The Mode of Reflexive Practice among Young Indonesian Creative Workers in the Time of COVID-19

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Abstract
This article examines reflexive practice among young creative workers in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, during COVID-19. Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a series of relentless and overlapping crises across the Indonesian archipelago. In urban centres across Indonesia, the arts and creative sectors are among the key economic sectors severely afflicted by the pandemic. COVID-19 implies a lot more than the loss of income and livelihoods. Mobility restrictions, gig cancellations, venue closures, all entail the loss of connections, opportunities, and creative outlets. Yet despite such uncertain conditions, young creative workers remain reflexively creative in order to survive in everyday life. Building upon interviews and focus-group discussions with young creative workers in Yogyakarta, we found three modes of temporality-based reflexive practice: waiting, doing something and re-learning, which represent young creative workers’ active

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responses manifested in the practical and contradictory relationship to the diverse possibilities within hierarchical and heterogenous cultural fields in a pandemic era characterised by regular ruptures. The analysis of the data below contributes to the literature on reflexivity and habitus among young creative workers in a time of pandemic.

**Keywords**
creativity, Indonesia, habitus, pandemic, reflexivity, work, youth

**Introduction**

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a series of relentless and overlapping crises across the Indonesian archipelago. The general uncertainties associated with the peaks and troughs of a constantly evolving pandemic – combined with a lack of coordinated and effective government response (Setijadi, 2021) – have disrupted the livelihoods of many Indonesians. By mid-July 2021, with daily reported new cases of more than 50,000 and COVID-19 mortality in excess of 900 deaths per day, Indonesia became the global epicentre of the pandemic (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2021).

In urban centres across Indonesia, the arts and creative sectors are among the key economic sectors severely afflicted by the pandemic. As in many other parts of the world, venue closures, show cancellations, and the general calls to ‘stay home’ during lengthy mobility restrictions have amplified the precarious nature of the sector. Put simply, COVID-19 has paralysed artists and creative workers everywhere. But, consistent with how emerging societal issues have been typically represented in academia, much of the recent literature on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the creative economy to date has over-emphasised the experience of the Global North (see, for example, Comunian and England (2020) on the UK; Florida and Seman (2020) on the US; Betzler et al. (2021) for some European countries; Flew and Kirkwood (2021) and (Flore et al., 2021) on regional Australia; (Howard et al., 2021) on the comparison between Australia, England and Portugal).

Research on COVID-19 and creative workers in the context of lower middle-income economies remain relatively limited (see Joffe, 2021). In places like Indonesia, workers in the creative sector share many job characteristics with the large number of non-agricultural workers working in the informal sector of the labour market. These workers often lack union representation, lack job security, and are working in precarious conditions without adequate health and safety protection (Brata, 2010; Dartanto et al., 2015; Izzati et al., 2021). Moreover, given the general lack of welfare support in the country’s tax transfer system, creative workers – and workers working in the informal sector more generally – are confronted with the prospect of having limited/no access to State-sponsored social safety nets during mobility restrictions.

For young people working in the creative sector, COVID-19 implies a lot more than loss of income and livelihoods. As shown by earlier studies elsewhere, the impact of the COVID-19 crisis extends beyond the realm of financial hardship (Spiro et al., 2021). Mobility restrictions, gig cancellations, venue closures, all entail the loss of connections,
opportunities, and creative outlets. All these have an important bearing on the health and well-being of creative workers (Spiro et al., 2021). To document and examine such challenges, this article focuses on the reflexive practice of young creative workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta has been dubbed the city of culture in Indonesia. The city is home to 172,000 creative workers (Wicaksono, 2019), and the creative economy generated US$238 million in 2016 (Badan Ekonomi Kreatif (Bekraf) dan Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), 2016). Young Yogyakartans in the creative industry have a diverse pool of talents with unequal distribution of valuable and relevant forms of cultural capital within and across their sub-fields. Our paper highlights their varied experience and reflexive practice to navigate COVID-19 pandemic-related challenges. Looking at the local fields of cultural production, we discovered three modes of reflexive practice, ‘waiting’, ‘doing something’, and ‘re-learning’, which show the complexities of interlinkage between temporality, reflexivity and habitus under conditions of crisis and disruption.

In the first section, the article maps previous studies on reflexivity and habitus. The next section examines Yogyakarta as a festive and reflexive space. In the end, we show plural narratives of survival among young creative workers in the time of pandemic, which manifest in the three modes of reflexive practice, namely ‘waiting’, ‘doing something’, and ‘re-learning’.

**Reflexivity and habitus in a time of pandemic**

Previous studies on reflexivity and habitus in the context of late modernity by youth studies scholars and sociologists, on the one hand, have highlighted the problems of being free from structural constrained agency and, on the other hand, too focused on deterministic and structuralist reading in explaining rapid social changes (see Adams, 2006; Coffey and Farrugia, 2014; Kelly, 2016; Sweetman, 2003; Threadgold, 2011; Woodman, 2009). In addition, some scholars have brought reflexivity and habitus together in order to understand the complexities of moving towards the reflexive modernisation era, as proposed by major sociological theorists such as Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992).

Notably, McNay (1999) explains the emergence of reflexivity provoked by the conflict and tensions of social forces operating within and across specific fields, thus highlighting the embeddedness of the subject within differing sets of power relations (p. 110). Sweetman (2003) argues that since the disjuncture between habitus and various fields of struggle has become increasingly ‘taken for granted’, flexible or reflexive habitus may become common and significant in the era of late modernity, as he claims that ‘reflexivity ceases to reflect a temporary lack of fit between habitus and field but itself becomes habitual’ (p. 541). However, being able to apply reflexive habitus in everyday life does not necessarily lead social agents to become ‘reflexivity winners’. This particular situation leads to discussion about what comes ‘after’ the moment of reflexive awareness, in which choices are resourced or otherwise (Adams, 2006, p. 523). Threadgold and Nilan (2009), building on ‘post-reflexive choice’ as suggested by Adams (2006), propose reflexivity as a form of cultural capital. Thus, they underscore the importance of socio-economic backgrounds in explaining the reproduction of social inequalities.
Mouzelis (2007) takes the discussion about reflexivity and habitus further using figuration theory. He proposes that in order to effectively account for social practices, habitus has to be connected with interactive and figurational structures (p. 4). Moreover, instead of viewing habitus as deterministic, Hilgers (2009) put forward freedom as an essential and necessary component in his analysis. For him, habitus determines practice but is also determined by it. Habitus is thus being in a state of permanent mutation (p. 731). Farrugia (2013) argues for a theory of reflexivity as actualising a practical intelligibility shaped by the dispositions of the habitus (p. 283). So, instead of viewing reflexivity as disembodied rationality, reflexive practices are embedded within the logic of fields and describe creative responses to local structural conditions (p. 296). In addition, Farrugia (2015) constructs reflexivity as social practice, which reflects the contradictions and insecurities intrinsic to modern social structures. Consequently, reflexivity is a concept that combines the macro and the micro, the structural, and the personal (p. 872).

The research in this article continues the previous discussions about reflexivity and habitus mentioned above, while differing in several aspects. First, the temporal context of this research is under conditions of disruption and crisis, specifically during the COVID-19 pandemic. It can be argued that the extraordinariness of this crisis is its unpredictable consequences at multiple levels of everyday life, both temporally and spatially, and ranging from local to global (see Connell, 2020; Matthewman and Huppatz, 2020). In short, the pandemic is ‘a monstrous threat’ (see Zinn, 2020). Moreover, we define temporality from a Bourdieusian perspective, which means time is understood in radically historicist terms as engendered through social being (McNay, 1999: 101). Time is what practical activity produces in the very act whereby it produces itself; in short, a non-ethical reference to a future inscribed in the immediacy of the present (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 138). Second, we critically apply the concept of ‘hysteresis’ (Bourdieu, 2000) not only to understand the rupture between habitus and field but also as theoretical bridging at the meso-level. Thus, analytically, ‘hysteresis’ mediates the interlinkage between crisis and disruption at the macro level and social agents’ reflexivity at the micro level. Third, we eclectically combine ‘hysteresis’ (Bourdieu, 2000) and reflexivity as social practice (Farrugia, 2015) in a time of pandemic to help us make an abstraction from empirical data about young creative workers’ strategies which resulted in three modes of reflexive practice, namely, ‘waiting’, ‘doing something’, and ‘re-learning’. For us, reflexive practice shows the complex interrelation between embodied dispositions and overlap yet disrupted fields of struggle.

Methods

The aim of our research is to understand the reflexive practice of young creative workers at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, a cosmopolitan city with a sturdy atmosphere of activism, education and leisure. In particular, our participants are musicians, dancers, and theatre artists who predominantly rely on physical and non-digital activities to produce their artistic works. Due to mobility restrictions, data were gathered through online Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews using Zoom as well as other platforms such as WhatsApp and Google Meet. In total, we conducted two Focus Group Discussions with 12 informants, and we did in-depth
interviews with 18 informants. Participants were recruited through our durable research networks with local music and art communities. We also approached the participants through Instagram and gained further insights of their artistic activities through their social media platforms. However, to give more weight to the voices of young creative workers, in-depth interviews rather than FGDs were selected as the principal data collection method. The in-depth interviews were conducted using a mix of Javanese, the local language, and Bahasa Indonesia, the national language. The participants were interviewed online for more or less 1.5 hours each.

During the process of data gathering, we aimed to build an equal and reciprocal relationship as well as sharing trust with the participants; therefore, they could share their subjective experiences freely, resulting in the voices of young creative workers being key to this research. These interviews and FGDs were held in October 2020, thus the research captures the situation in Yogyakarta after approximately 8 months of the pandemic. Analysis of the interviews and FGD data proceeded in various ways. First, the interviews and FGDs were transcribed and then translated from Javanese and Indonesian into English. Second, the transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis to create key themes, and third, the chosen quotations were assembled by key argument, and analysed using selected conceptual frameworks. Ethics approval for this project was granted by the University of Melbourne Faculty of Arts Human Ethics Advisory Group – Ethics ID 2057775.1.

Yogyakarta: a festive and reflexive space

Yogyakarta is globally known as a central space of arts and creative display. The city has hosted numerous popular annual arts festivals such as ArtJog, Jogja Biennale, Papermoon Puppet Festival, NgayogJazz Music Festival, and the Jogja-Netpac Asian Film Festival (JAFF) to name a few. Although each of the events has its own specific arts form to display, they often provide spaces for public artistic collaborations. Musicians perform in a film festival, dancers appear as an opening act for an art exhibition, and contemporary theatre performances are often seen in a dance festival. This cross-'artistic’ and public interaction has helped the city become a hallmark of arts festivals, thus creating a distinctive identity for its city façade (Irawanto, 2010). This practice has also opened up global-scale collaboration between young creative workers from Indonesia and artists from abroad.

Aside from its arts festivals, the popular status of the city as a tourist destination has also contributed to its distinct features. Many cafés and hotels offer live music as entertainment (Suharyanto et al., 2021). Each of these urban entertainment sites has its own distinct music genre. Jazz is often played live in hotels; popular tunes are heard in cafés; and traditional repertoires are performed at cultural sites as well as at local festivals (see Sutopo et al., 2020). Some tourist destinations manage series of scheduled attractions such as court dance performances (Rindrasih and Witte, 2021). Similar art displays also take place in neighbouring suburbs, such as Ramayana Shows at the Prambanan Temple Complex (Sedana and Foley, 2020). These various spaces have become places of production, exploration, creation, and labour for young creative workers in Yogyakarta. Not only do they provide sites for display and presentation, these particular venues have also
become physical fields of socialisation, learning, and embodiment of arts practice among young creative workers, thus, nurturing the accumulation of durable and strategic social capital (Sutopo et al., 2017) and embodied cultural capital (see Bourdieu, 1986; Wacquant, 2014).

In navigating those particular practices through various media and spaces, young creative workers in Yogyakarta are not necessarily institutionalised or dependent upon arts agencies or professional event organisers. Collaborative practice among artists has become common in production and learning processes. Tsui (2015) called this sort of art practice ‘the Jogja way’. This value contains a prevailing sense of community spirit embedded among artists and other arts practitioners in the creative and dynamic pursuit of resources to support DIY artistic endeavours (Tsui, 2015: 540, 542). This particular value can be seen across art fields in Yogyakarta. In the theatre community, the idea of communal liberation as a mode of creative production has become a collective value in the city since the New Order era in Indonesia (Bodden, 2007). In the music scene, the practice of nongkrong (hanging out) among musicians has provided a space ‘to accumulate social and cultural capital relevant to enhance their future career’ (Sutopo, 2019: 80). In this particular social activity, young musicians acquire knowledge of music production together with networks that are significant in their arts endeavours. A similar pattern of space-related activity as the main feature in Jogja is also apparent in other arts practices, as expressed by one of our informants, who is a dancer herself:

For me, Jogja is a space [ruang]. I see a lot of arts places or spaces where dancers can work on their pieces either in a collective manner in which a network is allowed to use the place or commercial in its character. So, yes, Jogja has many places that we can make as a stage. It is not only in an art gallery, even somebody’s house can be transformed into one (stage). It depends on the creator’s creativity to modify their place to become an exhibition arena or a stage for performance. My point is that Jogja has many places to be transformed into an art space, given the creativity of the artists possess.

(Interview with Sekar – a dancer, 3 October 2020)

Sekar has been managing her own sanggar as a dancing laboratory. In reflecting deeper on her collective arts arena, she adds that ‘Sanggar Seni Kinanti Sekar is a place for us to learn collectively. We welcome any activities either to learn new experiences or just to watch a rehearsal. Just come. We provide the space for people because dancing is fun!’ A similar view is also expressed by Meyda – the founder of an independent theatre company in Yogyakarta. She tells us that

Jogja is a very comfortable space to develop creative ideas. Because here, you have wide range of artists that you can build your idea with. If I compare this city with Lombok [East Indonesia], then it would feel very different [. . .] here, you can find many festivals and everyone can join if they find it interesting.

(Interview with Meyda – founder of Theatre Company, 10 October 2020)

Reflecting on Sekar and Meyda’s views, a place as a physical melting-pot seems to have become an important feature for young creative workers in Yogyakarta to learn and
explore their fields as well as gaining social and cultural capital for their future artistic endeavours. During the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, all these places suddenly became less relevant. Social restrictions meant the dancers, musicians, and theatre workers in Yogyakarta – who were strongly attached to physical places – were struggling to find an adaptive mode of practice. Amid the crisis, the Indonesian government has so far directed the dominant policy narratives towards the digital economy. This rapid response is a continuation of the national development agenda that contains a vision of Making Indonesia 4.0 launched in 2018 (Ministry of Industry, 2018) and coincides with the creative economy development that has been fostered since 2014 (Fahmi et al., 2016, 2017). This particular state-promoted vision is not necessarily attuned to the creative and arts scene in the local context, including Yogyakarta.

As such, the adoption of digital economy practice among young creative workers requires continual engagement with a specific cultural-digital capital (Ignatow and Robinson, 2017). Young creative workers in Yogyakarta – who have long been attached to physical space in their activities – often experience challenges in adapting digital platforms into their practices. The enduring ‘Jogja way’ as a particular value does not always contain the digital element, yet it plays a prevailing role in how the community is dealing with the pandemic. Thus, structurally, we argued that pandemic demonstrates moments of extreme uncertainties both temporally and spatially which force young creative workers to be reflexive. According to Bourdieu (2000), multiple forms of reflexivity can emerge under conditions of ‘lack of fit’ between habitus and the field of struggle, in particular, reflexivity which remains oriented towards practice. Next, we discuss the reflexive practice employed by musicians, dancers, and theatre workers to face the rapid changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic amid the dominant narratives of a state-promoted digital and creative vision. Building upon empirical data, we explore three modes of temporality-based reflexive practice to deal with the pandemic, namely waiting, doing something and re-learning. We notice that the field of cultural production is hierarchical and heterogenous; thus, valuable forms of capital are not distributed equally (see Bourdieu, 1993; Robbins, 2000).

Waiting

Most of the informants involved in this research were struggling during the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in Yogyakarta. Their places of production were closed, including arts spaces, music studios, and performance stages. In these risky and uncertain conditions, young creative workers’ option is chiefly to step back from their usual routine while observing the changing rules of the game in the field of cultural production. We call this reflexive practice waiting. Nisa, an early career musician, shared her story with us:

Everyone must have been shocked. I just started a regular job in a café, so excited to begin my new job. And, suddenly! The opportunity was gone! Just like that! From March to May, I literally did nothing. I was just in my room all the time, trying to live. You know, anak kos. Luckily, I still have some saving that can make me survive (only) for three months. I couldn’t go anywhere though and had to survive anyway. It was before Ramadhan that I was in a total...
micro lockdown. I was so terrified and I couldn’t do anything. I only went out to buy groceries. Life felt very difficult.
(Interview with Nisa – a musician, 14 October 2020)

Similarly, Sekar – a young dancer and a mother of two children – took the crisis as a decisive moment. Instead of keeping her dance laboratory running, she chose to use the moment to spend more time with family. She recalls that:

This is the time to rest, there is no need to force myself. I could not even imagine if I was being hard to myself [. . .] my husband also supported me to step back a little bit and more focused on the family, and not being so ambitious.
(Interview with Sekar, 3 October 2020)

A similar story with rather different details was told by Meyda. She is a young mother who has been running a small puppet theatre company with her husband who is also a DIY puppet theatre director. In the early phase of the pandemic, she kept her job as a programme manager in a training-sector start-up company to survive the crisis. However, she found it difficult to navigate between doing the job, looking after her child, and thinking about creative arts production during this time. She eventually gave up her job after 2 months of juggling, as she pointed out:

It was too much and because all of the meetings were online, everyone did not have a sense of time. It stressed me out [. . .] and it is pandemic, so I asked myself if it is worth it? I felt I was not personally achieving any improvements, so I decided to stop and focus on my child.

Theoretically, these three young creative workers experienced *hysteresis* (Bourdieu, 2000) in times of rapid societal transformation, crisis and disruption (see Heaphy, 2007; Lupton and Lewis, 2021). It is a complex relationship of a particular situation ‘when a field undergoes a major crisis and its regularity is profoundly changed’ (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160). Moreover, Bourdieu (2000) explains that ‘the perfect coincidence between structure and habitus is increasingly lost, and briefly alludes to the large-scale social processes involved in this transformation’ (p. 276). It can also be argued that pandemic becomes a precondition that opens up a possible structural change which produces contestation between existing *doxa* and indefinite forms of *heterodoxa* in the field of cultural production (see Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu, 1993). Thus, for young creative workers, the loss of a major production site as a main *playground* could mean an extreme game changing situation. The social restrictions have primarily shifted the labour process among the arts and creative production. Young creative workers have excessively lost their field of production to convert their on-hand stocks of capital and exchange their labour, as described by Rizki – an early career musician and audio engineer:

It was very impactful. We could not even talk about job risk, as we did not have job anymore, you know? Every gig was cancelled. My engineering job was about the same. I was scheduled to perform in the first ever Soul Music Festival, but it never happened.
(FGD with Rizki – a musician and audio engineer, 17 October 2020)
Galuh – an early career dancer – shared the same story. She is a member of a dance group that performed regularly in the *Ramayana Show* at the Prambanan Temple. The COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible for the show to remain on schedule. As a consequence, Galuh lost her dancing activities, as she recalls:

I lost all the performances, especially the Ramayana Show. It was usually scheduled in the first three months of the year – January, February and March. We did not have the show in March because of the pandemic. The temple called off the event, and that was also the beginning of my no-performances day.

(Interview with Galuh, 24 October 2020)

Galuh then went back home to South Sumatera to wait until the show is back in business. Further, Pambo – a puppeteer in the *Papermoon Puppet Theatre* – shared a similar story, he said that

all the projects were either cancelled or postponed, so basically, we have not yet written any new story [. . .] we cut all the production expenses.

(Interview with Pambo, 22 October 2020)

According to Sweetman (2003), habitus allows one to respond to the current state of play, while simultaneously limiting one’s responses, and as habitus operates in relation to field, it also ensures that removal from the field – or entry into a new game – will generate a different set of responses dependent upon one’s ‘feel’ for the game with which one is now confronted (p. 534). Thus, in over 3 months of disruption and crisis, young creative workers were faced with unpredictable conditions both in everyday life and in the cultural field. The irrelevance of past practices has put them in *hysteresis* that left them with limited options. With uncertainty playing as the background yet an active response being necessary, they were forced to step back and wait while observing and navigating through the available possibilities. Therefore, it can be argued that habitus at the individual level must respond to disruption and crisis in the existing field, however, such an active response needs time. Young creative workers are reflexively making calculations based upon available yet unsettled individual dispositions and on-hand stocks of capital. Nevertheless, this does not guarantee they will be able to adapt in the present and in the future. In the next phase, we elaborate on a second mode of reflexive practice, namely *doing something*, employed by young creative workers who start to make series of attempts to do something.

**Doing something**

*I turned into something else; I have started a new business with my friend at home; raising goats. It is better if I try to do something than just waiting. That is kind of our initiative, we also make use of village by planting papaya. We also use that piece of land to keep our goat feed.*

_Eko, Musician_

The above excerpt reflects how young creative workers have had to begin rapidly responding to the uncertain situation. Based on our interviews and FGD sessions, we found two modes of reflexive response to find another available alternative. First, a response that is available outside of their cultural field. Second, a response that
is available inside of their field. Both responses reflect the practical manifestation of reflexivity as an embodied form of cultural capital and availability of relevant on-hand stocks of capital at an individual level embedded in the overlapping domains of ‘transition’ and ‘culture’ (Furlong et al., 2011; Woodman and Bennett, 2015) under conditions of crisis and disruption. For Eko – who took the first response category – doing something regardless of the activity is more important since he is married and has a family to look after. Besides, Eko had tried to survive with a small number of gigs in the beginning but as most cafés gradually stopped their operation, he was left with very limited options. Thus, it is arguable that Eko’s reflexive practice is formed by a practical relationship to the possibilities available in a given social environment (Farrugia, 2013: 296).

A similar route has also been taken by Adrian. He is a professional session musician who usually played gigs with orchestral groups and famous bands in Jakarta, although his family is in Yogyakarta. He preferred to be with his family rather than waiting for calls about projects in Jakarta, since all of his past contracts were cancelled. Faced with limited networks in Yogyakarta, he tried to generate income through entrepreneurial activity outside of the music scene, as he described:

I sell frozen food now and also do something with my friends who run their own business. Some of them produce masks, the others make food. We are just like: “Ok, what do you need from me? What can you do to help me?” That kind of relationship.

(Interview with Adrian – a Session Musician, 7 October 2020)

Agnes – an independent theatre director – had a similar response. She had been managing her clothing business even before the pandemic and it has been her main income generating strategy while maintaining her artistic activity, as she recalls satirically:

My clothing business has provided me food on the table for some years or so. It is way more promising than what I have got from arts [laughing].

(Interview with Agnes, 27 October 2020)

Even so, she tried to remain in the art field during the early phase of the pandemic by creating a collective form of online distribution for recorded pieces of theatrical performance.

According to Hardy (2008), when hysteresis happens, new possibilities are invented by modified field structure. During the pandemic, the new structure of the fields disruptively shifted into the digital arena. In this case, reflexive practice was also adopted by other young creative workers who were trying to engage with digital-online platforms by seeking available alternatives. Sekar managed a collaborative production with UNESCO to create a series of dance tutorial videos and documentation of her sanggar, as she told us:

with UNESCO and a collective project named “Kita Muda Creative” [We Are Creative-Youth] we produced a streaming dance video for the public. We also created an online class and tutorial video as this sanggar has slowly back to business.

(Interview with Sekar – a dancer, 3 October 2020)
As a young creative worker who runs her own place, she has shown reflexive practice in taking an alternative opportunity that is available inside the field, without doing something outside of the dance scene. Presumably, having been born and raised in the family of a reputable national pantomime artist and painter helped her embody the disposition of art as a way of life throughout her life trajectory. This particular reflexive capacity to grasp available opportunity does not necessarily coincide with her relatively dominant position in the field, as shown by Nisa. Although she is in the relative position of an early career musician, she was able to convert her durable and strategic social capital (see Sutopo et al., 2017) to take a job offered by her fellow musicians in an existing digital based collective in the music field, as she told us:

Fortunately, one of my partners offered me a job as a content creator for his talent management. In this organisation, I am both an employee as well as a talent member whose record will be distributed and managed.
(Interview with Nisa – a musician, 14 October 2020)

A similar opportunity was also available to Galuh as an early career dancer. She had been teaching before the pandemic, and she kept teaching with a few online adjustments, as she described:

Fortunately, I have been part time teaching in this school, and it starts to use virtual platforms such as Zoom for the class.
(Interview with Galuh, 24 October 2020)

Even though they have managed to take job opportunities inside the field, both Sekar and Galuh continue to struggle when asked about the involvement of digital platforms for their individual display medium. Accordingly, social agents are actively responding to situations of crisis or sudden change, however, they often have difficulty in holding together the dispositions associated with the different stages of the given field, and adjusting to the newly established order (Bourdieu, 2000).

The digital field seems to be part of the new rules of the game within the field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993) as the hysteresis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about changing requirements to survive in the field. Further, social agents are compelled to be reflexive in order to negotiate fields that are breaking apart and reforming in ways that are unfamiliar (Farrugia, 2013: 882) in the domains of ‘transition’ and ‘culture’ (Woodman and Bennett, 2015). In this case, the linear assumption of unified and coherent single habitus no longer exists. Thus, the narratives above show how young creative workers are reflexively adapting yet experience continuous habitus disruption at an individual level, since for a time at least, field struggles are taking place in the context of an unknown future (Hardy, 2008: 148). The contingent nature of pandemic has exaggerated the disrupted yet unsettled embodied artistic dispositions of young creative workers. Apparently, doing something as a mode shows reflexive practice as agile responses to multi-layered distortion yet plural (Lahire, 2003) and conflicting structural logics in the time of the pandemic. In the next section, we will explore the strategy employed by young creative workers to re-learn the incoming rules of the game, dominated by the presence of digital media.
Re-learning

I have my own YouTube Channel, but it is not yet ready to monetise and also, my record has not generated significant income yet.

Nisa, Musician

As stated by Nisa, not all young creative workers are individually and generationally equipped with sufficient and relevant forms of capital to embark on the digital platform as a space of display and distribution. Some of them have certainly tried to experiment with digital technology, including Nisa herself, as she told us that

I’ve seen that my friends are quite clever dealing with the digital. They have massive followers and once they go streaming, they will put their bank number in the display. So, audience can transfer some money (nyawer). It’s like, there are many alternatives available. People are getting more creative. That one is just a simple example. But it is of course it’s not sustainable and you can’t gain significant income from that.

(Interview with Nisa – a musician, 14 October 2020)

Such a short-term strategy is not suitable for the platform as it requires a solid understanding of online behaviour, the working of various platforms, and engagement with algorithmic-based creative distribution (Arriagada and Concha, 2020; Ignatow and Robinson, 2017). This particular requirement needs to be reflexively re-mapped and re-learned by young creative workers in order to survive in the digital arena. Pambo shared his collaborative learning experience with his puppet group in dealing with the new rules of the game. He said that

We have to be really smart in maintaining our audiences, we always put our updated info through our channel [. . .] in fact, we always respond and answer all of the comments and questions from our audiences and, regularly, we discuss what our audiences have said both in their own channel and in our own channel, this helps us to explore the closest topic that relate to our audiences.

He continued discussing the technical aspects of the medium as explained below:

Talking about digital performance, we have to touch on its strength and weaknesses. We understand that the mediated show is a whole different world. It detaches audiences with the performers yet allow them to enjoy every detailed visual material captured by camera. Because of that, we have to offer a detailed depiction of our performance, which is off sight during live performance. Once we comprehend those visual aspects, we can then shoot tiny detail that audience can see during live performance.

(Interview with Pambo – a puppeteer, 22 October 2020)

Appearing on camera is seen as one of the main important skills that has to be re-learnt by young creative workers, as also experienced by Galuh that:

Dancing in front of camera is different. In live performance, I receive a lot of energy from audience and from other dancers as well. The atmosphere is totally different. Now, you have to
dance in front of the camera, the “feeling” is not there anymore. I don’t know what’s missing, but something has gone. (Interview with Galuh – a dancer, 24 October 2020)

Agnes highlighted similar technical and embodiment aspects that need to be understood and re-learned by young creative workers, as she recalled that:

It is not about being cool, but to make yourself contextual [. . .] Corona forces us to learn editing; musicians have to be able to produce their own drum sound, play their keyboard, sing their own verse. It got to be there at some point. (Interview with Agnes, 27 October 2020)

This coincides with the requirement for new skills pointed out by Rizki, as he said that:

In the near future, I need to master some new skills, for example in the recording I used to do a mere operating job, while now, I start to learn producing my own audio-marketing and scoring a movie since such jobs do not entail crowd and you can do it on your own. (FGD with Rizki – a musician and audio engineer, 17 October 2020)

A similar reflexive strategy is also employed by Adrian, who said he wanted

\textit{to produce [his] own piece without depending upon a project from other group.} (Interview with Adrian, a Session Musician, 7 October 2020)

Hence, it can be argued that their habitus is not only open to regular adjustment, but also perpetually differs in reaction to disrupted field structures and field positions at macro and micro levels.

Although young creative workers have seemingly gravitated into mediated production, some remain in the existing field without moving much of their practice onto digital platforms. This strategy has been made possible as show business has begun to adjust its event management. Some cafés have started back in operation with certain health protocols; other public events such as weddings and gatherings are starting to occur. With adjustments, some young creative workers are able to gradually work in their field, as experienced by Eko where he has to

adjust to the situation, I can play a gig with health protocol such as wearing a mask all the time, do the test screening before the show, and bring a small format-band [. . .] also now in the wedding event, the guest can no longer make a request to sing with the band and we mostly play instrumental songs with a small portion of repertoire played with a singer. (Interview with Eko, Musician, 15 October 2020)

Having been a session player throughout his music career, Eko’s reflexive practice shows a contradiction between being able to adapt to the new rules of the game, while at the same time, struggling to erase his ‘nostalgia’ for reintegration (see Bourdieu, 1998; Friedman, 2016) into pre-pandemic forms of playing live music. Nevertheless, a ‘feel for
the game’ predicated on relationships and regularities of the game and field structures as they were in the past, pre-pandemic, is no longer fit for purpose (Graham, 2020: 451).

Based on the narratives of the young creative workers above, it can be argued that, during conditions of multi-level and multi-temporal dynamics of *hysteresis* (Graham, 2020) characterised by disruption and crisis (Lupton and Willis, 2021), the multiple schemas of embodied dispositions are reworked in order to fit with the disrupted, irreconcilable yet situational new rules of the game. In addition, new rules of the game in the hierarchical and heterogeneous fields of cultural production are rapidly introduced and learned improvisationally, while concomitantly an enduring practice of an established *doxa* remains *running* in the field with few, yet significant, contextual adjustments. Thus, the re-learning strategy applied by young creative workers shows two different types of practice. First, young creative workers who observe other possibilities of engaging with new platforms and alternatives which require some previously unlearned skills. In this line of reflexive strategy, they re-map their field and re-learn the embodied cultural capital and other forms of capital required to pursue the available options. Second, young creative workers who try to adjust their enduring practice into a new situation, in particular, the strict health protocols applied during live shows and performances. Both strategies represent how pandemic as a form of contingent crisis and disruption at macro level are managed fragmentedly at an individual level which is oriented towards re-navigating their future creative careers. Neither reflexive strategy guarantees that young creative workers will be able to sustain their future creative careers; yet they still have to do it in order to survive. In sum, three modes of reflexive practice at an individual level represent active responses manifested in the practical and contradictory relationship to the diverse possibilities within the hierarchical and heterogeneous cultural fields in the pandemic era characterised by regularity of ruptures.

**Conclusion**

Based on the data analysis above, we found three types of temporality-based modes of reflexive practice in the time of pandemic in Yogyakarta, Indonesia: ‘waiting’, ‘*doing something*’, and ‘*re-learning*’. Under conditions of crisis and disruption, young creative workers have to *wait* in order to cope with the experiences of *hysteresis*. Their ‘pre-pandemic habitus’ and relevant existing forms of capital need to be reflexively re-examined and re-calculated to prepare for the unpredictable yet regular ruptures ahead. ‘*Doing something*’ indicates the interlinkages between temporal conditions, multi-layered structural/cultural forces in the overlapping domains of transition and culture, and continuous disruption of individual habitus which put pressure on young creative workers to do something under undisclosed future conditions. ‘*Re-learning*’ reveals how young creative workers reworked their multiple embodied dispositions and other forms of capital in a manner that fit with the disrupted, incompatible yet circumstantial new rules of the game. Being able to re-learn does not by any means guarantee the sustainability of their future creative careers; nonetheless, young creative workers still have to undertake it to survive. Theoretically, pandemic as an extraordinary moment has highlighted the complex relationship with reflexivity and habitus as conceptual tools. In particular, we argued that the contingent nature of a pandemic becomes a prerequisite of a ‘chaotic’ mechanism of adaptation among social agents in the hierarchical and heterogenous fields of
struggle under conditions of extreme uncertainties. The intertwined relations between reflexivity and habitus are in a state of constant revisions, yet the precarious nature of human being as cumulative labour remains. Thus, this article has made a contribution to the literature on reflexivity and habitus among young creative workers at a time of pandemic.

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