

A Qualitative Study of Work Motivation Among the Media and Creative Workers in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The creative industry is a booming sector in the contribution to the gross domestic product in a country especially towards the gig economy. Among the pillars within the creative industry is those from the film and drama sectors. Terms such as above-the-line and below-the-line are segregated to identify their nature of work and how it contributes to the audio-visual industry. Therefore, the creative industry practitioners are facing challenges in maintaining their status quo for better economic gains and protecting their well-fare due to the nature of the creative industries as freelancers. This study's objective is to understand the problems that are faced by the creative industry stakeholders in generating their income and also to study the possible effects of inefficiency of well-fare protection in Malaysia's creative industry. This study also uses qualitative study and thematic analysis to analyse the data gained from focus group discussion of five (5) participants where four (4) of them are creative creators and one (1) of them was from the legislative office of copyright protection in Malaysia. The interviews were recorded into audio files and transcribed verbatim. The data acquired were later on analysed using ATLAS.ti and have managed to discover three (3) emergent themes that reflects the whole purpose of the study. The impact of this study is to understand what could possibly be done to improvise the economic and welfare well-being of the creative industry practitioners.

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Contribution/Originality: This study is one of very few that studies the role of guilds and union in the media and creative industry holds great power to elevate the economic and moral well-being of the practitioners in Malaysia's scenery.

1. Introduction

Malaysia has emerged to be a nation that advances in creative or knowledge-based industry as part of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) contributor. [Siti Salwa et al. \(2011\)](#) stated that with the emergence of terms of the 'creative industry' and 'creative economy' has created a greater cause for the ecosystem to produce more job opportunities and wealth through intellectual property-based products. According to [United Nations Conference and Trade Development \(UNCTAD\) \(2008\)](#), since the role of creativity, technology and innovation has restructured the whole landscape of the cultural produce, worldwide business conduct and not to mention utilisation. [Au Yong \(2018\)](#) and [UNCTAD \(2008\)](#) identified Malaysia as among the top developing countries in cultural producers other than Indonesia, Nigeria, and Vietnam. Malaysia, with the initiative of Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) is also promoting added value services through the digital economy ([Au Yong, 2018](#)).

[Chang et al. \(2018\)](#) stated that Malaysia is fully moving towards a developed nation by years beyond 2020 in preparation of preparing efficient and effective workers for the market. As many universities today in Malaysia, also many other countries in the world offer courses that contribute to cater the needs and demands of the creative industry, students in the creative department and faculty have the insecurity of pursuing their career and generating income from the creative economy. Despite the difficulties, students around the world continue to pursue tertiary studies related to creativity in the higher education level ([Ashton, 2014](#); [Bridgstock, 2011](#); [Brown, 2007](#); [Harbour 2005](#); [Jeffri 2004](#)). However, through the focus group discussion conducted in this study, the creative industry contributors that were all newly graduates from a local university in Malaysia feels that their economic and welfare is not being taken well care of by the government and the industry itself.

As the creative industry nature of work is relatively temporary and job-per-basis and dominated by freelancers, its characteristics are like the gig economy. Gig economy is a flexible on-demand tendency of companies to hire contractors to complete and execute the job for them instead of hiring full-time employees ([Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2017](#)). According to the report by the [Texas Workforce Investment Council \(2017\)](#), technology advancement drives and spears the direction of the gig economy and bridges conventional type of employment with the gig economy workers. Referring to the definition of gig economy itself, the meaning of 'gig' derives from the gig performances that the musician does and signifies job basis work only and not for permanent hires. There are possibilities for the gig economy to transform to be the heart and pillar of the economic progression as technological advancement takes over our daily life.

As the talk of modern economics is all about gig economy that gives alternatives to the younger generation to not depend on being employed full time by any entity to minimise the problem of unemployment, there are also downsides of being the '*master of your income*'. One must be able to uphold their income in the long run and be able to have sufficient retirement schemes once they are no longer contributing to the industry. Compared to workers that are employed by companies, they might have a lot of beneficial returns and protection schemes that would legally protect them in the long run during their career and even after they are no longer attached to a company.

Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara (DIKN) is one of many of initiatives that was introduced by Malaysian government like many other creative industry policies there are in other

countries does not only focus on ways to developing the creative industry, but it also enhances the local cultural products (Barker & Lee, 2017). *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN) listed the three (3) types of classification in the creative industry.

Table 1 indicates the classification of creative products in the creative industry according to DIKN. The audio-visual industry belongs to the Multimedia Creative Industries. This is because the content produced from this industry functions with the advancement of technology. Audio-visual products and outcomes are also related to copyright related industry where the product of its industry is intangible and requires intellectual property protection.

Table 1: DIKN's classification of creative products in the creative industry

Multimedia Creative Industries	Cultural Arts Creative Industries	Cultural Heritage Creative Industries
Film and Television	Crafts	Museum
Advertising	Visual Arts	Archives
Design	Music	Restoration
Digital animation content	Performing Arts	Preservation
	Creative writing	
	Fashion and textile	

Source: [Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara \(DIKN\) \(2009\)](#)

1.1. Research Objectives:

This study aims to study to objectives which are:

- i. To understand the problems that are faced by the creative industry stakeholders in generating their income.
- ii. To study the possible effects of inefficiency of well-fare protection in Malaysia's creative industry.

2. Literature Review

History indicates that Malaysia is one of the countries in Southeast Asia (SEA) that pioneers in the filming industry that centre in Singapore (Hisham, 2013). As developed countries such as United States (USA). United Kingdom (UK) and Australia are the forefront to spearhead policies and new trends within the creative industry, Asian and African countries are still behind to catch up and to be at par (Siti Salwa et al., 2011). However, developing countries such as Malaysia itself that falls under Asian countries have potential in advancing the creative economy due to the richness of cultural diversity that still strongly exists (Barrowclough & Kozul-Wright, 2008). The United Kingdom defined their creative industry as a success story that they would promote as great singers that reached international stardom such as Ed Sheeran and Adele and also the establishments of the National Theatre (Department for Culture Media and Sport [DCMS], 2023).

The World Intellectual Property (WIPO) forecasted that the 'copyright related industry' would contribute 2.9% to the Malaysia's gross domestic product (GDP) and would create jobs for 518,200 people (Barker & Lee, 2017; Au Yong, 2018). WIPO (2015) also added that Malaysia is experiencing a growth below average in the GDP. However, as the report done by WIPO (2015), the GDP contribution of Malaysia's copyright base industry is

stagnant. A comparison to other countries was done in the [WIPO \(2015\)](#) report, Malaysia's GDP contribution percentage of 5.7% has surpassed the below average figure of 5.17%.

[Table 2](#) is the list of countries that submitted their economic report of the copyright-based products to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). Malaysia's report as per 2015 was done in the year 2008 were listed as in [Table 2](#). The data submitted though is not updated and may not reflect the current GDP in Malaysia as of 2023.

Table 2: Forty-two (42) countries, and the percentage of GDP and employment share

No.	Country/year	% of GDP share	% of employment share
1.	Argentina (2013)	4.7	3
2.	Australia (2011)	6.6	8
3.	Bhutan (2011)	5.46	10.09
4.	Brunei Darussalam (2011)	1.58	3.2
5.	Bulgaria (2011)	4.54	4.92
6.	Canada (2004)	5.38	5.55
7.	China (2009)	6.37	6.52
8.	Columbia (2008)	3.3	5.8
9.	Croatia (2007)	4.27	4.65
10.	Dominica (2010)	3.4	4.8
11.	Finland (2010)	4.6	3.6
12.	Grenada (2012)	4.83	5.12
13.	Hungary (2010)	7.42	7.28
14.	Indonesia (2013)	4.11	3.75
15.	Jamaica (2007)	4.81	3.03
16.	Jordan (2012)	2.43	2.88
17.	Kenya (2009)	5.32	3.26
18.	Latvia (2004)	5.05	5.59
19.	Lebanon (2007)	4.75	3.03
20.	Lithuania (2012)	5.4	2.88
21.	Malawi (2013)	3.46	3.26
22.	Malaysia (2008)	5.7	5.59

23.	Mexico (2006)	4.77	11.01
24.	Netherlands (2009)	5.9	8.8
25.	Pakistan (2010)	4.45	3.71
26.	Panama (2009)	6.35	3.17
27.	Peru (2009)	2.67	4.5
28.	Philippines (2006)	4.82	11.1
29.	Republic of Korea (2012)	9.89	6.24
30.	Romania (2008)	5.55	4.19
31.	Russian Federation (2007)	6.06	7.3
32.	Singapore (2007)	6.19	6.21
33.	Slovenia (2010)	5.1	6.8
34.	South Africa (2011)	4.11	4.08
35.	St. Kitts and Nevis (2012)	6.6	3.1
36.	St. Lucia (2012)	8	4.4
37.	St. Vincent and Grenadines (2012)	5.6	4.9
38.	Tanzania (2012)	4.56	5.63
39.	Thailand (2012)	4.48	2.85
40.	Trinidad and Tobago (2011)	4.8	5
41.	Ukraine (20018)	2.85	1.9
42.	United States of America (2013)	11.25	8.35
	Total	217.48	219.04
	Average	5.178095238	5.215238095

Source: [World Intellectual Property Organisation \(WIPO\) \(2015\)](#)

Figure 1 indicates Malaysia's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) indicates below average growth compared to other nations is marked in the graph below according to the report ([WIPO, 2015](#)). Therefore, with so much advancement there is in the creative industry, Malaysia too is not left out in supporting financially and motivating the individuals involved. *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN) that was introduced in 2009 is one of many initiatives that aspires to elevate the creative industry well-being and future advancement.

Figure 1: The % of GDP contribution and employment shares



Source: World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) (2015)

Table 3 indicates the list of initiatives that were suggested by DIKN in 2009. However, this initiative was launched more than ten (10) years ago. A lot of improvement was needed to improve the *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN) so that it aligns with today's technological advancement and social mobility. Among the latest initiatives that was introduced by the Malaysian government is the Cultural Economy Development Agency (CENDANA). CENDANA is an agency that is metaphoric as an umbrella that caters enough expertise and resources to improve the cultural sector that would eventually contribute to the creative economy (Cultural Economy Development Agency [CENDANA], n.d.). CENDANA's vision is to transform Malaysia into a vibrant and promising creative economy ecosystem that could be appreciated by fellow Malaysians, and their mission is to develop the cultural sector in the creative industry (Cultural Economy Development Agency [CENDANA], n.d.).

Table 3: Initiatives of *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN)

Initiatives	Explanation
Initiative 1	To draft and produce a Creative Industry Policy that is comprehensive and as the base for the nation's creative industry development.
Initiative 2	To provide a 200 million MYR fund that could cater activities such as the film and drama productions, musical content, animation, advertising and the development of local contents. The funds that were provided are in loan forms and managed by <i>Bank Simpanan Nasional Malaysia</i> (BSN), and one utmost important outcome of these initiatives is that this would ease the industry players.
Initiative 3	To manage the welfare of the creative industry players through the ' <i>Tabung Kebajikan Penggiat</i> '. 3 million MYR was given for this initiative as grants.

Source: *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN), (2009)

Beijing Treaty on Audio-visual Performances that was introduced in the year 2012 in a Diplomatic Conference on the Protection of Audio-visual Performances. The [WIPO \(2012\)](#) is the beginning of the advancement of economic and moral protection that focuses on the advancement of audio-visual based output in the creative industry. The [WIPO \(2012\)](#) specialises in providing protection of economic rights of the performers within the audio-visual industry in four (4) perspectives.

[Table 4](#) indicates the list of focus and specialisation of protection of the [WIPO \(2012\)](#) for the audiovisual based industry. With the introduction of [WIPO \(2012\)](#), the performers' economic and moral well-being was expected to be improved whereby the initiation of the treaty was an extension and improvisation from the Rome Treaty that was introduced in 1961. The Rome Treaty was introduced to provide security in performances for performers in phonograms and broadcasting purposes because those were the years where television transmission was being used by households worldwide.

Table 4: Lists the focus and specialisation of protection of the Beijing Treaty for the audio-visual based industry.

Type of protection	Explanation
The right of reproduction	This protection grants the permission for the performers to reproduce their performance in any form.
The right of distribution	This protection grants the permission for the performers to make available of the original copies and performances through other transactions of monetary gain or other transfer of ownership.
The right of rental	This protection grants access for the performers to allow commercial rental to the public of the rental in any form of audio-visual.
The right of making available	This protection grants access for the performers to make available their performance to be accessed in any other form such as the internet.

Source: [WIPO \(2012\)](#)

According to [Micunovic and Balkovic \(2015\)](#), the author's right and copyright law has undergone a lot of enhancement from the print's era to the binary era as we are here today. With technological advancement, that provides support for a new way to grant moral or author rights of the creators by promoting free internet and digital markets that would root in the digital technology, mass communication and the virtual world of multimedia. The television industry today has dynamically evolved and increasing competition among its providers since the early days of free-to-air to over-the-top services being offered to the masses now ([Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission \[MCMC\], 2015](#)). [MCMC \(2015\)](#) also stated that to maintain its status quo and increase the audience loyalty towards its channel, the television stations are subsequently investing in content creation to capture the audience's attention and collaborating with international productions. Due to this, the television industry is always seeking potential investors through advertising activities.

Copyright protection is known to grant two (2) types of protection to its owner or original creator which are moral and economic rights. [Spinello \(2007\)](#) stated that the copyright has its sets of limitations of consideration of the public interest. Among the limitations that were as stated by [Goldstein \(1994\)](#) are security for the creators and to serve the public interest. It is noted that copyright does not last forever, and it would generally last

for the lifetime and seventy (70) years after the death of the author (Kretschmer et al, 2018).

Table 5 indicates the copyright terms that are being listed by the Centre for Copyright and New Business Models in the Creative Economy (CREATe). In the filming field of work, there are distinctions between above-the-line and below-the-line jobs description. According to Pruner (2022) the term above-the-line is associated with high-ranking jobs in the creative production such as the director, executive producer, screenwriters, casting director, and not to mention main casts. While below-the-line jobs describe those who are working in the technical area and these groups of individuals are the biggest portion in a creative production activity. The jobs within the below-the-line group are the assistant directors, line producers, cinematographers, art directors, costume designers and many more. The combination of jobs within the above and below the lines contributes to a success or failure of a creative production outcome, though both work categories and criteria are significant and would only function together. However, the below-the-line hard labourers are usually paid hourly, compared to above-the-line workers where they are the spearheader of a production and usually being paid upon contract rather than below-the-line labourers which are being paid on an hourly basis (Aaron, 2021). This would cause these groups of labourers' motivation to produce and contribute to decline. But on top of that, universities and tertiary institutions continue to offer courses that are related to the creative and cultural studies that sit largely in the vocationally oriented degrees (Pettinger et. al, 2016). But it is clear to know that intellectual property work are works of the mind which are intangible (Rakova, 2021).

Table 5: Copyright term from CREATe

Work categories	Duration of copyright
Dramatic, literary, and artistic work (includes musical)	The author's life and 70 years after his/ her death.
Film	If the work has co-authors, the duration of work protected is 70 years from the death of the longest survivor. 70 years from the death of the following creators: The director Author / scriptwriter Composer of music that created the specially dedicated soundtrack that is used in the film.
Sound recordings	50 years from the year end of the calendar in the year the music / sound was created Or, If the work is being played and broadcasted to the public within the mentioned period above, then 70 years later the work will be protected .
Broadcasts	50 years from the last airing time of the work.
Typographic and published work	25 years from the end of the year of the publication.

Source: Kretschmer et al. (2018)

3. Research Method

Let's discuss the Malaysian scenario of the creative industry. A journal written by Alavi and Azmi (2019) stated among the problems that stems that contributes to the lack of

wealth generation on the copyright-based industry are the low payment for content produced, absence of moral rights given to the scriptwriters that are deemed as the important individuals to produce content, and lack of governance structural and practice. The above findings written by [Alavi and Azmi \(2019\)](#) have led to the questions that were asked in the focus group discussion (FGD) session. This uses qualitative study that conducts focus group discussion (FGD) as a tool to collect data.

Quality qualitative questions should have elements of exploration and discovery in its process ([Agee, 2009](#); [Creswell, 2007](#)). [Agee \(2009\)](#) also stated that good questions do not necessarily produce good research, but incompetently questions are plausible to create problems that would in a way affect the direction and outcome of the study. For novice researchers, it is important to know that qualitative study does not need to commence with establishing hypotheses for such an idea as for quantitative study ([Agee, 2009](#)). The questions constructed in this study are semi-structured questions and the direction of the interview and questions asked evolved according to the answers. The focus group discussion (FGD) consisted of five (5) participants from various backgrounds in the creative industry. The sampling chosen in this study was purposive sampling where the researcher has already identified the demographics of the informants for the study.

[Table 6](#) demonstrates the profiling matrix of the informants in the study. The participants were labelled as 'C' throughout the study. The letter 'C' represents content creators, which are the biggest stakeholders in the creative industry. All the participants interviewed are from a similar background from *Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)*. Meanwhile the informant that was labelled M is a legal practitioner that works with the Intellectual Property Corporation Malaysia (MyIPO).

Table 6: The participant profile matrix and their experience being in the creative industry.

Participants	Background of study	University	Occupation	Years of Experience
C6	Degree in College of Creative Arts	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)	Props master	<10 years
C5	Degree in College of Creative Arts	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)	Line producer	<10 years
C7	Degree in College of Creative Arts	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)	Director of Photography / Director	<10 years
C8	Degree in Music	Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)	Musician	<10 years
M1	Degree in Law	International Islamic University (UIA)	Legal practitioner	>10 years

This study's limitation is that the interview conducted is only among four (4) participants that joined the creative industry in less than 10 years and has less experience compared to those practitioners. Another one (1) participant from the legislative office which is MyIPO was interviewed in the duration of 20 minutes. The participants of the focus group discussion (FGD) were also from the bumiputra group, and this signifies that they don't

speak on behalf of the creative industry. The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted in 1 hour 10 minutes in duration. This study is hoped to uncover the gaps within the study of economic and welfare well-being among the production workers in Malaysia's audio-visual industry.

4. Results

Conducting qualitative data analysis involves activity such as segregation, grouping and rearranging rich contents that originated from documents (Wahyuni, 2012; Boeije, 2010). This study however uses thematic analysis to analyse the transcribed audio documents. The focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted via online interview using google meet. Interviews main features were to facilitate the ones who were interviewed of their expertise in a particular phenomenon being studied (Wahyuni, 2012). The questions were asked in semi-structured features where additional questions would evolve and asked during the interview session. Forty-three (43) codes were discovered in the transcribed document file, which was later grouped into four (4) code groups and two (2) themes were discovered. Table 7 indicates the suggestion of codes that were extracted from the transcriptions were then grouped into four (4) code groups.

Table 7: The list of codes

Experience	Content Creators	Creative industry	Limitations of the creative industry	Real problem
31 Music	51 Limitation of Malaysian Drama	45 Politics	44 Freelancers	50 FINAS
28 Business Management	14 PROFIMA	13 Content Creators Guilds	6 Minimum Wage	28 Contract
5 Negotiation	13 Improvisation in the industry	8 Welfare	16 Basic needs	53 Role of guilds
49 International market	7 Production crew	12 KWSP	10 Negative Stigma	24 Sustainable wealth
16 Market dictate	23 Market dispute	3 Moral rights	15 Economic rights	7 Lack in Support
4 Education	1 Management Knowledge	21 Future Security	11 Roles by all in the industry	7 Quality of content
15 Work together	15 Production house	13 Multitasking	4 Creative Content	3 Business in Creative Industry
1 Readiness	20 Beijing treaty	1 Rome convention	7	42
1	7	1		

Table 8 suggests the code group discovered from the group of codes discovered in the study.

Table 8: The code groups or categories

Code Groups (CG)	Explanation
CG1	Role of guilds
CG2	Copyright protects the moral and economic rights
CG3	Distinctions of the below and above the line workers.
CG4	Creative studies are feeders to creative industries

4.1. CG1: Role of guilds.

CG1 is basically explaining about the role of guilds that is supposed to be accommodating the needs and welfare of the creative industry stakeholders. All the participants in the focus groups discussion (FGD) and one-to-one interview mentioned the role of the guild that was registered in The Registries of Societies of Malaysia (ROS).

“PROFIMA has been giving out help but most of it does not arrive to the dedicated people. As we all know, PROFIMA is in Gombak. So, during the MCO, these crews will be going back home. So basically, since there were limitations of movement during the MCO, a lot of help was only given within the Gombak district. And not segregated throughout Malaysia. And if let’s say there were accidents happening, insurance only covers for like 3% of the total cost.” Excerpt C5

“There was a situation when we were called to do a show. Like freelancing jobs. There is no black and white to execute the job. And a lot of these creative industry players were being manipulated to not be paid at the end of the day. This is only about their payment or salary; let alone we would want to discuss copyright. This is why we need more agencies or guilds like PROFIMA to help us. Be our voice.” Excerpt C7

“Even though we all are aware of the significant role of PROFIMA, there are times like if problems occur IN our workplace, PROFIMA has no capability or say in helping us to solve the problem due to a lot of bureaucracy that exists within organisations.” Excerpt C6

“If in Malaysia, there are guilds such as PROFIMA that are dedicated to take care of the crew or non-featured players in the creative industry for their well-being. In the copyright act, there is no said act mentioning the welfare of the production workers.”

“Like you mentioned just now.... In Malaysia there are so many guilds that represent so many ideologies. Why can’t these guilds stay in one single guild to be the voice of any stand they want to fight for like how the actors/performers guild there is in the United States. So, if Malaysia is ready to be merged under one voice of a guild, then it is functional for us to be part of the Beijing Treaty which is far more complex and sophisticated. Malaysia’s industry is still not ready.” Excerpt M1

4.2. CG2: Copyright protects moral and economic rights.

The code group above discusses what type of protection that the Copyright Act Malaysia 1987 grants to the authors.

“I can talk about Malaysia's perspective of copyright protection. There are basically 3 types of protection that is granted to the owners of the copyrighted work, aside from moral and economic protection. There are also legal rights too.” Excerpt M1

Since informant M1 is a legal practitioner, he has vast knowledge on copyright protection in the legal perspective. Informant M1 also added that there are many conventions and treaties that are involved in protecting the rights of many stakeholders in the creative industry. However, as being practised and recognised globally is the world Performers and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT) that was adapted by World Intellectual Property Organisation and simultaneously being practised by all the participating countries.

CG3: Distinctions of below and above the line workers.

As the heated focus group discussion (FGD) was being conducted among the participants of C5, C6, C7 and C8, these group of creative industry stakeholders comes from the non-featured or below-the-line workers that was said earlier in the literature review above that they were paid less than the featured workers. Therefore, the participants claimed to be as important a component as the featured workers and their presence also contributes to the success of a copyrighted work.

“This is an issue that I think has been a plague in Malaysia's creative industry. This is because how is a person to measure a worker's salary and their job? Why is it that between each task and jobs assigned even though the workload is almost the same, the payment is different?”

“I would also like to address this matter that I don't understand from the get go. Why is it the celebrities, featured workers so may say, are being paid more than us the technical workers? We also play a significant role in the success of the product we produce.” Excerpt C6

“And dealing or negotiation between the commissioners and the assignee of the job is also uncertain and vague and usually have no contract bound. We need to have that contract so that the people in the industry will not play around and discriminate against us with the value of our work. We want to protect the industry too.” Excerpt C8

“The big players who buys the content protects and appreciates the featured people of the production which are celebrities than to us – the below-the-line workers. Our industry has matured enough, but why do the same issues keep on happening again? The pandemic is long gone, and we have a lot of jobs coming in, but our salary keeps declining.” Excerpt C7

4.3. CG4: Creative studies are feeders to creative industries.

The gig economy has opened many opportunities to the freelance community that works in creative arts professions such as entertainment, media, and musical acts (Walzer,

2020). For these graduates from arts and creative studies to be fully prepared to face the open market, the graduates need to be invested in many skill sets that are beyond their creative specialisation (Walzer, 2020). Walzer (2020) and Markunsen et al. (2008) once stated that the creative economy is 'popular but problematic'.

"In my opinion, Malaysian do not regard the creative industry as a sector that has the potential to generate income. No appreciation towards the industry players. The public wants entertainment, but they don't appreciate the people behind the scenes." Excerpt C8

"Perhaps there are families who would question... Could this industry bring food to the table?" Excerpt C5

"There is a situation in this industry, where Singer A has professional certification from music school, but he/ she is not an influencer, but their fees are particularly higher while Singer B has no related professional certificates, and influencer but people are willing to pay higher than normal rates. Not to mention the distributors would meddle in with creative work and choose featured performers that have more commercial looks and followers on social media compared to real talent. These are the reasons how the industry rates and market get disrupted." Excerpt C7

The code groups (CG) discovered above were later then analysed and two (2) emergent themes. Table 9 states the suggestions of themes that were later discovered from the study conducted that would reflect the flow of the research being done and answers the objective of the research too.

Table 9: Emergent themes (T1 and T2)

Themes (T)	Explanation
T1	There is a significant importance of instilling positive motivation in the creative studies at the young age of graduates in order to produce good quality creative industry practitioners that contribute to the creative economy.
T2	Nurturing inclusivity in protecting the welfare of the creative industry practitioners be it in economic or moral protection be it below-the-line or above-the-line career options is the key to motivation of work and sustainability.

5. Conclusion

From the study conducted above, it is clearly understood that the success of an industry or a sector within the economic sector does not rely on a one person's contribution only. Theme 1 (T1) discusses more on instilling positive reinforcement and feel-good factor towards the students to be part and contribute to the creative industry. The creative industry stakeholders include three (3) clusters which are: content creators, agencies, and distributors (Fariza, 2023). Due to the diversity of stakeholders identified in the creative industry, each of the needs and demands to be able to sustain economically and morally in the industry are different too. As creative industry core business is intangible, it requires intellectual property as its legislative order to protect its products to generate income and wealth in the long run. Intellectual property also feeds on sustainable innovation (Rakova, 2021). However, this is the case of the intellectual property

ecosystem. Let's discuss how the Malaysian government could identify the issue of low wages in the creative industry ecosystem that is no new news ever since the establishment of the audio-visual technology.

If we take a glimpse of the European (EU) countries such as Norway demand and supply of labour according to education towards 2030 (Bjornstad et al., 2010). According to this report, due to globalisation and technological advancement, participating countries of Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) were deemed to witness an acceptable correlation between the demand for labour with higher skills and educational levels (Bjornstad et al., 2010). However, the growth in other countries is not correspondingly growing. It is important that future students who will be part of the job market choose their career prospect wisely so that it meets the demand of the industry. Quoting from a newspaper (Joseph, 2023), an interview with the famous child actress that has now blossomed into one of Malaysia's prominent celebrities in high art film and drama is Sharifah Amani.

Sharifah Amani in an interview stated that the local creative studies students from *Akademi Seni Budaya dan Kebangsaan* (ASWARA) are facing difficulties in getting a place in the local industry. This is happening even worse after the COVID-19 pandemic. Referring to the *Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara* (DIKN) of their first initiative which was to draft and produce a Creative Industry Policy that is comprehensive and as the base for the nation's creative industry development. With the initiative and aspiration that is being brought by the government, DIKN should be able to open more opportunities to the many groups of the creative industry stakeholders that also involves them from the student cluster to be able to sustain and replenish new ideas that aligns with future technology and advancement of legislation. DIKN's action plan also stated that their 1st strategy was to empower the human capital in the creative industry by nurturing expertise, creative studies, and room for creativity. ASWARA itself was the initiative of DIKN.

Theme 2 (T2) discusses on how inclusivity in protecting the welfare of the creative industry practitioners be it in economic or moral protection be it below-the-line or above-the-line career options is the key to motivation of work and sustainability. According to the third (3rd) initiative proposed by DIKN, to manage the welfare of the creative industry players through the '*Tabung Kebajikan Penggiat*'. According to the 10th strategy of DIKN's action plan was to nurture appreciation and positive perception within the community about the image, potential and the future of the creative industry so that it would stand at par with another professional sector.

Focus group discussions conducted with four (4) creative industry practitioners are mainly from the technical and operation of a production work delivering their thoughts onto the real scenario that is happening in the industry. Therefore, their thoughts and opinions do not justify and represent the creative ecosystem in Malaysia as a whole. The study involved participants with a background of degree certificates from the College of Creative Arts, UiTM. The ages of the participants are mostly in the range of 25-30 years old, which indicates they have just recently left school in the last 5 years. According to the [National Centre for Education Statistics \(2012\)](#), the tertiary courses enrolment in the creative and performing art has increased significantly in countries such as the United States with the percentage of 60% from the years of 2000-2011.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The researchers used the research ethics provided by the Research Ethics Committee of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the Declaration of Helsinki.

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Conflict of Interest

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