

# Exploratory Study on The Career Sustainability of Singing Talent Audition Finalists

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**Abstract**—Talent search events have become very popular in Indonesia because these programs give people a chance for a better life from their previous life condition in the form of talent competitions in a particular field. In these events, the participants are selected and trained to improve their performance. The elimination system creates a competitive environment among participants. The most popular talent search event is the talent search event in the singing field (longest running event). Usually, such events promise cash and/or contracts with certain companies. The purpose of this research is to explore the career of talent search finalists in the singing field, after participating in a talent search audition. Exploration is done through various sources such as interviews with the grand finalist in the talent search event in the field of singing, observations using YouTube videos to know the activities of finalists during the talent search event. Data obtained through the internet is secondary data that can be used as a source of information about the sustainability of a finalist's career after participating in the talent search event. The research results show that the sustainability of a finalist's career is determined by the attitude of the finalist itself, whether the finalist continues to struggle to learn things so that they can convince their management to keep promoting them to be able to compete in the Indonesian music industry.

**Index Terms**—talented people, talent audition, singer, work contract, finalist (top 12)

## I. INTRODUCTION

Talent search events conducted in Indonesia is very popular with the public. One of the most popular talent search shows, with the most season is Indonesian Idol. The motivation of the participants to participate in the competitive event is usually triggered by the desire to get a better life than their previous condition. The winners of the reality show were promised millions of rupiah and a work contract with a certain record company. Events like this can spur the enthusiasm and fighting power of talented people in their fields (singing).

The existence of an elimination system carried out every week creates a competitive environment between finalists in the field of singing. They have to work hard, struggle to show their strength to surpass other participants so they are not left out. This certainly takes up the time, energy, and mind of the finalists who try not to be eliminated before reaching their desire to become a winner or runner-up. On the other hand, the organizing company requires sponsors to support that the event.

The sponsors and organizers make commercial events with different titles in each season such as Indonesian Idol Extra, Dahsyatnya Indonesian Idol and Idol Banget. At these events, the finalists' daily activities behind the stage were shown. This is intended to give a clearer picture to the audience regarding what the finalists' activities are during the quarantine period. In addition, they were also asked to advertise certain products from sponsors, be it food or drinks. The program was aired as a supplement to the Indonesian Idol program. These activities can also make the finalists become known to the public, even though they are actually not related to the finalist talent search event.

Based on the above explanation it can be said that Indonesian Idol is an ideal place to find new singers and is also a good promotional tool for marketers by endorsing Indonesian Idol finalists to market their products. The problems were: 1) the finalists who made it to the grand final round had received financial compensation and initial contracts for making albums from the company, but not all could survive in the Indonesian music industry. 2) With the completion of the talent search program every season, all finalists received the title as Idol, they were contracted by the organizer for the given period only. 3) A contract extension is only carried out for certain finalists that can be accepted by the community. 4) So in reality shows, the sustainability of the finalist career is not the company's main need, but the needs of personal finalists. 5) For companies, the finalists' commercial values that convey sponsorship messages to advertise products are the other objectives.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Penelope Coutas in her journal entitled *Fame, Fortune, Fantasy: Indonesian Idol and the New Celebrity*, talent search is a form of reality show without using a script; the participants consist of people who are in extraordinary circumstances who compete to get a chance to improve their lives [2]. In the talent search, the competing participants demonstrate their abilities and were judged by the judges and the audience in the studio as well as the spectators who watched on the television. The talent search event conducted in Indonesia includes Indonesian Idol, The Voice Indonesia, X Factor Indonesia, Indonesian Got Talent, and Indonesian Mas-

TABLE I  
LIST OF TALENT SEARCH EVENTS IN THE SINGING FIELD

No	Program Name	Seasons	Broadcast Year
1	Indonesian Idol	9	2004-2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2018
2	Kontes Dangdut Indonesia (KDI)	9	2004-2015
3	Akademi Fantasi Indosiar (AFI)	6	2003-2006 and 2013
4	Mamamia	4	2017-2008, 2010, 2014
5	X Factor Indonesia	2	2012 and 2015
6	The Voice Indonesia	2	2013 and 2016
7	Rising Star Indonesia	1	2014

Varied sources

ter Chef. Winners and runners-up in all talent search events will get an initial employment contract from the organizing company.

Another goal of reality shows is to get the media to advertise products for sponsors, whether it is food or drinks. Idol finalists appear to use the latest mobile phones or wear clothes from certain designers while consuming Indomie Instant Noodles or other products. Aditya Indrawanto stated that the products placed as advertisements from reality shows have become very successful strategies for his clients [2]. The goal is packaged quite interestingly to give a clearer picture to the audience about what activities the Indonesian Idol finalists are doing behind the stage. Of course, such activities are not related to finalist talent search activities but are very important for the company.

Companies that apply talent management will try to get talented people by creating what is called “the war for talent” [1]. There is another opinion that the company will be a misstep when they expect a comprehensive talent package from one person. If someone displays talent in many broad areas of competence in order to be called talented, Torrington, et al. state that a person may have great talents in one area but is weak in other areas so work needs to be designed according to the person’s talent in order to achieve maximum results [6]. This awareness triggers the development of talent search events where audition participants are expected to have talents in a particular field and if they succeed in becoming a winner they will be given a job that matches their talents.

### III. RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This research is an explorative research, intended to get a deeper understanding of whether the finalists of talent search can maintain their careers in the singing field to date. This research is also a qualitative research that uses triangulation method between observation, documentation from the internet such as videos and interviews and relevant research results. The study was conducted from January to July 2018, located at Plaza Indonesia and Kota Kasablanka, South Jakarta.

The population in this research are all finalists of singing talent search field performed in Indonesia, including finalists of AFI, KDI, Indonesian Idol, Mamamia, X Factor Indonesia, Rising Star Indonesia, and The Voice Indonesia. The name of the talent search event in the singing field, the number of seasons, and the year of each talent search event as shown in

Table I. The sample determination in this study was chosen from the talent search event with the most seasons and the longest running year, Indonesian Idol.

The sampling technique in this research is to select the finalist of the most successful Indonesian Idol talent search event to date and the most successful wildcard finalists, who are Judika Sihotang and Citra Scholastika. The success of Judika Sihotang can be proven through the following: a) Judika is a finalist of the talent search audition (Indonesian Idol Season 2) with the longest career sustainability (for 13 years from 2005 to the present). b) In addition to singing success, he was also chosen to be one of the juries in the Indonesian Idol talent search event in 2017/2018. Citra Scholastika’s success is based on her achievements in the spectacular arena of Indonesian Idol; among all participants who entered as wildcards, only Citra Scholastika successfully became a runner-up and immediately got the contract for the initial recording of her album. This led the researchers to assume that Judika Sihotang and Citra Scholastika as a sample that can represent the population of this research.

The data collection instruments used in this study are observations from videos on the internet to show the process in talent search auditions until the finalists are eliminated or become champions and also to show finalist activities during the quarantine period. The data from the video is considered credible because the video was taken when the finalists carried out the live audition process and were also taken directly when the finalists performed their daily activities during the quarantine period. The researcher also made instruments from interviews with interviewees using the Verbatim method.

Data analysis in this research is done according to Flick, as follows [4]: a) Conducting Data Reduction; In this study, the aspects that were reduced were the results of observations and interviews regarding motivation, the talent search audition elimination process, and other corporate objectives by holding reality shows, in order to obtain winners and runners-up, and the career sustainability of the finalists. This data reduction process aims to facilitate researchers in presenting data and will refer to drawing conclusions from the results. b) Data Presentation; researchers present data clearly and briefly to make it easier to understand the problems studied. The data presented in this study is in the form of a brief description of the results of observation, elimination process, and comparison table of views between interviewees, verbatim making,

triangulation of data and the like to be easily understood. c) Data Conclusions and Verification; From the results of observations, interviews, and video documentation, researchers make conclusions and verify. Verification of the data in this study is in the form of thoughts during the data preparation and processing, reviewing notes during the research period in the field and comparing with the findings of other researchers related to the research. The conclusions drawn from the research in exploring the singing talent field obtained will turn into an accurate and credible final conclusion because the data collection process by researchers is supported by strong, valid and consistent evidence.

#### IV. RESULT

Research results are obtained from observations and interviews related to motivation, talent search audition elimination process, and other corporate objectives by holding a reality show event, until the winners and runners-up were produced. Data reduction was performed to facilitate researchers in presenting data as a research result. Then to find out the sustainability of the career of the finalists, the results of the observation data were triangulated using the interview results from the interviewees.

Data analysis in the qualitative research starts from a clear and concise data presentation process to make it easier to understand the problems studied, both in whole and in part. The data presented in this study are in the form of a brief description of the results of observation, elimination process, and comparison table of views between interviewees, verbatim creation, triangulation of data.

The results of this study in the form of thoughts during the data preparation and processing were reviewed, confirmed using records during the field research and compared with the findings of other researchers related to this research. The data collection process carried out by researchers is supported by strong, valid and consistent evidence so that the results of the research in exploring singing talent search fields can said to be accurate and credible. final results.

The results of interviews with the interviewees (Judika Sihotang and Citra Scholastika) regarding the exploration of the career sustainability of the talent search event finalist in the singing field can be viewed from the following indicators:

- Motivation to get a better life because if you succeed in becoming a winner or runner-up, you will get money prizes and work contracts. This can be used as a stepping stone to enter the music industry. The conditions are that the winners are not arrogant and remain humble, cooperate with the management and continue to develop themselves. If they cannot show new things, the contract will also be difficult to extend.
- Hard work and discipline, not quickly become satisfied with the achievements, always trying to correct deficiencies, never stop learning new things. if a person is already satisfied because he has become the first champion or runner-up and stop trying, his or her career will end, meaning he/she only gets the title of champion. The

point is not to be passive, not to stop even though the competition event has finished.

- Singing must be considered as a job, being a champion is not important, because if after becoming a champion he or she can not show their work, then he/she will be overshadowed by the new Idol from the next season. If you really want to be a singer, you have to fight hard. The profession never stops, continuing learning.
- Family support, management, extraordinary support from fans, do not let ourselves be affected by the star syndrome, because that will affect our psyche too, our mentality too, where we feel I am an artist so we look arrogant. we have to know how we can adapt and control the star syndrome well. If the finalist gets a management that is not right, then the finalist must introspect himself. So it's back to the individual back to the person, because when you want to be someone you imagine, no matter how many people close your door you should not give up.
- Having a distinctive voice character, because the most important thing in singing is to be able to display that distinctive sound optimally. From there, people know your strength, your character, even if you don't become a winner, someone will want to be your producer. In that industry, the most important thing is where your work is, therefore everything will return to the community, there is no influence of you as a judge, as a junior, there is no concern.
- Finalists must be active, after completing the competition, the finalists must immediately find out how to have an album, get the right management, the right contract must be sold immediately in the community. If the finalist does not have a work, it will be covered with new participants. The real competition is after completing the competition, the finalists are no longer easy to enter TV as scheduled by the organizer.
- Get positive publicity from the media. The existence of social media and the internet makes it easier for finalists to be known to the world. In this digital world, there are no screens at all, everything can be captured, any moment can be included on Youtube. People have the right to conclude anything about us and the media cannot be controlled. Because we must be smart to get along, how to maintain our image well without having to fake it.

#### V. DISCUSSION

**Observations and Interviews;** The results of observation through the media in the form of videos from the internet to show the process in talent search auditions until the finalists are eliminated or become champions and also to show finalist activities during the quarantine period. The data from the video is considered credible because the video was taken when the finalists carried out the live audition process and were also taken directly when the finalists performed their daily activities during the quarantine period.

Based on the results of an interview with Judika, who was the runner-up of Indonesian Idol season 2 and Citra Scholastika who was the runner-up for Indonesian Idol season 6, it was recognized that Indonesian Idol was a good place to find new talented singers because in Indonesian Idol finalists learned many things to develop their talents such as: practicing vocals, attending Psychology classes, public speaking, taught how to choose appropriate clothing and being required to be disciplined in doing activities.

**Audition and Elimination Process;** Early stage auditions are carried out in several predetermined cities called boot studios. There, the participants were audited by local judges, for example by artists appointed from the city. From the boot studio, they continue to boot video to be sent to Jakarta. If called to go to Jakarta, it means that the participant has started to enter the elimination round. The round consists of three stages: singing alone, singing in a team, and singing a selection of songs, so that the participants can really give their best performance. The results of auditions from all cities in Indonesia are collected, if participants are declared qualified then they proceed to the showcase round that is aired on TV. The showcase round is also called top 24.

In the showcase round of the top 24, the audience will select and determine the best 12 people through SMS and telephone. Sometimes the jury also provides a second chance for some participants who failed in the round of workshops to compete for the top 12. Finalists who enter the top 12 or enter the spectacular round are selected again; this process is called the elimination system which is carried out every week. Elimination is based on the appearance of contestants with the least SMS and telephone calls from the audience. The elimination process continues until the selection of two people who enter the grand final and they will get a contract with Indonesian Idol. At this stage, the participants have been dressed well, and the audience is shown a video showing the daily lives of the participants. Participants can choose the clothes to wear, dress up with makeup artists and practice vocals behind the scenes along with vocal trainers. This is intended to create a good emotional connection between the audience and participants.

**Indonesia Idol Supplements;** Is an event that is performed when the finalists are not performing on stage. The aim is to give a clearer picture to the audience about what the daily activities of the finalists are during the quarantine period. From the results of the interview with Judika, it was also said that the Indonesian Idol finalists were also asked to promote certain products for other purposes, which were not related to the finalists' talent search activities.

From the point of view of the organizers, product promotion shows carried out by the finalists, are the rights of the sponsor of the program organizer. So in the show, the finalists will deliver sponsorship messages to advertise products, which is the main goal for the company because it has sustainable commercial value. Every season the program is aired with different names such as Indonesian Idol Extra (season 2), Dahsyatnya Indonesian Idol (season 6), dan Idol Banget (season 9).

At times before appearing on stage, for the preliminary performance that is broadcast live on TV, shooting is usually held to find out the habits of the finalists. Finalists were also asked to appear in advertisements that became sponsors of Indonesian Idol, both food and beverages. At certain times the media also gave a number of personal questions to the finalists, including questions collected from fans. Citra Scholastika acknowledged that the media is an important thing that affects the sustainability of the finalist's career because the media can be a source of good news or bad news for finalists. The media often reports bad news about artists (finalists). This is because bad news about artists is more attractive to its readers and this is something that the artist cannot control. Therefore, finalists must be good at getting along, making friends with productive people, to avoid bad news.

**Reward Grand Finalist;** Judika stated that the rewards obtained by the grand finalists (1st place and runner-up) of Indonesian Idol were in the form of work contracts with certain record companies because 1st place and runner-up were the winners of Indonesian Idol. Even so, it does not mean that other finalists who do not enter the grand finalist have no chance of getting a work contract with a record company. RCTI has the right to choose which finalists who enter spectacular shows (top 12) to work together (get a work contract). This statement was also reinforced by Citra Scholastika's statement that since before entering the spectacular round (the workshop round or the top 24) the finalists will be given a work contract stating that for the 3 months after the event, the first and runner-up winners are determined, all finalists will be monitored. The finalists who are most favored by the community will get a work contract. This is intended so that the RCTI gives the best work contract to finalists who are favored by the public. The first employment contract with a record company lasts for 3 years, can be extended based on an agreement between the artist and the record company. Whereas according to Judika, Sony Music's standard contract is 6 albums.

From this statement, it can be said that all finalists have the opportunity to get employment contracts with record companies even though they are not grand finalists. But the finalists still have to try to become a grand finalist because the grand finalist will definitely get a work contract with a certain company and the best concerts will be prepared to promote them. Judika stated that at the time of Indonesian Idol season 2 RCTI, appointing an independent external recording company as manager for the grand finalist, in this case the company was Sony Music Studio. Then in 2017 or precisely on Indonesian Idol Season 9 RCTI which has joined MNC TV which has its own production container for its grand finalists. Although RCTI gave a work contract for Indonesian Idol finalists, the finalist has the right to cancel his/her contract if s/he feels dissatisfied, this can be seen from what was done by Joy Tobing, the winner of the Indonesian Idol 1 event who canceled her contract because the producer was hesitant to give Joy Tobing the opportunity to appear in the International event, World Idol in 2004 [2].



**Finalist Career Sustainability;** According to Judika, Indonesian Idol is only the beginning of the struggle to enter the Indonesian music industry. After attending Indonesian Idol, the selected finalists will work with the management who have chosen them. To be the chosen finalist is of course not easy, each finalist must be able to display their strength, especially the superiority of the vocal character. Finalists must be able to compete with all those who have and will be in the Indonesian music industry, therefore the finalists must be active and try to produce work (albums) before newcomers invade, so they do not overshadow by others.

If there are finalists who are overshadowed by others in the music industry it is something that cannot be predicted, because it can be influenced by various things. The sustainability of a finalist's career is also determined by the attitude of the finalists themselves, whether the finalists are still struggling to convince management, especially if they get bad management or are not good at promoting finalists. and also determined by the level of seriousness of the person to continue to fight and compete in the music industry, of course, the finalists cannot stop learning new things.

According to Judika, the quality of one's self cannot actually be covered by others. On the other hand, there are also opportunities that the finalists get management that is not good in selling the finalists but if we continue to try we can certainly overcome all the difficulties that exist. If the media reports weaknesses and shortcomings or achievements that have been achieved by the finalists in the past when they have become successful, said the second winner of the Indonesian Idol season 2, it is something that must be accepted, especially with the development of technology that causes a person's privacy limits to become more narrow. It was also emphasized that by raising the achievements of the finalists in the past it would be emphasized that becoming a champion in Indonesian Idol was obtained by struggle, and not something instant. Indonesian Idol finalist predicate is only one way to be able to compete in the music industry, while many people are also successful in the music industry despite failing in talent search events.

Citra Scholastika also stated that the sustainability of the finalist career was determined by many factors ranging from management, finalists themselves, fans and families, technology, and the media. In order to survive in the music industry, a finalist must continue to try to improve things still lacking and must be proactive not just waiting on the management side. Finalists are also required to be able to control star syndrome that appears when the person becomes an artist so that the person does not become arrogant. Star syndrome is actually important so that the finalists can appear confidently. In addition, finalists must also be good at behaving themselves when meeting other people. Technological developments that are so fast also make finalists must try to adjust to new technology. This is intended so that finalists can utilize the new technology available to spread their work.

## VI. CONCLUSION

- 1) Indonesian Idol finalist career sustainability in the music industry depends on the finalists' own effort after entering the music industry, whether the finalist is proactive in dealing with a poor manager who did not promote them and not give up easily in the face of rejection from the manager. In addition, finalists must also continue to develop themselves by learning new things and have to pursue the field of singing as a profession seriously.
- 2) Fierce competition motivates the finalists to show their best performance, this is due to the desire to get a job contract by becoming a grand finalist.
- 3) The compensation received when they can become a grand finalist is adequate but even though they cannot be the grand finalist, other finalists still have a chance to get a contract.

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