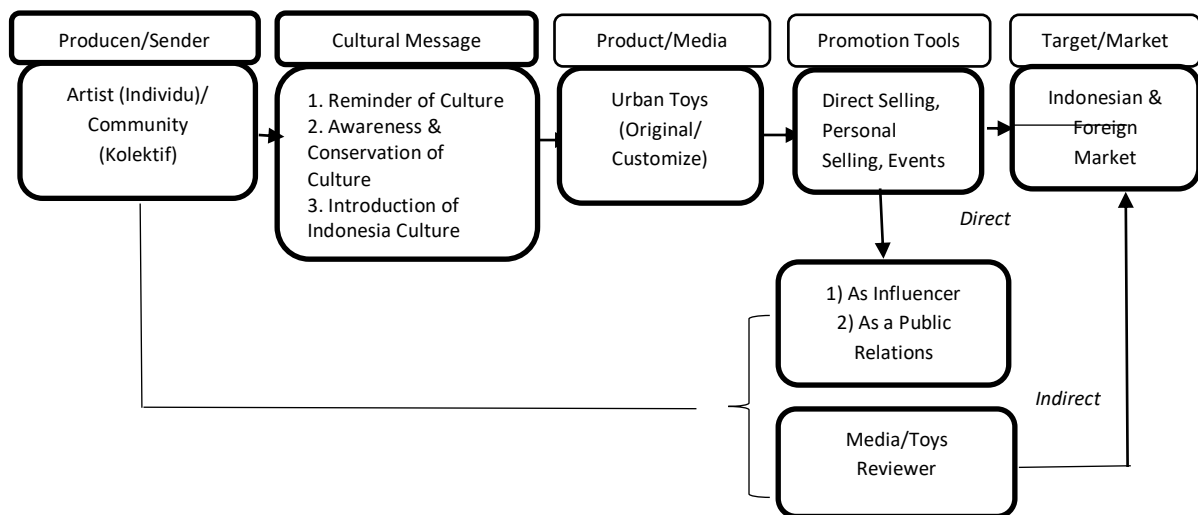


Figure 6: Flow chart of cultural promotion by urban toys.

CONCLUSION

This research concluded that urban toys can play a new alternative role in media visual communication with the theme of Indonesian culture. This research shows the peculiarities of urban toys as a media that combines popular culture and traditional concepts. The use of urban toys as a media for cultural promotion is a form of paradigm shift from some people,

especially among urban toy artists to return to the ideology of the nation, which is to raise the theme of Indonesian culture in the midst of the rise of foreign popular culture.

The findings of this research also illustrate that through the superiority of urban toys, the Indonesian community at this time began to have a slight shift in perception and began to appreciate local works, especially those with the theme of Indonesian culture. Even though the appreciation is not yet high, there has been a positive response and led to the perception of the importance of promoting the cultural icon of Indonesia. Another implication is that the work of Indonesian-themed urban toys actually reaches new markets namely overseas buyers, and the promotion function is more than just a reminder of culture, but introducing and creating awareness of Indonesian culture to foreign countries.

Urban toys as a popular cultural product can be used as a media for showcasing Indonesian culture, although it has not yet become a counter of the popular culture. However, the interesting findings are on the added traditional concept value. Urban toys have the opportunity to establish an artist's identity as well as national identity.

Recommendations for the IAT community include the need to be discuss and formulate ideas in relation to cultural potential through urban toys. This includes analyzing the steps in the work with cultural themes ranging from, sustainability, strengthening vision to the need for strengthening cultural literacy among artists. Comprehensive management of artists individually and community collectively will make Indonesian urban toys known for their unique positioning of Indonesian urban toys and become a counter to foreign cultures.

Recommendations regarding empowerment in the creative industry in the urban toy environment are also part of the findings of this study. Some of the advantages of urban toys as an alternative media for Indonesian culture make the findings quite meaningful. So for the government itself, there is a need for cultural codification so that it can be a guide for artists who want to visualize culture. From the codification, a minimum standard of visualization can be made that characterizes every Indonesian cultural artifact. In the future, in making the work of urban toys with Indonesian culture themes, they can refer to this standard as a basis and the rest can be further developed by the artists themselves. As a media that has the potential to promote Indonesian culture, there is a need for the role of government in safeguarding elements of traditional culture so that it is not distorted from the freedom of art of every artist. The constraints in shipping regulations is also an important matter. There is a need for shipping rules and regulations that support artists and the urban toys community in the distribution process.

BIODATA

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