

The Futures of the Music Industry in the Philippines in 2050: A Causal Layered Analysis

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Abstract

This research explores the potential futures of the music industry in the Philippines in the year 2050 using Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) as the primary methodology. CLA is employed to envision various trajectories for the country's music industry, particularly in the realms of pop music scenes, classical music, music education programs, business, and technological advancements. The study generates plausible scenarios by examining underlying worldviews, social causes, and metaphors that shape the current and future states of the music industry. Through the deconstructed layers, the research identified key trends and drivers of change, allowing for the development of distinct scenarios such as technological renaissance, cultural revival, global fusion, and sustainable harmony. These scenarios aim to inform stakeholders and guide strategic actions to ensure a vibrant and sustainable music ecosystem in the region by 2050.

Key Words: *Futures Research; Philippine Music Industry; Causal Layered Analysis*

1. Introduction

The future of the music industry is at a crucial turning point, driven by the rapid pace of technological innovation, shifts in cultural values, and changes in educational frameworks (Jia, 2021). As global media consumption evolves, it becomes increasingly important not only to recognize but also to proactively respond to these changes in order to ensure the continued vitality and growth of local music industries (Sacdalan & Estranero, n.d.).

In the Philippines, the music industry reflects the country's rich cultural heritage and diverse musical traditions, spanning from indigenous and folk forms to contemporary pop, rock, and hip-hop. However, despite its cultural significance and contributions to national identity, recent research reveals persistent economic challenges for music practitioners. A national music stakeholders survey conducted by the Department of Science and Technology–National Research Council of the Philippines (DOST–NRCP) found that more than 50% of Filipinos employed in the music industry earn less than ₱20,000 per month, an amount that hovers just above the minimum wage in the National Capital Region (DOST–NRCP, 2022). The survey, which involved 700 respondents from music creators, producers, distributors, companies, and organizations across different regions, also showed that 61.1% of those engaged in music creation or related activities hold college degrees and that a majority rely on non-music-related income to support their living expenses due to unstable or insufficient earnings in the sector (DOST–NRCP, 2022). These findings point to a structural challenge where artistic talent does not always translate into sustainable livelihood or financial security.

Although the Philippine Creative Industries Development Act (Republic Act No. 11904) aims to support creative sectors more broadly, music remains subsumed under performing arts and audiovisuals and is not recognized as a standalone creative sector. This has resulted in persistent gaps in representation during policy discussions as well as inadequate identification of the music industry's economic contribution (Republic Act No. 11904, 2022). Preliminary data from the Philippine Statistics Authority further underscore the economic dynamics of creative sectors: the country's creative economy expanded from ₱1.61 trillion in 2022 to ₱1.72 trillion in 2023,

contributing approximately 7.1% of the gross domestic product (GDP) (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2024). Within this larger creative economy, the music sector's reported contribution was ₱18.1 billion, accounting for roughly 8.8% of total creative gross value added (GVA), reflecting its relatively small share of measurable economic output despite its cultural prominence (PSA, 2024).

These socio-economic realities—low average earnings, high educational attainment without adequate industry support, and limited economic recognition—demonstrate the persistent gap between the sector's cultural value and its economic sustainability. When combined with ongoing challenges such as piracy and weak protection of intellectual property rights, these structural vulnerabilities point to an urgent need for coordinated industry support, policy intervention, and strategic development planning led by a centralized music coordinating council (Carroll, 2005; Wikström, 2020).

Aligning the future of the music industry with broader sustainable development goals remains a critical area of inquiry. This research supports several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 4 (Quality Education), which emphasizes the need for music education that equips future artists and professionals with relevant skills; SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), which promotes sustainable careers in music; SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), which highlights the role of technology in digital production and distribution; SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), which recognizes music as a driver of cultural engagement; and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), which underscores the importance of collaboration among government, academia, and industry stakeholders (United Nations, 2015).

Therefore, this study aims to explore and outline potential futures for the Philippine music industry by 2050. It seeks to identify key changes, emerging trends, and critical uncertainties that may shape the evolving music landscape. By proposing practical strategies for adaptation and growth, and by adopting a long-term horizon extending to 2050, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of major trends and potential disruptions, providing a roadmap for stakeholders navigating the future of the music industry in Eastern Visayas and beyond.

2. Review of Related Literature

Technology and production. Music technology has evolved significantly throughout history, starting in prehistoric times with the use of hand-drilled holes in bones to make simple flutes and the creation of stringed instruments like harps and lyres. During the Middle Ages, music notation emerged, allowing for the written record of plainchant melodies. The Renaissance era introduced the printing press, leading to the mass production of music sheets and the faster spread of music. In the Baroque period, the invention of the keyboard, from organs to harpsichords, eventually led to the creation of the piano. The Classical era saw the addition of instruments like trombones, piccolos, contrabassoons, and untuned percussion. The Romantic era further expanded the instrumental palette with saxophones, euphoniums, tubas, and cornets, and marked the beginning of sheet music as a commercial product. The 20th century brought even greater accessibility to music listening with the invention of the gramophone and radio broadcasting, making distribution to the wider public more convenient. The development of sound recording profoundly influenced the popular music genre, facilitating the wide distribution of songs and bands for broader consumption. The advent of computer chips, software, and digital music technology, along with the development of microchips, revolutionized the industry, leading to the digital personal music systems of today, which allow listeners to carry entire music libraries with them anywhere. However, this convenience has also compromised the richness of musical experiences (Tanaka, 2006).

In the Philippine context, since the start of the 21st century, digital technologies have reshaped music promotion, production, and distribution, driving the rise of independent musical practices. Despite the near collapse of the transnational recording industry, Metro Manila's independent music scene has flourished, spanning various genres and demonstrating adaptability to the rapidly changing industry landscape (Schoop, 2017). The growth of independent practices has been supported by widespread broadband internet access, the explosion of social media, and advancements in home recording technology. This shift has often left artists with no choice but to

operate independently, with innovative strategies for music production, distribution, promotion, and financing becoming central to Manila's independent music scene.

Despite these advancements, music technology comes with several disadvantages. Musicians and producers may become overly dependent on software and hardware, potentially diminishing traditional musical skills and creativity (Garavaglia, 2009). The abundance of music production tools has led to a quality vs. easy access dilemma, where high-quality work struggles to stand out. Technologies like auto-tune and quantization can strip away the human authenticity and emotional nuance of music. Piracy and copyright issues have also become significant challenges, as digital distribution has made unauthorized copying and distribution easier. High costs of equipment create barriers for many artists and producers, while the complexity of music technology can be overwhelming for beginners. The rapid pace of technological advancement also leads to frequent updates and investments in new gear. Additionally, the convenience of digital tools can result in overproduction and excessive complexity in music, while the use of pre-recorded tracks in live performances can compromise spontaneity. The environmental impact of producing and disposing of electronic devices contributes to e-waste, negatively affecting environmental health. However, many of these challenges can be mitigated through mindful use and a balance between technology and traditional methods.

On the other hand, music technology offers numerous benefits. Digital tools provide expanded artistic freedom, offering a wide array of sounds and effects that are not possible with traditional instruments (Hosken, 2014). Affordable equipment and at-home studios empower both amateur and professional musicians to create high-quality music without the need for expensive studio rentals. Automation and AI streamline production methods, making processes like editing and mixing more efficient. Technology also enhances audio quality with high-definition recording and advanced sound effects. Digital platforms facilitate global distribution and reach, allowing musicians to connect with audiences worldwide. Innovative performance techniques, such as live sound processing with MIDI controllers, enable real-time adjustments during shows. Online collaboration tools allow musicians and producers to work together remotely, sharing music projects across the globe. Educational software and online tutorials provide accessible resources for learning music theory, composition, and production. Sound design and customization allow musicians to tailor distinctive sounds to their personal preferences. Moreover, low-cost solutions offer affordable options for music production, with regular updates and upgrades improving functionality with minimal cost. These technological advancements have empowered musicians, producers, and listeners alike, reshaping the music industry and enhancing creativity and accessibility.

Economic Factors, Industry practices. Economic trends and industry practices significantly shape the dynamics of the music industry, affecting everything from music production and consumption to the economic viability of a musician's livelihood in the modern era. Musicianship has become a leading profession in today's entertainment industry, where those passionate about music often pursue it as full-time professionals, enthusiastic amateurs, or as a secondary occupation (Altun, 2023). The term "Music Industries" encompasses all the businesses and organizations involved in the creation, production, distribution, and promotion of music, reflecting the industry's dynamic nature, which evolves rapidly with new technologies, digital platforms, and changing consumer behaviors (Williamson & Cloonan, 2007).

Azores (2015) emphasized the importance of offering a Music Business Management course in music performance programs in Philippine colleges and universities. This course would professionalize the entire music industry, treating music performance as both a product—through recordings, compositions, concerts, and musicals—and as a service within the entertainment industry. Despite the rise of technology, many cultural and underground artists in the Philippines lag behind, with unsigned artists and independent practitioners struggling to gain recognition. Most Filipino artists continue to rely on live performances for income, as traditional earning methods remain common, and technological tools are underutilized. To address this, a Filipino artist proposed developing a platform specifically designed to distribute music, which would help unsigned artists reach a broader audience and allow listeners to discover new music. This initiative

would not only benefit artists and business proprietors but also serve as a global promotional platform for Original Pilipino Music (OPM) (Ventayen et al., 2019).

The success of the music industry heavily depends on the career opportunities available to musicians. Grible (2018) noted that musicians of low status often face financial instability and distrust. However, not all musicians struggle financially; some are well-compensated. To thrive in today's global landscape, musicians must create various revenue streams, such as licensing, performing, attracting sponsorships, and selling merchandise. They should also use social media to expand their audience, consider starting a record label or production company, turn fans into customers, and strategically offer free music (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

Artistic ability is crucial for composers, producers, and musicians, but entrepreneurship has become essential for securing income in modern society. While many musicians today identify as musical entrepreneurs, those who started their careers in the late 1960s and 1970s were hesitant to embrace this identity (Cropanzano et al., 2023). Most musicians view entrepreneurship as a necessity rather than a choice, seeing themselves as micro-entrepreneurs driven by creative concerns rather than financial motives (Ellmeier, 2023). Genuine and committed musicians are motivated by the satisfaction of creating music and maintaining collaborative relationships rather than by business strategies, competition, or profit (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

Younger musicians, however, recognize the importance of entrepreneurship and traditional business in contributing to society's welfare and see themselves as musical entrepreneurs without hesitation (Cropanzano et al., 2023). The shifting work environment in the creative industries—marked by autonomy, entrepreneurialism, job insecurity, portfolio careers, and short-term project-based contracts—reflects broader trends in employment relations. However, the impact of these changes on musicians' labor remains uncertain, given that these conditions have long been part of their work practices, though they may have intensified due to the impacts of digitization and disintermediation in the music industry (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

Key economic factors and industry practices in the music industry include streaming platforms, economic inequality, globalization, and the impact of digital technology. Industry practices encompass record labels, royalty systems, distribution channels, marketing and promotions, and ethical considerations.

The Music Sales Revenue from Physical and Digital Sales. Although declining, recorded music still contributes to the income of artists and labels. Streaming platforms like Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube have become primary sources of revenue, but streaming typically generates lower pay-per-play earnings, significantly impacting musicians' income. Many artists struggle to make a living in a world where music is freely available online, and smaller independent artists face difficulties negotiating with music distribution giants like iTunes, Spotify, Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube. Numerous artists have highlighted issues such as unjust compensation and confusing contracts. As the music industry continues transitioning toward online distribution, addressing these challenges and opportunities is essential to ensure a just and healthy environment for both artists and fans (Autio, 2019).

Live performances and touring, such as concerts and festivals, remain major income sources for musicians, often surpassing earnings from recorded music, despite the economic challenges posed by live performances. Merchandise sales, including branded items like t-shirts, posters, and other products, provide an additional revenue stream, especially during live events (Schultz, 2008). The rise of the "gig economy" presents another avenue for financial earnings for musicians, characterized by short-term, project-based work rather than long-term employment. The evolving music industry landscape has made the gig economy a reality for many musicians, replacing the stability of a contract with a record label. Today, musicians must navigate a world where flexibility, adaptability, and diverse income streams are essential for survival. While the gig economy offers flexibility and creative freedom, it also presents significant challenges, including a lack of steady income and benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, or paid leave (Galfalvi, 2024).

As live performances take center stage in the music industry, securing copyrights for recorded music is becoming increasingly difficult. The most complex and ornate aspects of copyright law apply to music, making it more challenging to secure rights for recorded music.

However, licensing music for use in films, commercials, video games, and TV shows can be lucrative for artists, especially as content demand increases (Carroll, 2005).

Classical and Pop Music Scenes. Classical and popular music have significantly shaped the global musical landscape. Classical music, with its roots in Western art music, boasts a rich history encompassing various periods and complex structures like the sonata and symphony (Buenrostro & Cabbab, 2013). In contrast, popular music embodies modernity, appealing to broader audiences. While both genres hold cultural significance, classical music faces critiques of elitism and exclusivity (Bull, 2019).

The Philippine music scene reflects this interplay of tradition and modernity. A blend of indigenous, Spanish, and American influences characterizes Filipino music, creating a unique hybrid (Buenrostro & Cabbab, 2013). While Spanish colonization profoundly impacted certain regions, indigenous traditions persisted. This complex musical heritage laid the groundwork for the development of Philippine popular music.

Popular music in the Philippines is a product of both colonial influences and the nation's quest for identity. Filipino musicians have skillfully blended diverse musical elements to create a distinctive sound, reflecting the country's history, social conditions, and aspirations (Jia, 2021). This hybridization, while challenging to categorize, showcases the resilience and creativity of Filipino musicians in asserting their cultural identity on a global stage.

Cultural Preservation. Music, often referred to as the "language of the soul" (Buenrostro & Cabbab, 2013), is a vital cultural asset that requires preservation. While the Philippines boasts a rich musical heritage, safeguarding it is challenging due to scattered resources and limited preservation efforts. A concerted approach is needed to uncover, preserve, and promote Filipino music. Education plays a pivotal role in cultural preservation. Recent reforms in the Philippine education system, such as the K-12 program and the MATATAG curriculum (Pawilen & Manuel, 2018), offer opportunities to integrate music education. However, the shortage of specialized music educators, especially in regions like Eastern Visayas (Conde-Abanilla, 2021; Mabini, et al., 2022), hinders music education and preservation efforts. Establishing music education programs in state universities, like Leyte Normal University, is crucial to address this gap and nurture future generations of music educators and enthusiasts.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This qualitative futures and foresight inquiry seeks to explore and anticipate the potential trajectories of the Philippine music industry toward the year 2050. To accomplish this, Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), as articulated by Inayatullah (2004), was adopted as the primary methodological framework. CLA extends beyond conventional forecasting approaches by examining complex issues across multiple layers of understanding. These include the litany, which captures surface-level trends and observable phenomena; systemic causes, encompassing social, political, and economic structures; discourses and worldviews, which reflect shared values and assumptions; and myths and metaphors, the deep-seated narratives that shape collective perceptions of the future.

Applying CLA to the Philippine music industry enables a deeper examination of the cultural, social, and economic forces influencing its long-term development. This layered approach facilitates an understanding not only of *what* futures may emerge, but also *why* such futures are likely to unfold. By engaging with the underlying narratives and belief systems that frame industry practices, the analysis reveals key dynamics and tensions shaping the music landscape, particularly in regions such as Eastern Visayas. Through the systematic identification of these forces, multiple future scenarios are generated, each representing a distinct pathway the industry might take by 2050. These scenarios serve not only as plausible visions of the future but also as strategic guides for stakeholders, supporting informed decision-making, targeted interventions, and the pursuit of a more inclusive and sustainable music industry.

3.2 Data Gathering Procedures

Before the data collection phase, preparatory activities focused on building a strong conceptual and contextual foundation for the inquiry. A comprehensive review of related literature was undertaken to examine both the historical development and current conditions of the Philippine music industry. This review included scholarly studies, policy-oriented publications, and industry analyses, allowing key trends, gaps, and debates to be identified. Insights from this phase informed the refinement of the research focus and the development of the interview guide used for key informant interviews. In parallel, relevant documents—such as policy papers, industry reports, and cultural development plans—were identified and organized to ensure alignment between empirical data and existing institutional frameworks.

During the data collection phase, qualitative methods were employed to gather in-depth and context-rich information. Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with purposively selected stakeholders, including music educators, industry practitioners, cultural advocates, and community leaders. These interviews explored participants' experiences, perceptions, and insights regarding the present conditions and future directions of the music industry. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured guides, allowing flexibility to probe emerging ideas while maintaining focus on futures-oriented themes. Concurrently, document analysis was carried out on selected policy documents, industry reports, and cultural plans to triangulate interview data and capture institutional perspectives on music development.

After data collection, all interview transcripts and documentary materials were systematically organized and analyzed using qualitative analytic procedures. Data from interviews and documents were coded and examined to identify recurring patterns, tensions, and narratives relevant to the layered dimensions of the music industry. These findings were then interpreted through the lens of Causal Layered Analysis, enabling the identification of surface-level issues, systemic drivers, dominant worldviews, and underlying myths shaping the industry's future. The synthesis of these layers informed the development of multiple future scenarios, each reflecting alternative pathways for the Philippine music industry toward 2050 and offering strategic insights for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders.

3.3 Data Analysis

Reflexive thematic analysis was employed as the primary analytic approach for examining qualitative data drawn from the literature review, key informant interviews, and document analysis, following the framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021). This approach involved a systematic yet flexible process of familiarization with the data, initial coding, and the iterative development of themes that captured patterned meanings across the dataset. Rather than treating themes as fixed or purely frequency-based, reflexive thematic analysis emphasizes interpretive engagement and the active role of the researcher in constructing meaning. Through this process, underlying issues, emerging trends, and shared narratives relevant to the Philippine music industry were identified, allowing for a deeper examination of the factors shaping its possible futures.

The themes generated through thematic analysis served as the analytic foundation for exploring the multidimensional nature of the music industry and its prospective trajectories toward 2050. These themes highlighted key influences—such as technological change, cultural identity, education, sustainability, and governance—that inform how the industry may evolve over time. To ensure coherence with the study's futures and foresight orientation, the identified themes were subsequently interpreted and organized using Causal Layered Analysis (CLA). This framework enabled the classification of themes across multiple layers of understanding, including surface-level trends (litany), structural and institutional drivers (systemic causes), dominant beliefs and values (worldviews), and deeper metaphors and myths that shape collective imaginaries of the future.

In the later phase of analysis, the layered insights derived from thematic analysis and CLA informed the development and visualization of alternative future scenarios. To support the communication of these potential futures, ChatGPT version 5.2 (Plus subscription) was utilized to generate illustrative images corresponding to the identified scenarios. The use of this generative tool was limited to visual representation and did not influence the interpretation, coding, or thematic development of the qualitative data.

2. Results

CAUSAL LAYERED ANALYSIS

Level one: Litany

Current Trends. At the most surface level, the litany level highlights the observable trends that are currently shaping the music industry in the Philippines. One of the most significant trends is the increasing digitalization of music (Brusila, et.al, 2022). This transformation has fundamentally altered how music is produced, distributed, and consumed. The shift toward digital platforms, particularly streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music, has made music more accessible than ever before. Social media has also played a pivotal role in promoting and distributing music, allowing artists to connect directly with their audiences and bypass traditional gatekeepers. An informant, a young independent music producer from Tacloban City, shared an experience:

"Before, getting your music out there was really tough. You had to know someone in the industry or have a lot of money to promote your songs. But now, with platforms like Spotify and even YouTube, I can upload my music and reach people not just in the Philippines but all over the world. It's amazing how technology has leveled the playing field."

Alongside this digital shift, there has been a noticeable rise in the popularity of Filipino pop (P-pop) and indie music (Placido, et.al, 2022). These genres have gained considerable traction both within the Philippines and internationally, signaling a growing appreciation for local talent. This trend is indicative of a broader movement towards embracing and celebrating Filipino cultural identity through music. However, despite these positive developments, the industry faces significant challenges. One of the most pressing issues is the inconsistent funding and support for music education (Almaden, et.al, 2024). Without adequate resources, music education programs struggle to thrive, limiting the opportunities for young, aspiring musicians to develop their skills. Moreover, music consumption habits are evolving rapidly, with younger audiences increasingly favoring on-demand and mobile access to music. This shift challenges traditional music formats and requires the industry to adapt quickly to these changing preferences.

While the rise of Filipino pop (P-pop) is a notable trend in the Philippine music industry, it has also been significantly shaped by the influence of K-pop (Sacdalan & Estrañero, n.d.). This influence is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, K-pop has inspired a wave of new P-pop groups who adopt similar training systems, production values, and aesthetic styles. This has helped P-pop gain traction both locally and internationally, as it resonates with the existing fanbase of K-pop enthusiasts. However, this heavy influence of K-pop is also perceived as a challenge. Some critics argue that the adoption of K-pop's style has led to a lack of originality and cultural authenticity in P-pop. Instead of creating a distinct Filipino sound, many P-pop acts are seen as emulating their Korean counterparts too closely. This has sparked debates about the identity and future direction of P-pop. An informant, a music producer from Manila, shared their perspective:

"It's great that P-pop is growing, but sometimes it feels like we're just copying K-pop. We need to find our own voice and style, something that's uniquely Filipino. Otherwise, we risk losing our cultural identity in the process."

This perceived issue highlights the broader tension between global influence and local identity within the Philippine music industry. While K-pop has undeniably opened doors for P-pop, there is a growing need for the industry to strike a balance between drawing inspiration from international trends and fostering a unique, culturally grounded P-pop sound.

In recent years, the Philippine music industry has seen a decline in the appreciation for classical music, a trend that poses significant challenges to the preservation and promotion of this genre (Woody & Burns, 2001). While contemporary genres like pop, hip-hop, and P-pop have gained widespread popularity, classical music is increasingly perceived as outdated or elitist, appealing to only a niche audience. This shift in musical preferences is particularly evident among younger generations, who tend to favor more modern and accessible music forms. One informant, a music educator, shared a concerns:

"It's disheartening to see how classical music is being overshadowed by more popular genres. Many young people don't even have the chance to be exposed to"

classical music, let alone appreciate it. Without proper education and exposure, we're at risk of losing a vital part of our cultural heritage."

This declining interest is exacerbated by the limited presence of classical music in mainstream media, a lack of funding for classical music education, and fewer opportunities for live performances and public engagement. As a result, the classical music community struggles to attract new audiences and sustain interest in this genre. The lesser appreciation for classical music not only threatens the survival of this art form but also limits the diversity and richness of the Philippine music landscape.

Perceived Issues. Alongside the trends in digitalization and the rise of Filipino pop (P-pop) and indie music, several perceived issues at the surface level are impacting the music industry. A significant concern is the lack of infrastructure for music production (Schoop, 2017), especially in regions outside of major urban centers like Metro Manila. This infrastructural gap hinders the development and promotion of local talent, particularly in less developed regions such as Eastern Visayas. Without adequate recording studios, performance venues, and support services, local artists find it challenging to produce and distribute their music on a broader scale. An informant from Eastern Visayas, an emerging musician, expressed frustration with the current situation:

"We have so much talent here, but the lack of facilities is holding us back. There aren't enough studios or places where we can perform for a cheap price. Many of us have to travel to major cities just to record or get noticed, and that's not always possible."

Additionally, there is limited access to quality music education across the country (Chipso, 2015). This lack of access affects the overall development of musical skills and knowledge among aspiring musicians. In many regions, schools and institutions lack the resources to provide comprehensive music education, further widening the gap between urban and rural areas in terms of musical development.

Another critical issue based on the interview conducted is the underrepresentation of provinces in the national music scene. Despite its rich musical traditions and the emerging talent within the region, aspiring musicians from the provinces often struggle to gain recognition and support at the national level. This underrepresentation limits the opportunities for local artists to showcase their work and contribute to the broader Philippine music landscape.

Level two: Systemic Causes

Economic Factors. At the systemic level, several underlying causes contribute to the challenges faced by the music industry in Eastern Visayas. Economic disparities across regions are a significant factor. These disparities result in uneven access to resources and opportunities for musicians, particularly in less developed areas (Ventayen, et.al, 2019). The limited investment in cultural industries further exacerbates this issue. Often, funding and resources are allocated to more immediate economic concerns, leaving the arts and cultural sectors underfunded and unsupported.

A local politician from Eastern Visayas, who has advocated for increased cultural investment, shared their perspective:

"Our region has immense cultural potential, but without the necessary funding and infrastructure, our artists are left behind. It's a tough decision because we have to prioritize essential services like health and education, but that often means the arts don't get the support they need. We need a more balanced approach to ensure that our cultural heritage and creative industries can thrive alongside economic development."

This lack of investment not only stifles the growth of local music scenes but also hinders the ability of emerging artists to gain visibility and support on a national scale. Without adequate economic backing, the music industry struggles to develop the necessary infrastructure to nurture talent and sustain vibrant cultural expressions.

Technological Developments. Technological advancements play a crucial role in shaping the future of the music industry, presenting both opportunities and challenges (Wikström, 2020). Innovations in music production and distribution technologies have revolutionized how music is created and shared. Artists can now produce high-quality work from virtually anywhere and reach global audiences through digital platforms. The rise of streaming services has significantly altered music consumption patterns, providing artists with new avenues to distribute their music and connect with fans. Moreover, the potential for virtual reality (VR) concerts represents an emerging

trend that could transform live music experiences. VR concerts offer immersive and interactive performances that transcend geographical limitations, allowing fans from around the world to attend live events virtually.

However, these technological developments also pose challenges, particularly for regions like Eastern Visayas that may lack the necessary infrastructure and digital literacy to fully leverage these advancements. A local music teacher from Eastern Visayas expressed concern about these disparities:

"While technology opens up so many possibilities, many of our students don't have access to the latest tools or even reliable internet. It's frustrating because they have the talent, but without the right resources, they can't fully participate in the digital music world. We need more support to bridge this gap, so our local artists can compete on equal footing with those from more developed areas."

This lack of access to technology and digital literacy could further widen the gap between urban and rural music scenes, limiting the ability of musicians in regions like Eastern Visayas to benefit from the opportunities that technological advancements offer.

Educational Frameworks. The systemic issues within the educational frameworks for music in the Philippines further contribute to the challenges faced by the industry (Wang, 2024). There are significant gaps in the music education curricula, which often do not adequately prepare students for the demands of a rapidly evolving music landscape. These gaps are compounded by a lack of resources, such as modern instruments, technology, and learning materials, which are essential for a comprehensive music education. Additionally, there is a shortage of trained music educators who can effectively teach and inspire the next generation of musicians. Many schools and institutions struggle to attract and retain qualified music teachers, particularly in rural areas. A music teacher from a rural area in Eastern Visayas shared their experience:

"It's a constant struggle to provide our students with the education they deserve. We often lack even the most basic instruments, and there's little access to the technology that's becoming so crucial in modern music. Many of us teachers do our best, but without adequate support and resources, it's hard to inspire students or prepare them for the realities of today's music industry. We need more investment in both training for educators and the resources necessary to teach effectively."

This deficiency in music education not only limits the development of musical talent but also affects the broader cultural appreciation and understanding of music within society. Without a solid educational foundation, the potential for innovation and growth within the music industry is severely hampered.

Level three: Discourses & Worldviews

Cultural Identity. At the worldview level, the discourse surrounding the music industry in the Philippines is deeply intertwined with the local region's rich musical heritage (Castro, 2001). There is a strong cultural identity rooted in traditional music, including indigenous songs, folk music, and other forms that have been passed down through generations. The preservation and promotion of these local music traditions are seen as vital to maintaining the region's unique cultural character. This worldview emphasizes the importance of safeguarding these traditions against the homogenizing forces of globalization and modernity, which often overshadow regional and indigenous musical forms. A local music teacher, who has dedicated years to teaching traditional music, shared their perspective:

"Our music is more than just art; it's the heartbeat of our community. Teaching these songs to the younger generation is not just about preserving a tradition—it's about keeping our identity alive. But with the influence of global pop culture, it's becoming harder to engage students with our local music. There's a real fear that these beautiful traditions could be lost if we don't actively work to keep them relevant and cherished."

The community's sense of pride in its musical heritage fuels efforts to ensure that these traditions continue to thrive and are celebrated by future generations. This pride is reflected in the various cultural events, festivals, and performances that take place throughout the region, showcasing the richness and diversity of Eastern Visayas' musical landscape.

Community Perspectives. The perspectives of the community in Eastern Visayas, Philippines are shaped by a vision of a thriving music scene that serves as both a means of cultural

expression and a catalyst for economic development. There is a widespread belief that by fostering a vibrant local music industry, the region can not only preserve its cultural heritage but also create opportunities for economic growth. This includes generating income for local musicians, creating jobs in related industries, and attracting tourism through music festivals and cultural events. The community views music as more than just entertainment; it is seen as a powerful tool for social cohesion, identity formation, and economic resilience. A local politician expressed this vision during an interview:

"Our region is rich in cultural heritage, and music is at the core of that. We see the potential for music not only to preserve our traditions but also to drive economic growth. By supporting our local musicians and creating platforms for them to showcase their talents, we can attract visitors, create jobs, and strengthen our community's identity."

By building a robust music ecosystem, the community hopes to strengthen its cultural and economic foundations, ensuring a sustainable future for the region. The desire to achieve this vision is driven by the recognition that a strong cultural sector can contribute significantly to the region's overall development and well-being.

Industry Narratives. Within the broader industry narratives, there is a prevailing belief in the transformative power of technology to democratize music creation and access (Burkart, 2012). This narrative is based on the idea that advancements in technology, such as digital production tools, streaming platforms, and virtual reality, can break down barriers that traditionally limited who could create, distribute, and enjoy music. Technology is seen as a great equalizer, providing even the most remote or underfunded artists with the tools to reach global audiences and participate in the broader music industry. A local music studio businessman shared his insights on this topic:

"Technology has completely changed the game for us. Before, you needed a lot of money to produce a decent track or get your music out there. Now, with the right software and an internet connection, anyone can create professional-quality music and share it with the world. But it's not just about the tools—it's about knowing how to use them. We need to invest in educating our local talent so they can fully harness these technologies. The potential is huge, but we have to make sure our community is equipped to take advantage of it."

This worldview is optimistic about the potential of technology to revolutionize the music industry, making it more inclusive and accessible to all, regardless of geographic or economic constraints. However, it also acknowledges the challenges that come with technological integration, particularly the need for education and infrastructure to fully realize its potential. The industry narrative is one of both hope and caution, recognizing that while technology can offer new opportunities, it also requires careful planning and investment to ensure that these opportunities are available to everyone.

Level four: Myths & Nature

"Manila, Manila". A prevailing myth within the Philippine music industry is the belief that true musical talent and innovation are exclusive to major urban centers like Manila. This myth perpetuates the idea that the most creative and influential artists, as well as the most cutting-edge musical developments, can only emerge from these large cities. As a result, regions like Eastern Visayas are often overlooked or undervalued, despite their rich musical traditions and the talent that exists within their communities. A local music studio businessman shared his thoughts on this issue:

"It's frustrating to see so much talent here in Eastern Visayas, but it feels like we're always in the shadow of Manila. People think that just because we're not in the capital, we can't produce anything worth listening to. That's simply not true. We've got incredible artists who are just as capable as those in the big cities, but they don't get the same opportunities or recognition. It's time we change that narrative and show the rest of the country what we're capable of."

This myth contributes to the marginalization of regional music scenes, reinforcing a centralization of cultural production and recognition in the country's capital. By overshadowing the contributions of regions like Eastern Visayas, this myth limits the diversity of the national music landscape and stifles the full range of creative expression across the country. Challenging

this myth is essential for ensuring that the entire nation's musical potential is recognized and nurtured, allowing for a more inclusive and representative Philippine music industry.

3. Discussions

The analysis of the Philippine music industry using the Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) framework unveils a nuanced and interconnected reality shaped by visible trends, underlying systemic issues, dominant discourses, and entrenched myths (figure 1). On the surface, the digitalization of music and the emergence of P-pop have brought significant advancements, democratizing access to music and allowing Filipino artists to gain international recognition. However, these developments are not uniformly beneficial across the country, particularly in regions like Eastern Visayas, where economic disparities, technological limitations, and inadequacies in music education create substantial barriers. These systemic issues not only stifle the growth of local talent but also perpetuate a cycle of marginalization, where regional music scenes struggle to gain visibility and influence.

Beneath these challenges lies a critical discourse on cultural identity and the role of local traditions in the national music narrative. In Eastern Visayas, there is a strong emphasis on preserving and promoting indigenous music forms, which are seen as essential to the region's cultural integrity and diversity. This perspective contrasts with the dominant industry narrative, which often prioritizes commercially viable genres like P-pop over traditional and regional music. The community in Eastern Visayas views the development of a robust local music industry as a dual-purpose endeavor: preserving cultural heritage and stimulating economic growth. However, their efforts are consistently undermined by a pervasive myth that true musical talent and innovation can only emerge from major urban centers like Manila. This myth not only marginalizes regional artists but also reinforces the centralization of cultural production, limiting the diversity of the Philippine music landscape.

To create a more inclusive and representative music industry, it is crucial to address these systemic barriers through targeted investments in cultural industries, enhanced access to modern technology, and comprehensive music education reforms. By dismantling the myth of urban exclusivity in musical talent and fostering a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, the Philippines can fully embrace the rich tapestry of its diverse musical traditions. This transformation would not only invigorate the regional music scenes but also contribute to a more vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive national music industry that celebrates the full spectrum of Filipino cultural expression.

By 2050, the Philippine music industry could evolve in several ways, shaped by how the country addresses current challenges and leverages emerging opportunities.

Technological Renaissance. By 2050, the Philippine music industry is dominated by technological advancements (figure 1). Artificial intelligence aids in music composition and production, while virtual and augmented reality create immersive concert experiences. High-speed internet connectivity in every corner of the country enables remote collaboration and global reach for Filipino musicians. Music education is revolutionized with digital platforms, making learning accessible to everyone. This scenario sees the Philippines as a global leader in music technology.



Figure 1. Technological Renaissance

Cultural Revival. In this scenario, there is a strong resurgence of Filipino traditional music and instruments. Government initiatives and private efforts support the documentation and preservation of indigenous musical heritage. Music education heavily incorporates traditional elements, fostering a new generation of musicians deeply rooted in Filipino culture. The music industry becomes a platform for cultural identity and nation-building, with artists showcasing the country’s rich musical tapestry to the world.



Figure 2. Cultural Revival

Global Fusion. By 2050, the Philippine music scene is a melting pot of diverse influences. Filipino artists seamlessly blend traditional sounds with contemporary genres, creating a unique musical identity. Collaboration with international musicians becomes commonplace, resulting in a rich exchange of musical ideas. The Philippines emerges as a global music hub, attracting tourists and music enthusiasts from around the world.



Figure 3. Global Fusion

Sustainable Harmony. This scenario focuses on the environmental and social impact of the music industry. Sustainable practices are adopted throughout the value chain, from eco-friendly instruments to energy-efficient concert venues. The industry prioritizes fair labor practices and supports local communities. Music becomes a tool for promoting environmental awareness and social change, with artists using their platform to advocate for sustainability.



Figure 4. Sustainable Harmony

4. Conclusions

The Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) of the Philippine music industry provides insight into its current state, highlighting advancements and ongoing challenges. It points to the need for systemic changes to create a more inclusive musical landscape. The rise of streaming services and social media has transformed music production, distribution, and consumption in the Philippines, boosting recognition for Filipino pop (P-pop) and indie music and enhancing appreciation for Filipino cultural identity. Despite these trends, significant challenges persist in ensuring equitable access to resources across regions, with areas like Eastern Visayas struggling due to economic disparities, inadequate infrastructure, and limited investment in cultural industries. Although technology offers new opportunities for music creation and distribution, these benefits are unevenly shared. Addressing these disparities is essential for achieving a balanced and inclusive music industry, with education playing a critical role in shaping its future.

Gaps in music education, along with a lack of resources and trained educators, restrict musical talent development, especially in rural areas. These systemic barriers not only hinder individual musicians but also affect cultural appreciation of music. Strengthening music education frameworks is vital for nurturing future musicians and fostering industry innovation. The Philippines' rich musical heritage, including indigenous songs and folk music, is essential to its cultural identity, making preservation and promotion crucial for diversity in the national music scene. The community's vision of a vibrant local music scene that supports cultural preservation and economic development highlights music's role in social cohesion. The misconception that true musical talent is exclusive to major urban centers like Manila marginalizes regional music scenes and limits diversity. Challenging these narratives to recognize the potential of regions like Eastern Visayas can create a more equitable and inclusive music industry that celebrates the country's diverse cultural traditions.

The future of the Philippine music industry depends on addressing the systemic causes that hinder the development of regional music scenes, improving access to technology, and strengthening music education. By challenging myths that centralize cultural production, the Philippines can unlock the full potential of its diverse musical traditions, creating a vibrant and inclusive industry for the future.

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