

# Tarling Music Virtual Concert Remediation Strategies in the COVID-19 Pandemic Era

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## ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic is driving changes in how music concerts are produced, and tarling music is no exception. The government's policy, which included the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (*PSBB*) and the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (*PPKPM*), forced the event organizer, which used to hold entertainment stage concerts, including tarling music, to cease operations. Economically, the tarling musicians lose money because they are out of work for too long. Tarling musicians in Cirebon, West Java, are trying to break through in a variety of ways, including holding virtual music concerts. The purpose of this research is to uncover the practice of tarling music production in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as how tarling music agents adapt to their new habits regarding production methods through remediation strategies practiced through virtual and hybrid environments. This is a qualitative study that employs the paradigm of cultural materialism, as defined by Marvin Harris (1980a, p. 277), who believes that the material conditions of society determine human consciousness rather than the other way around. This research uses documentation study, observation, interviews, recording, and literature study as data collection methods. As a result, the Tarling music artist agency aggressively reforms the form of stage performance that is perceived as reality and presents it in the form of virtual and hybrid reality.

**Keywords:** Remediation, virtual concert, hybrid, tarling music, Covid-19 pandemic.

## INTRODUCTION

Changes in the way tarling music is made occur not only as a result of digitization but also as a result of the rapid development of technology and information (Imawan & Sari, 2019). The Covid-19 pandemic is another cause causing huge changes in the tarling music production system. "Health protocols" have been one of the requirements in different community activities after Covid-19 reached the world in March 2019, including Indonesia. During the Covid-19 pandemic, health protocols were established to ensure that people could continue to do their jobs safely and without endangering the safety or health of others. Keeping a safe distance is one of the health protocol requirements. In other words, to limit the spread of Covid-19, people should avoid groups or activities that have the potential to produce crowds. Due to the policy of adopting social distancing and Large-Scale Social Restrictions (*PSBB*)<sup>1</sup>, this situation has caused the event organizers for stage concerts and video shooting entertainment stages, including the production of tarling music, to really collapse.

Tarling music events are still held to stay alive. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, tarling artists deceive themselves into continuing to exist to welcome their followers and delight the audience. Virtual concerts are held at their homes or in their own mini studios. Their virtual concert shows come in a variety of packages. The Covid-19 pandemic has nearly brought tarling music to an end. Tarling musicians must respect government policy, which includes guidelines to preserve communication distances between participants, crowding prohibitions, and the policy of not permitting live music performances on stage. This situation forced the tarling artists to make compromises to survive. By beginning a remediation method, they generate tarling music by utilizing the surviving capital and collecting fresh capital to be converted into economic capital.

Remediation is the process of transferring from one medium to another. Through hyper-mediated activities, such as the connecting process of mixing several types of media (Imawan & Chamidah, 2018), such as "live-action film with computer composition and two

<sup>1</sup> Article 4 of Law Number 6 of 2018 concerning Health Quarantine: Large-Scale Social Restrictions are restrictions on certain activities of residents in an area suspected of being infected with a disease and/or contaminated in such a way as to

prevent the possibility of spreading disease or contamination. (<https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Home/Details/90037/uu-no-6-tahun-2018>)

or three-dimensional computer graphics" to generate a seamless moving visual display (Bolter & Grusin, 2000, p. 54). Remediation is a media theory that is linked to various forms of media (Genealogical media theory). The goal of the remediation process is to fix the prior media's flaws. To put it another way, new media introduces modifications or reforms through reusing the content and/or forms of previous media.

This research seeks to uncover the practice of producing tarling music in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, and how tarling music agents adapt to their new habits regarding production methods using remediation strategies that are practiced through virtual and *hybrid*. This research also answers the question of whether the remediation strategy can also take place dynamically and can be an alternative for the sustainability of virtual and hybrid outside of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## METHOD

This study uses qualitative data collection, the data is not in the form of numbers, but in the form of statements about the content, nature, characteristics, circumstances, and things or symptoms, or statements about the relationship between something and something else. It can take the form of physical items, patterns of behavior, beliefs, values, and conventions, as well as societal events (Ahimsa-Putra, 2009). Tarling musicians are the subject of this study, which takes place in Cirebon, West Java. Field observations, interviews with tarling musicians, and observations of social media platforms Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube were used to compile the data. This study used the cultural materialism paradigm (cultural materialism). This approach is founded on the idea that society's material conditions, not the other way around, influence human consciousness (Harris, 1980b, p. 277).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The Covid-19 Pandemic and Changes in Production Methods

Almost a year after the policy of social distancing and Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) was implemented in several areas of West Java, tarling music artists have begun to experience economic difficulties. Because the concert job has ended, the management of their Tarling music group can no longer afford to pay monthly wages. Similarly, the results of the stage and sound system rentals are insufficient due to a lack of orders. Even if you receive an order for the rental of the stage and sound system, it will be for the Task Force and social activities to raise humanitarian funds for Covid-19 victims.

Taking advantage of the momentum of social activities, Tarling musicians attempted to participate by live streaming to help raise aid funds for Covid-19 victims. The activity was packaged in one of their house's rooms, which had been converted into a music studio with a very simple stage setup. Because of the implementation of social distancing, live streaming is only done by a few people, such as singers and keyboardists, as well as one IT staff member who also serves as a visual editor. Tarling's music production work is kept to a bare minimum by adhering to health protocols.

In accordance with the government's policy of implementing the Adaptation of New Habits (AKB), tarling musicians' productivity began to increase, despite the fact that tarling musicians had to adapt to new behaviors in order to prevent the transmission of Covid-19. Tarling musicians can rehearse and plan more perfect virtual concerts. The music studio created at singer Tarling's home was rearranged so that it could function properly. The room's walls are covered with wallpaper and a backdrop that bears the name of the masterpiece singer or the name of a music group with a dynamic design. Setting studio properties, such as the placement of musical instruments, audio, and visual devices to support live streaming, is also included.

The number of fans in cyberspace continues to grow as a result of virtual concerts held during the covid-19 pandemic. Aside from Cirebon and Indonesians, viewers on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook come from all over the world, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, and Korea. The Tarling group's management can even profit from social media relationships by selling merchandise to fans of Indonesian Migrant Workers (*TKI*) abroad.

Tarling musicians admit that in the era of the covid-19 pandemic, concerts that are held in a limited manner and must stick to health protocols are not optimal. As a result, a unique strategy must be implemented to continue obtaining clients and generating profits to cover the team's operational needs. Tarling musicians must update the working mechanisms of music production, distribution, and consumption to survive.

Tarling musicians actually spent a lot of time at home and in the studio during Covid-19. During the Covid-19 pandemic, virtual concerts using social media platforms have become a new activity. They perform virtual concerts almost every day by live streaming on their social media platform channels. This activity is a way of discovering artistic talent as well as a challenge to change production management. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the New Habits Adaptation Policy (AKB) refers to a new habitus for tarling musicians, as shown in the table 1.

**Table 1.** Habitus of tarling musicians during the Covid-19 pandemic

MECHANISM WORK	NEW	
	Before the Covid-19	Pandemic During the Covid-19 Pandemic
PRODUCTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning meetings with producers, songwriters, other musicians to compose songs and instruments, survey stage concert locations, load sound systems, meet clients and rehearsals.</li> <li>2. Production of recordings and video shooting, production team meetings, presenting talent, and making audio-video raw materials.</li> <li>3. Meetings and teamwork in processing packaging, editing raw audio-video materials into digital music files.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare a mini studio, determine the cover song and create your own.</li> <li>2. Limited personnel by observing social distancing and wearing masks.</li> <li>3. Prepare the computer, switcher, and audio-visual equipment</li> <li>4. Perform in the studio virtually (live streaming) via social media platforms</li> </ol>
DISTRIBUTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet clients for the distribution of tarling music on stage.</li> <li>2. Meet publishing services, promotion contracts</li> <li>3. Meet with clients, relations and video shooting services.</li> <li>4. Press conferences and roadshows to the media.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distribution directly via live streaming social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram and Facebook)</li> <li>2. No need for publisher services, just admin and digital marketing team</li> <li>3. Can share links to viewers, fan groups, clients and media relations.</li> </ol>
CONSUMPTION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consumer audience on stage</li> <li>2. Meetings with fans and clients were held after the stage concert.</li> <li>3. Group member meeting and selection/audition of accompanying singers.</li> <li>4. Rewatch/review and download a few days after the concert via the YouTube channel.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consumer viewers virtually (online) through social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram and Facebook).</li> <li>2. Fan reactions can like, comment and share links.</li> <li>3. Meeting fans, relations and clients is done via zoom/google meet.</li> </ol>

Based on the data in table 1, this study concludes that there has been a significant change in the working mechanism of tarling music production, distribution, and consumption. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Tarling musicians are consciously required to build their new habitus in the music stage arena through virtual concerts. It is divided into three parts in detail: First, let's talk about the production process. Tarling music production is carried out independently through music group and singer management initiatives in accordance with the policy of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) and recommendations to maintain health protocols. Done on a limited scale without any need for producers, songwriters, or other musicians to create songs and instruments. No need to go down to the field for site surveys like stage concerts, no need to load the sound system, meet clients, or practice. Likewise, offline media production, such as video clips, has virtually stopped, therefore, there are no longer production meetings, talent briefings, or audiovisual media production. There will be no more editing, dubbing, vocal takes, or post-production processes to create digital music files. Tarling music production activities have been carried out in a limited capacity in simple music studios since the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic.

Second, concerning the distribution mechanism. Tarling musicians' new habit is to avoid interacting with clients to distribute tarling music on stage, as well as meeting with publishing services, entering promotion contracts, and dealing with relationships such as sponsors and video shooting services. They also stopped holding press conferences and roadshows for the media just before the stage concerts. Since the pandemic of COVID-19, the distribution mechanism has been carried out directly through virtual concerts via streaming live and through links shared with community groups, clients, fans, and media relations. In addition, there is an online musician network. The distribution mechanism is also no longer handled by a publisher, but rather by social media administrators who also work in digital marketing.

Third, concerning the consumption mechanism. New habits in the consumption mechanism take over as the dominant factor. The audience no longer needs to be present in front of the stage and go up to the stage to dance to tarling music. They can now watch the group and singer Tarling's performance virtually (online) via social media platforms (YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook). Furthermore, to express their longing for the singer who has become their idol, clients and loyal

fanbases no longer meet face-to-face after the concert. They can interact directly online through online broadcasts by giving likes, comments, and sharing links, and they can even easily greet the tarling singer by recording audio-visual messages that can be uploaded through the comments column or sent in the private message column.

For loyal fans who are not satisfied with attending a virtual concert, they can interact directly with other fans and their idol singers through a fan community group created by themselves. The audience can express their concern for tarling music in this fan community group. Even from here, singers can identify fans who have good voices and could be hired as backup singers. Fan interaction occurs not only through social media platforms, but also virtually through the use of Zoom or Google Meet. During the covid-19 pandemic, they adapt to new habits by enjoying live streaming habits of *nyawer* by sending donations through the account number of their idol singer or tarling group.

### Adaptation of Virtual and Hybrid Concerts

Tarling artists were stuttering with conditions at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and were forced to work without meeting the person, but through virtual concerts.<sup>2</sup> The recordings were made at each of their homes. Tarling artists racked their brains to keep working and earning a living. A virtual stage is an alternative, but it cannot fully replace a large-scale live show. In general, adaptation is limited to technical issues, which result in the adaptation of technological devices and health protocols. The government has implemented a policy to limit crowds to reduce the potential spread of the Covid-19 virus. The performing arts sector, including music, is one of the sectors facing significant challenges as a result of this policy (Khlystova, Kalyuzhnova & Belitski, 2022, pp. 1192-1210).

Adaptation is what tarling musicians do during the Covid-19 pandemic. They can work with creative content actors and production companies. Tarling artists can also host a variety of activities via digital platforms, such as virtual concerts or other activities packaged into audio-visual content. This is done by tarling artists to keep working even in uncertain conditions, by implementing new standards in accordance with the government's health protocol rules.

Virtual concerts cannot be enjoyed in the same way that live concerts on stage can. Virtual concerts do not provide the same level of interaction between artists and audiences as live performances. Virtual concerts can only be accessed via internet-connected media such as television streaming, android, laptop, or tablet. The experience of both parties, audience, and performance, which cannot interact directly and freely because it is done virtually, is what makes the difference.



**Figure 1.** The virtual and hybrid of the tarling music group Dian Prima, held at his house which was set up as a mini studio.

Tarling artists no longer have the alternative of accepting or rejecting virtual concerts; instead, the choice is 'adapt or die.' As a result, the organization of tarling music performances has been able to adapt since the Covid-19 pandemic. Everything must be done in accordance with strict health protocols. Despite having various shortcomings, virtual music shows are enough to make the tarling music show industry survive.

<sup>2</sup> A virtual concert is a music event that uses an online intermediary to connect musicians and audiences via a streaming platform. For the sake of the industry's survival and the survival of many parties, virtual concerts have become a middle ground for all

music players, including tarling music. Virtual concerts necessarily require concert broadcasting to a platform. As a result, technical knowledge and tool mastery skills are essential (Rahardyan, 2022).

Another adaptation is the interaction of musicians with the audience, which cannot be done directly because virtual concerts are held at home or in a small studio. Tarling musicians must adapt to cameras and digital devices replacing the audience in front of them. Virtual concert adaptation must be accompanied by technological advancements to determine the most appropriate form of virtual performance interaction with each artist. With the same concept, the show can only be performed by singers and a limited number of musical performers, but it can be seen by the entire world at the same time.

Tarling music concerts often assume the position of an option or alternative. The audience has the freedom to select the creative form of music that is growing as a result of virtual concerts. Tarling musicians can also adapt to perform hybrid 'offline and online' performances while sticking to health protocols. Tarling musicians conduct experiments and develop new ideas that are adapted to the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, such as drive-in and audience restrictions.

### **Remediation a Strategy**

Based on previous discussion, virtual and hybrid are reasonable alternatives for tarling music performers to maintain their performance. This is possible due to the agents' performance adaptation strategies. How do Tarling music agents handle pre-production, production, and post-production to ensure that the virtual and hybrid are fully displayed in front of the audience? As a result, the author believes it is critical to include remediation as a theory that can help with how Tarling music stage concerts are packaged into virtual and hybrid formats.

Bolter and Grusin (2000) apply remediation considerations to the ontology that all mediation is remediation. All of today's media represent as remediators, and remediation provides a means of interpreting previous media works. How to comprehend each media or media constellation that reacts, reorganizes, competes, and reforms other media. The perspective (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) can be used as a reference for how the practice of producing tarling music concerts on stage is mediated and remediated into virtual and hybrid forms, as shown in the point below:

#### **1. Transparent**

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, the agent for the Tarling music group openly admitted that virtual and hybrid through social media platforms were a substitute for stage concerts. Tarling music agents can persuade the audience that what they are

doing is the right thing to do to still say hello and entertain them. Presenting the reasons for changing stage concerts in front of the audience and adapting to replace them with virtual concerts directly provides them with education and new knowledge. Viewers are made aware of the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, and their presence in virtual and hybrid environments still has a close relationship with what they see in content, just as they do in live concerts.

The main point is that the agent conveys the virtual concert concept to the audience in a transparent manner. Tarling music agents use social media platforms to clearly communicate guidelines that direct events such as ticket sales or massive charity concerts. In addition, with the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a message of change in performance that still pays attention to the audience's wishes. Explaining the adaptation of the performance that must greet the audience via virtual space, with the cooperation of clients and sponsors to help with production costs.

#### **2. Translucent**

Tarling music concerts in virtual and hybrid, but this does not mean that stage performance is completely removed. Rather, it is addressed from a small studio stage via a virtual space in the form of audio-visual products. Tarling's virtual concert emphasizes differences rather than completely erasing stage concerts. At this point, mediation and remediation strategies are implemented to adapt to changes the performance format from stage concerts to virtual concerts. To facilitate the mediation and remediation process, a production team that can quickly adapt to the needs and workings of technological tools is required at this point. Among them are the inner workings of (1) a professional camera. (2) adjusting the lighting requirements based on the camera position. (3) check the channel, live mixing, and oversee each performer's sound check to ensure audio is clearly heard by the virtual concert audience on the streaming platform. (4) This group is in charge of broadcasting to streaming platforms.

#### **3. Hypermediated**

The virtual concert attempts to transform traditional concert production in the form of video clips and stage concerts into a virtual experience by live broadcasting directly through social media platforms. Trying to present the quality of the performance is similar, if not even more, to performing on stage. Hyper-mediated concerts are shown on streaming platforms using computer devices with adequate specifications and speed. This is necessary for the smooth processing of audio and visual products. The mediation process and stage concerts

that are mediated into digital music files are carried out using software known as OBS (Open Broadcaster Software), which allows stage concerts to be broadcast virtually via social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, and many others.

#### 4. Aggressive

To minimize discontinuity, virtual concerts continue to present audio and visual forms of music. To create characters in cinematic narratives, the mediation process uses editing tools that present text, photo slides, graphics, and animations. A switcher, a tool used to combine audio and images from multiple cameras connected via an HDMI cable to a single monitor screen, works to help the mediation and remediation process. The most important aspect of how virtual concerts work is a fast and stable internet connection. A few minutes before the show began, the camera, lighting, audio, and streaming teams double-checked audio-visual synchronization. The video's motion will be boosted up by the visual editor until it matches the sound and vice versa. Including audio-visual synchronization treatment to code for musicians and singers during performance.

#### 5. Refashioning

Refashioning is accomplished through an audio-visual editing process that involves playing music that has been reproduced from the previous raw material. It can be derived from cloned photos and video documentation, which are then mediated and corrected into various forms such as text, photos, audio visuals, animations, and graphics. The camera team also calculated the color and tone of each camera. In terms of refashioning, the decoration team presented the stage in accordance with the concert's theme. Refashioning, on the other hand, requires the presence of a master control room close to the stage.

This refers to Auslander's point of view, which charts changes in the relationship between stage performance and remediation over time. Previously, musical forms were transmitted from their original forms via radio and recorded music taken from concert performances. The introduction of new media has had a significant impact on the relationship between remediation and music; concert performances have imitated the mediated (Auslander, 1999; Middleton, 1990). Although concert performance has traditionally been thought to be more authentic than remediation performance, as Auslander points out, the trade-off increases these two perceptual challenges. Live music is a secondary form of music, but it is still necessary because the primary form cannot be validated without the presence of live music (Auslander 1999, p. 160).

The audience can express their emotions and physicality in front of their idol singer, listen directly to the sound of music and songs sung by the singer, and become emotionally involved in dancing and *sawer* on stage. Viewers can express their connection to their idols' music and singers. The Covid-19 pandemic conditions forced meetings and exchanges of stage concert practices with concerts through social media platforms or termed virtual concerts.

Remediation has occurred as a result of a change in media; whereas audiences previously enjoyed live music on stage, local radio or television broadcasts, they can now watch it virtually via various digital platforms. Tarling music is represented by one mediation among other mediations (mediation of mediation), which is also demonstrated by the Tarling music production process via digital devices that present stage concerts in audio-visual format. The next stage is then remediated (remediated) into digital music files or virtual forms that are presented live streaming through social media platform accounts.

According to Bolter and Grusin, remediation can also be defined as the reuse, refashioning, and repurposing of reality, as well as remediation as reform. The main remedy is a change in meaning, which occurs in one form of mediation to another. Bolter and Grusin (2000, pp. 54-58) When Tarling music concerts are viewed virtually through digital platform accounts and social media, they are interpreted differently than when they are seen live on stage. The meaning of the digital music file representation will be different depending on how it is interpreted. A shift in meaning from the practice of remediation at a Tarling music concert occurred virtually as well, as evidenced by the audience's interaction via commentary messages on social media platforms that are freely accessible via internet-connected devices. Although Bolter and Grusin acknowledge that not all cultures believe remediation is equally compelling or that digital media can identify all strategies used by previous media to restore and repair. The dual logic of remediation can function explicitly or implicitly in Tarling music practice during the Covid-19 pandemic, which can be restated as follows:

1. Remediation as mediation of mediation: The workings of virtual and hybrid tarling music production are actions that are chosen by tarling artists during the Covid-19 pandemic, by means of mediation practices that depend on other mediating actions or previous mediation. Using digital devices, mainstream media such as radio and television facilitate narrative forms that are packaged with audio and visual forms, then reproduce and even replace each other in virtual

and hybrid forms. This procedure is an essential component of the media. As a result, remediation as a strategy necessitates the use of another form of media to serve as a medium.

2. Remediation bridges the gap between mediation and reality: virtual and hybrid concerts demonstrate that Tarling music is still present in reality (stage performance). Indeed, Bolter and Grusin point out that the notions of simulation and simulacra (Baudrillard, 1995) can be demonstrated to be false, implying that all mediation is real. Virtual and hybrid dance performances exist as artifacts (rather than autonomous agents) in the process of mediating culture. The presence of virtual and hybrid tarling concerts demonstrates that all media rely on other media in the remediation cycle, in which media restore the real. Nothing, just as nothing can be done to eliminate mediation, can be done to remove the real.
3. Remediation as a reform: Remediation strategies seek to reshape or rehabilitate other media. As a form of mediation and reality, tarling music concerts on stage into virtual and hybrid concerts. In a broader sense, remediation is the process of reforming reality. Tarling live music performances on stage as a reality are reformed into a new reality by the concept of virtual and hybrid concerts.

## CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way tarling music is produced. The Adaptation of New Habits (AKB) program develops a new habitus for tarling music artists to continue to be adaptable by utilizing digital technology devices. Virtual and hybrid systems Tarling music concerts became a solution for them to stay creative and survive in the end. Tarling music is produced and performed in a different way when a remediation strategy is used. Tools and platforms in digital media technology bridge remediation strategies, mediation practices, and hypermediated communication. Tarling music artist agency aggressively reformed the form of stage performances that were previously perceived as reality and brought them into a new reality in the form of virtual and hybrid concerts.

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