

# **BAB I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Heavy metal is defined as a genre of rock music known for its thick sound characteristics, strong guitar distortion, and steady beats. The roots of this genre can be traced back to blues rock, psychedelic rock, and stoner rock in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The genre became a means of intense and energetic musical expression, with lyrics that often alluded to dark themes and challenged prevailing social conventions (Admin Artikel Superlive, 2024). According to Awang Kurniawan (2022) in Indonesia, heavy metal music also has fans. Some of the famous bands in this genre are Komunal, AUMAN, The Slave, Matiasu, Suri, Temaram, Klandestin, Dhurma, and Nagasari. One of the most prominent bands in this genre is Komunal, which is known for its unique musical characteristics and evocative lyrics, so it is important to explore more deeply about Komunal's profile and contribution to the development of the heavy metal scene in Indonesia.

Komunal is a band from Bandung that was formed in 2004, still standing strong and getting greater. Twenty years have passed since Komunal was founded, with Doddy Hamson (vocals), Muhammad Anwar Sadath (guitar), Harry Reza (drums), and Arief Khomani (bass) still together spreading the dangerous virus produced by their songs. The name Komunal has a meaning related to the commune and indicates ownership by the community or the public. When the name is a prayer, then their works belong to the audience who always sing along every time they perform (Bicara Musik, 2019).

Komunal has released several albums in his career, including three studio albums and one EP. The titles of the three albums are Panorama (2004), Hitam Semesta (2008), and Gemuruh Musik Pertiwi (2012). In addition, the band also released a new EP titled Komando Badai Api (2022) which contains two songs, namely "Komando Badai Api" and "Keras Menyambar" (Rangga Iskandar, 2023). In terms of genre, Komunal is indeed very much in the style of heavy metal popularized by bands like Pantera, but Led Zeppelin is also recognized as their inspiration. Some of their hit songs such as Higher Than Mountain II, Thunder of Mother Music, and Squad of War from the Swamp whose lyrics are the opening of this article are works of this group that must be noted. Even from the first second, listeners will immediately understand why this band is special. No time is wasted when trying to get to know Komunal. Komunal is ready to devour musical tastes

and explain how they survived twenty years and still maintain the same musical style without the need to change it under the pretext of 'musical revolution of the personnel' or 'trying a new style' that is often echoed by bands that are not strong with the attacks of a new era (Bicara Musik, 2019).



**Figure 1.1** Komunal band personnel  
(Source: Personal documentation of the band Komunal, September 26, 2024)

On the Komunal social media platform on *Youtube*, it can be seen that the band Komunal has 2,001 followers with a total of 1,376,825 viewers. In the last two years, the band Komunal on *Spotify* had 237,799 listeners, as recorded in the band Komunal's archive as of January 14, 2024. Komunal listeners through *Spotify* are 32% male, 8% female, 7% unspecified, and 3% *non-binary*. On *Instagram*, the band Komunal has 20,353 followers, with cities in Indonesia having the highest followers being Jakarta (20.8%), Bandung (11%), Bekasi (3.2%), Denpasar (2.9%), and Badung (2.8%). Through their *Instagram* accounts, the average followers are 95.6% men and 4.4% women. The band's profile on *Facebook* has 128,998 followers, with the highest number of followers from Bandung (13,000), Jakarta (11,000), Bekasi (4,800), Medan (4,600), Surabaya (3,300), and other major cities in Indonesia. Through their *Facebook* accounts, the average followers are 87.9% men and 12.1% women. On the social media account *Twitter*, the band Komunal has 18,001 followers. The Komunal band has listeners among teenagers ranging from 18 years old to 27 years old, as recorded in the archives of the band Komunal in 2024 (personal archives of the band Komunal 2024).



**Figure 1.2** Data on Respondent Character of Komunal Band  
 (Source: Personal documentation of the band Komunal, September 26, 2024)

According to Santrock (dalam Nur Rohmah et al., 2022), The age between 18 and 27 years old is an important transition phase from adolescence to adulthood. During this period, individuals often engage in self-exploration by trying out new experiences. They experience emotional instability and begin to realize the various possibilities that will come in their lives. In this context, many are interested in exploring fashion products, including buying merchandise from their favorite bands, as part of their search for identity and self-expression. One band that can capitalize on this phenomenon is the Komunal Band, known for its innovative music and heartfelt lyrics. To build a strong visual identity, Komunal Bands need to implement effective strategies in their Merchandise development . The right merchandise can not only create an enjoyable experience for fans, but it also helps build a community around the band. With the increasing competition in today's music industry, having a consistent and compelling visual identity through Merchandise products has become increasingly important for bands to stand out and connect with their audience.

Visual identity development is a crucial element in building a brand's image, including in the music industry. Merchandise, as a form of visual representation, serves not only as a marketing tool, but also as a means to express the character and values carried by a band. Creation of different types of Merchandise that reflect the visual identity of the Komunal band, such as t-shirts, posters, and other accessories that can be used for promotion and increase fan engagement (CherryPop, 2023). In the context of Komunal bands, well-designed merchandise can strengthen emotional connections with fans and increase brand recognition in a competitive market.

According to Sutanto et al. (2020), Merchandise serves as an important visual communication tool in conveying the creative aspects and brand identity to the target market. Good visualization in Merchandise can help brands to be better known and remembered by the audience.

This is in line with research showing that engaging visual elements can influence purchasing decisions and consumer perception of brands.

Merchandise has the potential to ease the longing felt by fans of the band Komunal. However, the design and launch process cannot be taken lightly; Deep attention and precision are required. For the band Komunal, launching Merchandise is not something that can be done carelessly. They must ensure that the products offered match the expectations and desires of the fans, so as to strengthen the emotional bond between the band and the fans. Based on the survey conducted by the author, around 94.4% of the 198 respondents showed their interest in the Komunal band through Merchandise, but 98% of the 198 respondents were very interested in the purchase of box sets. This shows that these products not only serve as merchandise, but also as a means to build a deeper connection between the band and its community of fans.

This shows that Merchandise designed with the right visual elements in mind, such as color, typography, and design, can create a positive image and strengthen a brand identity. Merchandise that is consistent with the band's visual identity can serve as a reminder to fans and increase their loyalty to the band.

Musicians in Indonesia now increasingly understand that Merchandise has an important role in the music industry. One example is Danilla, an indie musician from Jakarta, who markets her own merchandise and collaborates with a number of selected artists and illustrators. In addition, Isyana Sarasvati, a solo singer from Bandung, also released a box set for her latest album, Lexicon. The exclusive package contains a variety of special merchandise that is produced in limited quantities and marketed in bundles.

## **1.2 Problem Identification**

From the data obtained from the Komunal band and the results of the questionnaire respondents, there are several problems that need to be identified related to the design of visual identity through Merchandise as follows:

1. The interest of fans in Merchandise as much as 94.4% of the 198 respondents, it shows interest in the band Komunal through Merchandise. This shows that there are still challenges in attracting the attention of fans through the Merchandise products offered.
2. The interest in buying merchandise, especially box sets, is only 98%, from the results that show a lack of interest from fans to buy products in the form of boxsets.

## **1.3 Problem Formulation**

In the previous identification of the problem, it was how to design a visual identity through Merchandise that corresponded to the characteristics of the Komunal band for 18-27 year olds.

## **1.4 Problem Limitations**

The limitations of the problem in this design are explained as follows:

1. This design only focuses on designing the visual identity of the Komunal band through Merchandise.
2. This design does not address music, only focuses on Merchandise visuals.
3. The merchandise that was ordered was in the form of a Boxset containing T-shirts, Posters, Sticker Sets, Bandana buffs, physical albums.

## **1.5 Purpose of Design**

The purpose of this design is to develop the visual identity of the Komunal band through a Merchandise design that is not only attractive but also representative, so that it can reflect the character and values carried by the band. In addition, this design aims to identify important elements in the creation of merchandise that can strengthen the image of the Komunal band in the eyes of fans and the wider public.

## **1.6 Benefit of Planning**

This research is expected to provide the following benefits:

1. For the Komunal Band: Provides an effort to re-embrace fans and return their sense of fanaticism to the Komunal band.
2. For Researchers and Academics: Increase knowledge about the development of visual identity through Merchandise, especially in the context of the music industry.
3. For Design Practitioners: Become a reference in designing effective Merchandise for various brands, especially in the music industry.
4. Designing Merchandise for audiences, especially fans of Komunal Bands, provides a variety of significant benefits. Well-designed merchandise helps fans build self-identity and express their affiliation with the band. Additionally, the product strengthens the emotional connection between the band and fans, creating a positive experience that increases engagement. Merchandise also has the benefit of being an effective visual communication tool, introducing brand image and helping bands stand out in a competitive market. Thus, Merchandise not only has the benefit of being a merchandise, but also as a means to build community and increase fan loyalty to Komunal Bands.