
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Young, Noisy and Angry: Voice of Baceprot and Feminism in Metal Band

Aulia Rahmawati¹ ✉ Syafrida Nurrachmi Febriyanti² and Ririn Puspita Tutiasri³

¹²³Lecturer, Communication Science, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jawa Timur, East Java, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Aulia Rahmawati, **E-mail:** aulia_rahmawati.ilkom@upnjatim.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the significance of the Indonesian all-female teenage metal band Voice of Baceprot (VoB) in spreading messages of empowerment and social change through music. Drawing on feminist critical discourse analysis and textual analysis, this study analysed four VoB song lyrics. The analysis reveals three central themes in VoB music: resisting systemic oppression of women, advocating for freedom of self-expression and identity, and voicing sociopolitical criticism. This paper argues that VoB's lyrics portray empowerment as exposing and dismantling the prejudicial roots of injustice, making space for marginalised voices, and demanding human rights and equity as lived realities. The VoB suggests that empowerment requires transgressing societal constraints to integrate identity into one's own terms. As hijabi women perform metal music, the VoB signifies the radical possibilities of claiming space through art and courage. Their songs convey that empowerment starts by refusing control and determining one's path. Despite receiving some criticism regarding the inappropriateness of Muslim women playing in a metal band, the VoB's success illuminates the possibility of change through grassroots efforts. The paper concludes that VoB's lyrics envision alternative futures by advocating justice, equality, and empowerment. Their messages make empowerment possible by calling for oppression and creating space for marginalised voices. VoB represents hope for change, driven by creativity and perseverance.

KEYWORDS

Music, feminism, metal, band, Indonesia

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1. Introduction

Gender and feminism have been increasingly studied in various fields, including music. In particular, the role of women in heavy rock or metal music and the representation of feminist values in lyrics and performances have become important research areas. Although research on women and metal music is on the rise globally, there is still little research on Indonesia. This indicates that there are few female artists in Indonesian metal music, and even if they do exist, they are overwhelmingly under-studied in a scholarly manner. The emergence of the Voice of Baceprot (VoB) provides a fresh perspective on the lacuna of women-led metal bands.

Formed in 2014 in the small town of Garut, West Java, Indonesia, Voice of Baceprot (VoB) creates a dynamic blend of rock, metal, and traditional Indonesian tunes. This electrifying girl band, comprising teenage trio Firda Marsya Kurnia (who handles vocals and guitar), Widi Rahmawati (on bass), and Euis Siti Aisyah (behind the drums), infuse a sense of noisy vivacity into their music – perfectly in line with the meaning of their band's name 'baceprot' in Sundanese. In an interview with The Guardian, Firda Kurnia, the band's lead singer and guitarist, stated that their music aimed to empower women and inspire them to pursue their dreams (Lamb, 2017). She added that they want to show a world in which women can be powerful and rock out just as hard as men (Pashbani, 2017; Westerman, 2017).

Their lyrics throw light on a range of social issues – patriarchy, corruption, and religious conservatism, to name a few. In a chat with *The Guardian*, Firda Kurnia, the frontwoman, voiced their aim to uplift women and inspire them to chase their dreams. She expressed their intent to break stereotypes and show the world that women can rock just as fiercely as men do (Pashbani, 2017; Westerman, 2017). Their unique sound marries modern music with traditional Indonesian melodies, integrating local instruments like the *kecap* and *kendang*. They seamlessly blend languages – Indonesian, Sundanese, and English, into their music. VoBs gained international attention in 2016 after a video of their performance went viral on social media. The video shows the girls playing a cover of Rage Against the Machine's "Killing in the Name" at a school talent show and has since been viewed millions of times. On Twitter, VoB also received a few mentions and endorsements, including Tom Morello (Rage Against the Machine) and Flea (Red Hot Chili Peppers).

As of 2023, the VoB has not yet released a full-length album, apart from one live session, *The Other Side of Metalism* (2021). However, they have released several singles and music videos, including *School Revolution* (2016), *God, Allow Me (Please) to Play Music* (2021), *(Not) Public Property* (2022), and *PMS (Perempuan Merdeka Seutuhnya/fully independent women)* (2022) which are analysed in this paper. They have also lived at various events and festivals, both in Indonesia and internationally, including the South by Southwest (SXSW) festival in Austin, Texas, and have been featured in media outlets such as CNN, the BBC, *The Guardian*, and Al Jazeera.

2. Literature Review

Metal music is a derivative of rock music that has developed into a subgenre, even within the metal music genre (Krenske & McKay, 2010; Sunarto et al., 2020). The history of metal music began in the 1960s, which was characterised by "fast tempo, heavy distortion, powerful rhythms, and dense guitar and bass sounds", which later developed into various genres, including nu-metal and trash metal (Clark, 2022). The VoB's official website does not imply their metal sub-genre, although their Wikipedia page lists nu-metal or trash metal genres. Nu metal is considered the most contemporary sub-genre of metal music, developed in the 1990s with the emergence of rock groups such as Limp Bizkit and Linkin Park, with a characteristic blend of metal with various other music genres such as rap and hip hop (Clark, 2022). Unlike rock music, whose dominant theme is love and romance, the metal genre often contains social criticism and protests against the establishment, including darker themes such as death, suicide, and the afterlife (Gregory, 2013; Hansen & Hansen, 2015).

Male musicians have always dominated the rock music scene. Stage acts are usually dominated by attributes of masculinity, such as hyper-sexualised groupies, aggressive acts, and music lyrics that demean women (Daryana et al., 2020; Ms et al., 2007; Rafalovich, 2006; Vasan, 2011). As noted in several studies, the themes in masculine music genres, such as rock and rap, are almost always about violence against women, even though the number of female fans of these genres is substantial (Hill et al., 2021; Williams, 2020). As a result, the rock music scene has become an inhospitable space for female fans, not only because of sexist lyrics but also because the music venue itself has become a breeding ground for harassment against female fans by male fans (Vasan, 2011). Research on 603 songs in the metal genre during the 1990s revealed that masculinity is still a central theme, although it varies between traditional masculinity and the crisis of masculinity (Rafalovich, 2006).

However, the emergence of subculture in the UK in the 1970s slowly changed the domination of the masculine-leaning rock and punk genre. Female-led rock, punk, and heavy metal groups began to emerge within these times with a feminist agenda to break the patriarchal music scene and create a safe space for female fans (DOWNES, 2012; Hebdige, 1979; Hill et al., 2021). In the years following, music festivals have also been organised specifically for women to avoid harassment during events (Barnes & White, 2019; DOWNES, 2012; Gregory, 2013; Raisborough et al., 2014). The rock group Riot Grrrl, popular in the 1990s, broke the tradition of a dominant masculine punk subculture, which often voiced sharp criticisms of punk communities and raised awareness of the subjectivities of women and queer people who were often marginalised in punk music scenes (DOWNES, 2012; Hansen & Hansen, 2015). In the years since, metal bands that are either all female or have female vocalists have emerged, making metal music more inclusive.

Therefore, it is important to see how VoB is currently the only globalised female metal group in Indonesia while putting gender discourse and feminism as a central topic in their songs. It is possible that there are still female rock and metal groups in Indonesia, but the VoB is undeniably good at attracting public attention for several reasons. First, the lyrics of the songs are English and mixed Indonesian; second, YouTube and other social media platforms are utilised to increase engagement; and third, they are palatable to foreign journalists because of the ability of the three members to speak English. This third factor, in particular, is comprehensively analysed that foreign media often highlight the "zero to hero" narrative of VoB, which is always framed in terms of coming from a 'rural' area of Indonesia that has succeeded in breaking taboos of girlhood identity and going global (Saraswati & Beta, 2020).

In this study, we aim to explore the significance of female voices in metal music and analyse how VoB challenges gender norms and cultural stereotypes through music. We also examine how the Voice of Baceprot's music reflects and responds to the socio-political context in Indonesia, where conservative gender roles and Islamic values often clash with the progressive aspirations of

its youth. Our analysis draws on feminist critical discourse to examine how VoB used its music to subvert, resist, and criticise the dominant paradigm around gender in Indonesia.

Feminism, by definition, is political awareness and movement to end gender-based oppression of women (Fraser & Macdougall, 2017; Hooks, 2000). Feminism, once viewed through the lens of the pan-American movement, has undergone many disjunctures that emphasise intersectionality by recognising women's different experiences according to social class, ethnicity, sexuality, and geographical location. Intersectional feminism thus rejects the monolithic view that oppression against women is the same and similar but instead foregrounds the different social structures that shape women's experiences in different parts of the world (Bröckling, 2005; Mohanty, 2003; Tong & Botts, 2014).

In a study of the popular music industry (Ms et al., 2007), the transnational feminist movement not only fights for opportunities for female artists to get an equal place in the music industry but also advocates for the industry not to retain male artists who often stumble upon cases of domestic violence or create songs and lyrics that demean women (Macarthur et al., 2017; Nissen, 2022). Similar results have been reported in other genres, including rock, hiphop, and RnB (Berkers & Eeckelaer, 2014), in which music and lyrics are overwhelmingly sexist and cruel towards women.

The theory of the 'patriarchal unconscious' examines how masculinist values are embedded within cultural institutions and products, including music (Katz, 2006). Scholars argue that rock music actively produces and disseminates patriarchal ideologies by depicting stereotypical and often demeaning representations of women (Leonard, 2017; Reddington, 2020). However, some rock artists, especially female and queer artists, have the potential to disrupt patriarchal messaging (DOWNES, 2012; Leonard, 2017; Reddington, 2020). The VoB represents the disruption of the patriarchal unconscious in rock music. Their music promotes feminist principles and envisions the empowerment of women, opposing the masculinist ideology prominent in rock. By claiming a space in rock music, the VoB can spread counterhegemonic messages critiquing patriarchy.

Literature on Riot Grrrl and feminism in punk rock is also relevant to this research. Riot Grrrl is a feminist movement emerging from punk that combines music, zine-making, and activism (DOWNES, 2012; Strong, 2011). Scholars argue that Riot Grrrl empowered women by enabling them to control their own representation through DIY cultural production (Bleich et al., 1991; Leonard, 2017). VoBs follow this tradition by using music to create empowering narratives about women's experiences. Like the Riot Grrrls, they spread feminist messages, raised awareness of women's oppression, and envisioned liberation. The literature highlights how music can be harnessed as a medium for empowerment, giving voice to marginalised groups (Reddington, 2020).

We focus on analysing four VoB songs that have attracted the most attention through their lyrics (School Revolution, God Allow Me (Please) To Play Music, Not Public Property, and PMS (Perempuan Merdeka Seutuhnya (fully independent women) in terms of gender and feminist discourse in the socio-political context of contemporary Indonesia. Considering that there is little existing literature on women in metal music in the Indonesian context, this research will hopefully shed light and open up further research avenues on this subject.

3. Methodology

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) is a theoretical framework that combines feminist theory with critical discourse analysis. It focuses on the ways in which gender and power are constructed and reproduced through language and discourse (Bryson, 2003; Lazar, 2007; Marlow, 2014). Lazar's work on FCDA, whose methodology illuminates this research, examines how gender, race, and sexuality intersect in political discourse, media representation, and everyday talk (Lazar, 2006, 2007). Similar to other methods of critical discourse analysis, FCDA emphasises the importance of considering the social context in which discourse occurs and the ways in which power relations shape language use (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Overall, Lazar's work on FCDA highlights the need to critically examine the role of language and discourse in reproducing social inequalities and the potential for language to be used as a tool for social change. Like other critical discourse analysis methods, FCDA can be used broadly not only in language but also in advertisements, movies, comics, and other popular cultures, including music (Lazar, 2006; Rahmawati, 2018). FCDA will bring up some things to look for in the text: recognising power relations in shaping gender relations; contextual relations between the text and its social, cultural, and historical context; the intersectionality of gender with other social categories such as race and class; and the importance of reflexivity and emphasis on social change (Lazar, 2007).

Along with FCDA, this paper employs textual analysis to investigate the meaning of the text, which is the musical lyrics of VoB. Textual analysis is a method used in various fields, such as literature, linguistics, sociology, and communication studies, to examine and interpret the meaning of texts. It involves a systematic examination of a text or corpus of texts to identify patterns, themes, and other significant features (Hermes, 2005; Machin & Mayr, 2012). Critical discourse analysis in music means unpacking "social meanings and express values and identities and ideologies" contained in such songs and music (Hansen & Hansen, 2015; Hesmondhalgh, 2008; Leeuwen, 2012).

Four VoB songs—School Revolution, God Allow Me (Please) To Play Music, Not Public Property, and PMS (Perempuan Merdeka Seutuhnya (fully independent women)—were examined following this process: selecting a dataset, identifying key themes and patterns in the data, and developing an analytical framework to guide the analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Textual analysis also considers aspects of intertextuality, which in this case is the relationship between VoB lyrics and other texts, such as news archives and interviews, music videos, and fan comments.

It is worth mentioning that VoB songs use a mixed Indonesian and English language. Indonesian lyrics will be translated into English in this paper as long as the meaning does not change much from that in Indonesian.

4. Results and Discussion

We analysed the four VoB songs in several steps. First, we carefully examined the lyrics, focusing on words or phrases that tended to be repeated or emphasised (themes, patterns, and other prominent aspects). Second, we explored the intertextuality of the lyrics by referring to online archives, such as interviews with VoB members, connections between the lyrics and their corresponding music videos on YouTube, and news snippets from mass media about the songs. In the third step, we compared the thematic derived from the textual and intertextual readings of one song with those of the others and conducted a macro analysis of the songs' interconnections with the social, cultural, and political situations that inspired or caused their creation. Finally, we draw conclusions from our analysis.

Using the four steps above, we found that the four VoB songs had three central themes: resisting systemic oppression, sociopolitical criticism and freedom of self and artistic expression. The three major themes in VoB songs are not meant to stand alone and separate in each song but rather a theme that is more or less always present in every song.

4.1 Resisting Systemic Oppression

One thing that feminist music scholars criticise the most is how dominant sexist themes in lyrics across genres are towards women (Hill et al., 2021). "Perempuan Merdeka Sepenuhnya" / Fully Independent Woman (PMS) addresses issues of self-identity and independence. The feminist critical analysis of this song reveals that the band challenges the traditional expectations placed on women, particularly those related to purity and modesty. The repeated line "Meski tak seperawan Maria" translates to "Even though I'm not as pure as Virgin Mary," a reference to the idealized image of women as innocent and virtuous. VoB critiques this expectation by asserting their independence: "Aku bukan budak busuk otakmu" ("I am not a slave to your rotten mind") and "Akulah merdeka merdekalah seutuhnya" ("I am free, completely free").

The song highlights the band's struggle against societal norms and its desire for a world free from oppressive ideologies. Lyrics like "I never needed all of your stupid fascist words / What I long, is a peaceful world of colors" emphasise the band's desire for a more inclusive and diverse society that does not impose rigid expectations on individuals. "Not Public Property" confronts the issue of sexual harassment and victim-blaming, which are prevalent in many societies worldwide. The feminist critical analysis of this song reveals the VoB's commitment to addressing the objectification and mistreatment of women. Our body is not public property; we have no place for the dirty mind/Our body is not public property/We have no place for the sexist mind" serves as a powerful declaration of bodily autonomy and a rejection of the notion that women's bodies are available for public consumption or judgment.

The textual analysis of "Not Public Property" highlights the critique of societal attitudes that contribute to harassment and victim-blaming. The lines "They are still busy, talking 'bout dressing appropriately / (Because) We are forced to obey by unwritten fucking rules" address the harmful belief that women's clothing choices are responsible for the harassment they experience. VoB advocates for a safer and more equitable society in which everyone has the right to live safely, as stated in the lines, "Everyone has the right to live safely / But why do people ignore it."

VoB music provides a critical lens into oppressive systems and envisions grassroots empowerment. Their lyrics call for transgressing societal contradictions to integrate identity into their own terms. In "School Revolution," VoB argues schools impart "dreams I don't understand" and "dogmas piled up until bent" to stifle vision. However, they assert that only "focused people survive" through determined resistance. VoB suggests that empowerment requires recognising how oppression thrives through guising itself as virtue and surmounting constraints to self-determine purposes.

"God, Allow Me (Please) To Play Music" portrays religious doctrines used to suppress creativity, lamenting "many perceptions have become toxic" and "religion [is used] to kill the music." Yet, VoB proclaims, "I just wanna sing a song to show my soul", refusing to disavow their art or faith. Their lyrics point to empowerment through integrating identity however one chooses, not submitting to external controls enforcing "idealizations abusing our mind." In "Not Public Property," VoB links abuse to culture and "unwritten rules" policing women's worth, asserting "our body is not public property." They condemn the prejudice-propagating belief in

women as commodities for consumption. VoB argues for the “right to live safely” by dismantling the systemic roots of misogyny, not superficial fixes. Their message is that empowerment requires equitable access to justice and rights, regardless of social position.

“Fully Independent Woman (PMS)” rejects patriarchal authority, declaring “, I’m not a slave to your rotten mind.” VoB claims entitlement to self-determine identity as “completely free” from external policing of expression. They envision empowerment by renouncing patriarchal standards to define worth on one’s own terms. Doctrines enforcing limits are exposed as “fascist words.” The VoB suggests that empowerment begins with awareness and refusal to submit instead of seizing and self-curating alternative possibilities. The analysis demonstrates that VoB music spreads counterhegemonic messages from the locale to the globe. They fuse Western rocks and traditional Indonesian influences on a platform, highlighting local and worldwide issues. VoB blends English, Indonesian, and Sundanese to make their calls for change transnationally accessible. Their success as teenagers hijabi women performing metal evidence art’s radical possibilities through vision and determination. Future research should examine VoBs’ reception and role in creating new spaces for empowerment. Work is needed on women in metal music, especially across diverse locales, to understand how their artistry spreads. Overall, VoB provides a critical lens into the sinister workings of oppression and how empowerment thrives through grassroots vision, exposing and upending systemic constraints. Their lyrics suggest empowerment as transgressing doctrines curbing creativity to integrate identity; however, one chooses and demands justice by dismantling the prejudicial roots of harm. VoB offers a glimpse into how empowerment takes shape through spreading awareness of insidious controls and refusal to submit instead of self-determining alternative possibilities.

4.2 Sociopolitical Criticisms

Using Michelle Lazar’s feminist critical discourse analysis, we can explore the textual and discursive analysis of Voice of Baceprot’s song “School Revolution” by paying attention to specific words, expressions, and the social context of the song. The song expresses a sense of disillusionment and frustration with the educational system, as demonstrated by the repetition of the phrase, “Don’t try to judge us now.” This line can be interpreted as a critique of the patriarchal system that seeks to control and suppress young people, particularly young women, who are often subjected to harsh judgments and expectations.

A recurring theme in their lyrics serves as a rallying cry for resistance and empowerment, urging society not to label them based on their schooling experiences. Lyrics like “Paksa mimpi yang tak satupun ku mengerti” (Forcing dreams that I don’t understand) and “Terlempar kepala dipaksa pintar” (Thrown into a situation where we are forced to be smart) cast a critical eye on the repressive nature of education systems that push students into societal moulds. The usage of words like “paksa” (force) and “terlempar” (thrown) underline the absence of choice and freedom experienced by students.

Their lyrics also paint a picture of the suffocating effect of dogmatic teachings on the minds of students. Lines like “Di balik tembok isi kepala seakan digembok” (Behind the walls, our minds seem locked) and “Selaksa dogma ditimpa hingga bongkok” (a myriad of dogmas piled up until bent) create vivid imagery of being trapped and the constraints imposed on independent thinking and personal growth. The song “School Revolution” voices their disillusionment with an education system that fails to live up to its promises. Lyrics like “Di sana dijuluki penjara paling indah” (There, it is called the most beautiful prison) and “Tapi tak berikan bukti apa-apa” (But it doesn’t provide any proof) depict schools as creativity-stifling prisons rather than nurturing hubs of growth. The song ends on a hopeful note, encouraging listeners to stay focused, dream big, and pursue their aspirations without compromising their values. VoB’s lyrics in School Revolution reflect the anxiety, restlessness and harsh criticism of the younger generation towards an education system that does not liberate but instead imprisons. School Revolution also became one of VoB’s most accessed songs and music videos on Youtube, accompanied by many comments from its listeners, who felt represented by their anxiety about education in Indonesia.

4.3 Freedom of Self and Artistic Expression

The lyrics of their song “God, (allow) Me Please to Play Music” provide a valuable lens through which to examine the band’s relationship with feminism, religion, and cultural and political contexts. Feminist critical analysis emphasises the importance of understanding women’s experiences and the impact of gender on cultural production (Marlow, 2014). VoB’s lyrics highlight the band’s struggle for self-expression and its desire to break free from societal constraints. The repeated line, “I just wanna sing a song to show my soul,” underscores their longing for artistic freedom and challenges the notion that women, particularly hijabi women, should not engage in certain forms of music.

Textual analysis of the lyrics reveals a strong critique of societal norms that attempt to suppress creative expression. The lines “Why today, many perceptions have become toxic?” and “Why today, idealizations are abusing our mind?” questioned the rise of narrow-mindedness and intolerance. The band asserts their innocence and sincerity through the refrain, “I’m not the criminal / I’m not the enemy,” emphasising that their music does not pose a threat to society or religion.

In the broader cultural and political context, VoB's lyrics strongly resonate. In Indonesia, conservatism has been gaining ground, with a growing focus on religious piety and traditional gender roles (Fealy, 2008; Weintraub, 2011). Going against the grain, VoB embraces a genre mostly associated with male rebellion and aggression. The lyric "Why today, many people wear religion to kill the music?" encapsulates their concern about the misuse of religion to suppress artistic expression.

Despite the criticism faced by hijabi girls playing metal music – deemed incompatible with Islamic principles and modesty – VoB stands its ground. Their lyrics, "God, allow me please to play music," are a plea for acceptance and understanding. It highlights their belief that their music doesn't conflict with their faith, trying to strike a balance between their passion for music and religious identity and creating a dialogue between two aspects of their lives that may seem at odds with each other. This song highlights VoB's struggle for creative freedom as a hijabi woman performing rock music. Lyrics like "Why today, many perceptions have become toxic?" and "Why today, idealizations are abusing our mind?" criticise narrow-mindedness and intolerance, while "I'm not the criminal / I'm not the enemy" asserts their innocence. However, "Why today, many people wear religion to kill the music?" suggests that their music has been condemned, in contrast to Islam. The repeated refrain "God, allow me please to play music" can be read as VoB's attempt to reconcile their faith and passion for music. The song points to societal contradictions that urge piousness but suppress creative expression, especially for marginalised groups such as hijabi women. VoB's only wish is to "sing a song to show my soul."

Through these lyrics, we can see VoB's common thread of advocating for empowerment, freedom, and diversity against oppression. Their music provides a social commentary on restrictive norms in education, religion, and gender roles that curb self-expression and individuality. The VoB envisions an inclusive society in which people are free to pursue their dreams and identities without facing undue judgment or doctrines. This vision calls for empowerment that resists systemic oppression. VoB's lyrics demonstrate a commitment to raising awareness of societal issues and advocating for change. Their messages promote the empowerment of women and marginalised groups by urging resistance against oppressive ideologies and chasing one's passion.

4.4 The Radical Act of Making Space: VoB and the Marginalized Voices in Metal

The VoB's existence is significant in Indonesia's sociocultural context, where conservative gender roles and Islamic values often clash with progressive youth. Their music provides a platform for spreading counterhegemonic messages within this milieu. Scholars argue that rock music has historically propagated patriarchal ideologies through stereotypical representations of women (DOWNES, 2012; Leonard, 2017; Reddington, 2020). However, some artists, especially females and queers, appropriately disrupt patriarchal messaging (Gregory, 2013; Reddington, 2020; Vasan, 2011). VoB demonstrated this by fusing rock/metal with calls for women's empowerment. Their music creates space for marginalised voices in a masculinised genre.

Literature on Riot Grrrl shows music's potential for empowerment through enabling control over representation (Berkers & Eeckelaer, 2014; DOWNES, 2012). The VoB follows this tradition by using music to construct empowering narratives about women's experiences. Their messages raise awareness of women's oppression and envision liberation through collectivity (Leonard, 2017). As teenage hijabi women perform metal, the VoB transgresses expectations for their identity.

Furthermore, scholars argue that religious doctrines are used to justify patriarchal control (Ahmed, 1992; McGinty, 2007). However, some envision faith as compatible with women's rights (Badran, 2009). VoB fuses these perspectives through lyrics like "God, allow me please to play music", suggesting faith and creative passion can co-exist and inform one another rather than being irreconcilable. They proved that empowerment can involve working within constraints to find opportunities for resistance and change. Women negotiate masculinised spaces through "female masculinity" by adopting masculinised attributes for legitimacy while challenging gender exclusivity (Strong, 2011; Vasan, 2011). As hijabi women in metal, the VoB embraces a masculinised genre while fusing with traditional Indonesian elements. They create a unique female masculinity incorporating cultural identity, using music to create a space for women in rock.

The VoB's existence signifies the potential for grassroots change. Their messages promote empowerment through autonomy, resistance to systemic oppression, and justice for all. The VoB's vision involves dismantling prejudicial control over identity, expression, and agency to enable diversity. They argue that empowerment requires exposing sinister undercurrents masked as virtue and demanding alternative possibilities. Despite increasing conservatism, the VoB leverages music to change from within its milieu. Their success in gaining international attention suggests radical possibilities of art and determination. VoB offers a lens to envision empowerment by refusing external controls and spreading awareness to enact change; however, this is possible. They illuminate how empowerment takes shape at the grassroots level, sprouting vision and possibility through claiming space for marginalised voices. Overall, VoB signifies hope for change that thrives through artistry, creativity, and courage against all odds. Their existence calls for empowerment.

VoB demonstrates how empowerment takes shape through vision and voice against many forms of oppression. They offer a glimpse of how sinister workings are exposed and possibly enabled from the ground up. VoB messages call for empowerment by

refusing insidious controls to determine the identity and purpose of one's own terms. Their existence signifies hope for change envisioned and wielded through creativity, courage, and localised determination, thriving against all odds. Overall, VoB illuminates how empowerment takes shape – through claiming and cultivating space, but possible, for marginalised vision, to expose, make room, and spread awareness for alternative futures.

5. Conclusion

This paper has analysed how the VoB, an Indonesian metal band, uses music to spread radical messages of empowerment and an inclusive society. The VoB's lyrics call for dismantling systemic oppression and prejudicial control over identity and expression. They suggest that empowerment requires transgressing societal contradictions to integrate identity into one's own terms and create space for marginalised voices. We drew on feminist critical discourse analysis and textual analysis to examine the four VoB songs. The analysis shows that VoB portrays empowerment as exposing and acting against the prejudicial roots of harm, cultivating spaces for possibility, and demanding justice through any means available. Their music signifies how empowerment sprouts from the grassroots through artistry, vision, and refusal to submit.

VoB's messages call for equity, safety, and rights as lived realities, not as lofty ideals. They highlight how empowerment starts by refusing insidious controls to self-determine identity and purpose. VoB's success as a teenage hijabi woman performing metal suggests the radical potential of claiming space for change. Their existence illuminates hope that thrives through creativity and courage. Overall, VoB signifies how empowerment can be made possible. Through their music, VoBs offer a radical vision for empowerment and an inclusive society. By fusing rock/metal with calls for justice, the VoB leverages a masculinised genre to spread counterhegemonic messages. Their lyrics portray empowerment as exposing and acting against the systemic roots of oppression. VoB suggests that change requires transgressing societal contradictions demanding piety yet stifling creativity to integrate identity on one's own terms. VoB argues that empowerment involves refusing subtle controls to determine one's identity and purpose. Their messages call for cultivating spaces where marginalised voices are heard, and alternative futures are envisioned. VoB highlights how justice means demanding safety, equity, and rights for all people as lived realities, not as lofty ideals. Their lyrics suggest that empowerment starts by renouncing external authority to self-define worth and path. VoB signifies the possibility of a change that sprouts from the grassroots through artistry and courage. By claiming space in rock as hijabi women, the VoB has gained international attention, evidencing the radical potential of vision and voice. Their success illuminates how empowerment takes shape through any means available: expose oppressive undercurrents masked as a virtue, make space, spread awareness, and demand justice.

Overall, VoB portrays what empowerment requires and makes it possible. Their messages convey that alternative futures are envisioned and won only through action and the refusal to submit. VoB calls for empowerment through voice against sinister controls, integrating identity, cultivating spaces for marginalised possibilities, and enacting justice as a lived reality. Their existence signifies hope for change that thrives from the ground through creativity and determination. The VoB illuminates how empowerment sprouts and spreads.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the analysis was restricted to only four songs by VoB, which provides a limited sample of their work. Examining a larger sample of VoB's discography could reveal additional themes and perspectives. Second, as textual analysis relies heavily on interpretation, the identified themes reflect the researchers' subjective perspectives. Others may interpret the lyrics differently. Quantitative analysis of word frequencies could complement the qualitative analysis. Third, the study lacks contextual data like interviews with VoB members about their inspirations and aims. Their insights would enrich and validate the textual analysis. Fourth, the intertextual analysis only considered online archives, not VoB's reception and impact. Ethnographic research on their fans and audience could further illuminate VoB's cultural significance. Finally, as a case study of one band, the findings have limited generalizability. Comparative research on other Indonesian female metal groups could highlight patterns within the genre. Overall, a multi-method study with a larger sample size and input from the artists could provide greater depth. This study opens up many avenues for future research. First, scholarship is needed to map the broader landscape of women in Indonesian metal and rock music. VoB indicates a burgeoning scene, but more work is required to understand its scale and range. Second, a comparative analysis of female metal bands across Southeast Asia could elucidate patterns and differences shaped by each cultural context. Third, ethnographic studies should examine the impacts of bands like VoB – how fans interpret their messages, how they shape notions of identity and empowerment, and how they open up alternative spaces. Fourth, research could trace the trajectory of VoB's reception over time as they release more albums. Fifth, interviews with VoB members are needed to grasp their motivations, influences, and songwriting processes. Finally, feminist media studies can analyze VoB's representation in journalistic discourse – how media narratives may diverge from their self-articulated aims. This highlights broader opportunities for multidisciplinary research on VoB, female rock musicians, and feminist movements in popular music.

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