

Hip-Hop and Marginality in Eastern Indonesia

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines how hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia represents marginality, challenges dominant narratives, and functions as a site of meaning-making. Using critical discourse analysis of three songs—"Koruptor" by HHLF, "Mama" by Majelis Lida Berduri, and "#SavePapua" by Ecko Show—the study draws on Foucault's biopolitics and Baudrillard's hyperreality. The findings reveal three distinct discursive strategies. First, the metaphor of "rats" exposes corruption as biopolitical extraction (HHLF). Second, maternal resistance and ecological imagery challenge neocolonial extractivism (Majelis Lida Berduri). Third, hyperreal deconstruction and hashtag activism contest racial discrimination and conditional belonging (Ecko Show). This study demonstrates how global cultural forms such as hip-hop are localized as counter-discursive practices that contest power, representation, and identity in marginalized communities, contributing to a nuanced understanding of hip-hop not merely as resistance but as an active site of discursive production.

Keywords: hip-hop; Eastern Indonesia; marginality; discourse; representation.

INTRODUCTION

In the decades since its emergence from African American and Afro-Caribbean communities in 1970s urban spaces, hip-hop has developed into a global cultural phenomenon that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. More than a musical genre, hip-hop functions as a cultural practice through which marginalized communities articulate identity, negotiate power, and engage in social critique (1). Across diverse contexts, hip-hop has been widely recognized as a medium of resistance, enabling alternative voices to challenge dominant structures and narratives. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 10 (Reduce Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace,

Justice, and Strong Institutions). Understanding how marginalized communities articulate their experiences through cultural production such as hip-hop becomes crucial for addressing persistent disparities between centers and peripheries (26). Studies from postcolonial contexts, such as Nigeria, have shown how hip-hop operates as an alternative tool for social activism against political marginalization (2).

However, existing scholarship has largely focused on Western and urban contexts, often overlooking how hip-hop operates in geographically peripheral and socio-politically marginalized regions. In Southeast Asia, and Indonesia in particular, studies have shown that youth actively appropriate hip-hop to construct

identity and negotiate cultural belonging in rapidly changing socio-digital environments (3). More recent work has mapped the broader political landscape of Indonesian hip-hop, revealing how the genre operates as a site of ideological contestation (4,5). Yet, these studies tend to privilege urban centers, leaving regions such as Eastern Indonesia underexplored despite their distinct socio-political and cultural dynamics. Comparative studies from other Southeast Asian contexts, such as the Philippines, have demonstrated how hip-hop on digital platforms articulates the experiences of marginalized urban communities (6).

Marginality is not merely a material condition but also a discursively produced one, a process particularly visible in how Eastern Indonesia is represented in national discourse. Eastern Indonesia occupies a unique position within national discourse, not only as a geographically peripheral region but also as a site of persistent symbolic marginalization. Regions such as Papua and Nusa Tenggara are frequently framed through narratives of underdevelopment, conflict, and cultural otherness, which contribute to a form of collective stigma that extends beyond material conditions (7,8). This stigma is not abstract but visible in everyday discourse. For instance, public and media narratives in Indonesia often associate Eastern regions with terms such as “daerah tertinggal” (underdeveloped regions), “rawan konflik” (conflict-prone areas), or “butuh pembangunan” (in need of development), which implicitly position these regions as lacking, problematic, or incomplete in relation to the national “center.” Such repeated framings do not merely describe conditions but actively construct a hierarchical imagination of the nation in which Eastern Indonesia is continuously positioned as “the other.”

To analyze how such discursive marginalization operates and how it is contested, this study draws on Michel Foucault's concept of discourse and power/knowledge, which views representations not as neutral reflections but as systems that produce what is accepted as 'truth' (9,10). Foucault's later work on biopolitics further

illuminates how power regulates life through the management of resources and populations, a concept particularly relevant to understanding systemic marginalization (11). Complementing this, Jean Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality (1994) helps explain how mediated images, like the stigmatizing labels above, can override lived realities through repetition (12). The application of these postmodern frameworks to hip-hop has been fruitfully explored in other peripheral context, such as Brazil, where scholars have analyzed rep as a form of resistant discursive practice and insurgent communication from periphery (13,14,15). Within this framework, hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia functions not as resistant from an ‘outside’ but as a counter-discourse that reworks dominant narratives from within.

Within this context, hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia emerges as a significant cultural site for examining how such discourses are negotiated and contested. Rather than functioning solely as artistic expression, hip-hop operates as a discursive practice through which marginalized communities articulate lived experiences, challenge imposed identities, and reconfigure dominant representations. Through linguistic strategies, metaphorical constructions, and narrative positioning, artists do not simply reflect marginality but actively engage in redefining its meaning. This understanding is reinforced by critical hip-hop language pedagogies, which emphasize how hip-hop challenges dominant linguistic hierarchies and epistemic norms (16).

This study offers a novel contribution by shifting the focus from viewing hip-hop as merely a form of resistance to understanding it as a site of discursive production in which marginality itself is constructed, contested, and transformed. While previous studies have examined hip-hop in Indonesia primarily in urban or identity-based contexts, this research specifically foregrounds Eastern Indonesia as a discursive space shaped by collective stigma and mediated representation.

This study asks: (1) How do Eastern Indonesian hip-hop artists discursively construct marginality through linguistic and metaphorical strategies? (2)

In what ways do these practices challenge dominant national representations and hyperreal narratives of the region? Methodologically, the study employs critical discourse analysis of lyrics from selected hip-hop acts in Eastern Indonesia, including HHLF's 'Koruptor,' Majelis Lida Berduri's dialect-focused tracks, and Ecko Show's '#SavePapua.' This article argues that hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia functions as a discursive practice that not only expresses resistance but actively deconstructs dominant narratives and mediated representations of marginality, demonstrating that marginality is not a fixed condition but a product of power-laden discourse and hyperreal representations continuously contested and reconfigured through hip-hop practices.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine how hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia constructs and contests meanings of marginality through discourse and representation. Hip-hop lyrics are treated as cultural texts through which social realities are articulated and negotiated (17).

Theoretical Framework

The analysis is grounded in two complementary postmodern perspectives. Drawing on Michel Foucault's concept of discourse and power/knowledge (9,10), the study examines how dominant narratives about Eastern Indonesia are constructed and challenged through hip-hop lyrics as forms of counter-discourse. Complementing this, Jean Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality (1994) is employed to analyze how representations of Eastern Indonesia may operate as mediated constructs that shape perception.

Source of the Data

The data for this study consist of a purposively selected corpus of three hip-hop songs produced by artists and collectives associated with Eastern Indonesia. The selection includes: (1) one song by Hip Hop Lembata Foundation (HHLF) with title "Koruptor" and (2) one song by Majelis Lida Berduri with title "Mama-Mama Perlawanan", and (3) one song involving Ecko Show in collaboration with Eastern Indonesian rappers, "#SavePapua". These songs were selected based on their thematic relevance to issues of marginality, identity, and social critique, as well as their circulation within public and digital platforms such as Spotify.

Artist/Collective	Song Title(s)	Region	Platform
Hip Hop Lembata Foundation (HHLF)	Koruptor	East Nusa Tenggara	YouTube/Spotify
Majelis Lida Berduri	Mama-Mama Perlawanan	Sumatra"Negara	YouTube/Spotify
Ecko Show (feat. Eastern Indonesian rappers)	#SavePapua	Papua	YouTube/Spotify

Table 1 Corpus Data of the songs

The use of purposive sampling allows the study to focus on texts that are particularly rich in discursive content related to the research questions (17). Rather than aiming for

representativeness in a statistical sense, the selection prioritizes analytical depth and relevance, which is consistent with qualitative discourse analysis (20).

The inclusion of Hip Hop Lembata Foundation (HHLF) is significant due to its strong engagement with local socio-political issues, particularly corruption, inequality, and regional marginalization. As a collective rooted in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), HHLF's works provide insight into how marginality is articulated from within a localized socio-cultural context, making them highly relevant for examining discursive constructions of inequality. The song "Koruptor" directly engages with issues central to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), particularly target 16.5 which calls for substantial reduction of corruption and bribery in all their forms (26). By exposing how corruption perpetuates regional marginalization, HHLF's lyrics give voice to communities whose experiences of injustice might otherwise remain invisible in mainstream development discourse.

Majelis Lidah Berduri is included in the corpus because of its distinctive use of regional language and cultural references, particularly those associated with Flores and broader NTT contexts. The incorporation of local dialects and everyday expressions functions not only as a marker of identity but also as a discursive strategy that challenges linguistic and cultural centralization. As Yanko (4) has documented, Majelis Lidah Berduri's use of Eastern Indonesian dialect represents a form of "Politik rakat" that actively resists derogatory stereotypes and asserts regional pride. Majelis Lidah Berduri, particularly important for analyzing how meaning is produced and negotiated at the intersection of language, culture, and marginality.

Meanwhile, Ecko Show is included due to his broader national visibility and frequent collaborations with Eastern Indonesian artists. His work, particularly in songs addressing Papua, reflects how issues of marginality are mediated and circulated within wider audiences. The inclusion of Ecko Show allows the study to examine how discourses about Eastern Indonesia operate not only at the local level but also within national and digital public spheres, where representations are amplified and contested.

Taken together, this corpus reflects a range of positions, from locally grounded voices to more widely mediated representations, allowing the study to capture the complexity of how marginality is constructed, challenged, and negotiated across different discursive contexts.

Analytical Procedures

The analysis is grounded in critical discourse analysis (CDA) as developed by Fairclough (21), which focuses on how discourse shapes social relations, power structures, and system of knowledge. CDA is particularly suitable for examining how marginality is discursively constructed, as it attends to the linguistic and rhetorical strategies through which social identities and power relations are produced and contested. Recent applications of CDA to hip-hop have demonstrated its effectiveness in uncovering how artists subvert dominant discourses through lyrical strategies (22,23).

The analytical procedure follows a multi-stage interpretative approach involving close reading, thematic coding, and discursive interpretation (20,24). Key linguistic features, metaphors. And narrative patterns are identified and analyzed to uncover how meanings of marginality are constructed, contested, and transformed. The analytical process consists of four stages: (1) close reading and transcription of lyrics; (2) initial thematic coding to identify recurring themes, metaphors, and linguistic strategies; (3) discursive interpretation through the lens of Foucault's power/knowledge and Baudrillard's hyperreality; and (4) synthesis and theoretical triangulation.

To ensure analytical rigor, the study applies theoretical triangulation and provides detailed interpretation of the data, allowing for a deeper understanding of hip-hop as a site of discursive negotiation (17,26).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Corpus

This study analyzed three hip-hop songs produced by artists and collectives associated with Eastern Indonesia: "Koruptor" by Hip-Hop Lembata Foundation (HHLF) from East Nusa Tenggara, "Mama-Mama Perlawanan" by Majelis

Lidah Berduri from Flores, and “ #SavePapua” by Ecko Show featuring Eastern Indonesian rappers. These songs were selected based on their

thematic relevance to issues of marginality, identity, and social critique, as outlined in the methodology.

Table 1 presents an overview of the corpus.

Code	Artist	Song Title	Region	Key Theme
HHLF - 01	Hip-Hop Lembata Foundation (HHLF)	“Koruptor”	East Nusa Tenggara	Anti-Corruption, regional marginal
MUK - 01	Majelis Lidah Berduri	“Mama-Mama Perlawanan”	Flore, NTT	Local identity, linguistic pride
ECK – 01	Ecko Show (ft Eastern Indonesian Rappers)	“#SavePapua”	Papua	Media representation, injustice.

The analysis proceeds in three stages. First, finding are presented for each song in terms of the linguistic, and discursive strategies employed. Second, these findings are interpreted through the theoretical frameworks of Foucault and Baudrillard. Third, the research questions are explicitly answered.

Findings: Discursive Strategies in Easterns Indonesia Hip-Hop

This section presents the empirical findings from the lyrical analysis, organized by the dominant discursive strategy observed in each song.

Dehumanizing Metaphor: The Case of “Koruptor”

The analysis of “Koruptor” by HHLF reveals metaphor as a central discursive strategy in constructing marginality. The song repeatedly uses the team “tikus” (rats) to describe corrupt officials, as seen tn the following excerpt:

Table 2: Linguistic Strategies in HHLF-01 "Koruptor"

The original line	English translation	Linguistic Strategy	Discursive Function
“Koruptor itu tikus berdasi”	“Corruptors are rats in ties”	Dehumanizing metaphor	Positions corruptors as parasitic and destructive
“Makana uang rakyat tiap hari”	“Feeding on people’s money everyday”	Consumption imagery	Constructs corruption as extraction from the periphery.

At the surface level, this metaphor functions as moral condemnation, dehumanising corrupt elites by associating them with parasitic and destructive animals. However, at a deeper level, this metaphor participates in a broader discursive construction of power relations.

The metaphor of “rats” thus does more than insult; it exposes a system in which political and economic elites sustain themselves by extracting

value from already marginalised communities. The repeated imagery of consumption (“makan uang rakyat”) reflects a biopolitical condition in which the survival of the powerful depends on the deprivation of the periphery.

Furthermore, the metaphor simplifies complex structural inequalities into a morally legible narrative, making invisible systems of governance appear as identifiable enemies. In doing so, the

song constructs a form of “discursive truth” that shapes how marginality is understood, not as accidental, but as produced through exploitative power relations.

Linguistic Resistance: The Case of Majelis Lidah Berduri

In contrast to HHLF’s overt political critique, Majelis Lidah Berduri foregrounds marginality

through direct political critique and the symbolic figure of maternal resistance. The song “Mama-Mama Perlawanan” employs regional dialects and localized expressions that depart from standardized Indonesian. As a group originating from Mamasa, West Sulawesi, Majelis Lidah Berduri articulates a peripheral voice that challenges the extractive logic of the postcolonial state.

Table 3: Linguistic Strategies in MUK-01 "Mama-Mama Perlawanan"

The original line	English Translation	Linguistic Strategy	Discursive Function
“Negara terlalu Belanda”	“The state is too Dutch”	Neocolonial critique	Exposes continuity of extractive regimes.
“Di depan mata bulldoser, di depan mata mesin monster”	“Before the bulldozer’s eyes, before the monster machine’s eyes”	Visual imagery of extractive violence	Constructs marginality as immediately material violence.
“Gunung jadi lubang, sajaratun tumbang, bumi jadi ilang”	“Mountains become holes, trees fall, earth becomes a grave”	Ecological destruction imagery	Constructs marginality as violence against land
“Maka mama merajut siang sengkabut menganyami berontak”	“So mother knits in the afternoon chaos, weaving rebellion”	Maternal resistance + metaphor	Repositions periphery as active agent of resistance.
“Mama bertahan, mama melawan, mama membangkang”	“Mother survives, mother fights, mother defies”	Triadic repetition of resistance.	Constructs multi-dimensional resistance.

The critique of neocolonialism from the opening line “Negara terlalu Belanda” is a powerful accusation that the postcolonial Indonesian state has not broken with the extractive logic of Dutch colonialism. This reframes marginality not as a condition of underdevelopment but as a continuation of colonial extraction under new management.

The visualization of extractive violence can be seen from the imagery of “bulldoser” and “mesin monster” grounds abstract critique in material reality. Unlike HHLF’s metaphorical rats, Majelis Lidah berduri uses hyper-realistic imagery to expose how marginality is physically produced: “gunung jadi lubang, sajaratun tumbang....” . This ecological destruction imagery constructs

marginality as violence against land, nature, and the very material basis of life.

The maternal figure as agent of resistance shows from the repeated invocation of “Mama” who survives, fights, and defies repositions the periphery. The mother is not a victim awaiting rescue but an active agent who knits in the afternoon chaos, weaving rebellion. This maternal resistance challenges the hyperreal representation of Eastern Indonesian communities as passive, deficient, or in need of development.

The closing lines “Mama merajut dan menganyam kemungkinan” as the construction of alternative futures. “Mama mama tak lekang, selamanya tak lekang” constructs hope and futurity from within the periphery. Unlike the

despair that dominant narratives often assign to marginalised communities, “Mama” asserts durability, resilience, and the capacity for world-building from below.

Deconstructing Hyperreality: Hip-Hop and the Representation of Papua

The analysis of “#SavePapua” by Ecko Show featuring Lil Zi, Epo D’Fenomeno, and Jacson Zeran reveals the most explicitly political

discourse among the three songs in this corpus. Unlike HHLEF’s metaphorical critique of corruption or Majelis Lida Berduri’s maternal resistance to extractive violence, “#SavePapua” operates simultaneously as a critique of racial discrimination, a demand for recognition, and a negotiation with national identity. Table 4 presents the key discursive strategies identified in the song

Table 4: Presents the key discursive strategies identified in the song

The original line	English translation	Linguistic strategy	Discursive function
"Cendrawasih jadi singa / Bila harga diri ku diinjak"	"The bird of paradise becomes a lion / When my dignity is trampled"	Transformative metaphor	Rejects passive representation; asserts capacity for resistance
"Rasis buat tong bertindak"	"Racism makes us act"	Causal statement	Constructs resistance as response to structural racism
"Perlakukan seperti binatang dalam negeri"	"Treated like animals in our own country"	Exposure of dehumanization	Reveals internal exclusion within the nation
"Bangsa yang kuat sekarang jadi / Anak kandung dan tiri"	"A strong nation now becomes / Legitimate and stepchildren"	Metaphor of national betrayal	Exposes gap between national rhetoric and practice
"Ye lima puluh tahun yang lalu / Mereka datang atas nama nafsu dan jadi benalu"	"Fifty years ago / They came in the name of lust and became parasites"	Historical critique	Traces marginality to colonial origins
"Setelah tanah kami di garuk dan nyaris habis"	"After our land was scratched and nearly depleted"	Imagery of extractive violence	Constructs marginality as material depletion
"Indonesia kah kami ini?"	"Are we Indonesia?"	Rhetorical question of belonging	Challenges terms of national belonging

The metaphor to reject passive representations of Papua is the most striking element of the song, as the lyrics “Cendrawasih jadi singa / Bila harga diriku diinjak”. At the surface level, this metaphor invokes the cendrawasih (with means bird of paradise), a symbol of Papua’s exotic. Beauty frequently used in tourism and development discourse. However, by transforming this exotic bird into a lion capable of anger and resistance, the song refuses the representation of Papuans as

passive or docile subjects. The conditional clause “bila harga diriku diinjak” constructs Papuan resistance not as inherent aggression but as a response to structural racism and humiliation.

The line “Perlakukan seperti binatang dalam negeri” exposes the dehumanisation at the heart of racial discrimination. Being treated as foreign or subhuman within one’s own nation. The phrase “dalam negeri” emphasises that this

dehumanisation occurs not at the border but at the heart of the nation-state

The gap between national rhetoric and lived reality is exposed in the lyric “Bangsa yang kuat sekarang jadi, anak kandung dan tiri”. This metaphor of national betrayal constructs the nation as a family that has failed its own children. The distinction between “anak kandung” and “anak tiri” captures the conditional nature of Papuan belonging: recognized in the name but treated as inferior in practice.

The most powerful moment in the song is the rhetorical question posed to the nation, “Indonesia kah kami ini?” This question is not a declaration of separatism but an accusation. It exposes the gap between the hyperreal image of a unified nation and the lived reality of racial discrimination. The repetition of this question insists on an answer that the nation has failed to provide.

Finally, the chorus operates as a form of digital counter-discourse, “#SavePapua / Stop rasis untuk Papua / Katong basudara semua”. The hashtag functions simultaneously as a political demand, a call to solidarity, and a bid for visibility within digital public spheres. The assertion “katong basudara semua” (we are all siblings) in Papuan Malay constructs an alternative fraternity that challenges racial hierarchy. Unlike the hierarchical language of “anak kandung dan tiri” (legitimate and stepchildren), “basudara” (siblings) implies equality and mutual recognition.

Discussion

This discussion is organised to answer the two research questions that guided this study. The first section addresses RQ1—how Eastern Indonesian hip-hop artists discursively construct marginality through linguistic and metaphorical strategies—by interpreting findings from HHLF and Majelis Lidah Berduri through Foucault's concept of biopolitics. The second section addresses RQ2—how these practices challenge dominant national representations and hyperreal narratives—by interpreting findings from Ecko Show through Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality. The third section synthesises the findings across all three artists to demonstrate

how marginality is constructed, contested, and reconfigured as a discursive practice.

Biopolitics and the Construction of Marginality

The findings from HHLF's “Koruptor” and Majelis Lidah Berduri's “Mama” can be interpreted through Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics (11). Foucault argued that modern power operates not primarily through direct repression but through the management of populations, resources, and life chances. Corruption and resource extraction, from this perspective, are not merely individual misconceptions or economic activities but mechanisms that produce what Foucault terms the “uneven distribution of life chances”—where certain populations are allowed to thrive while others are effectively “left to endure” marginal conditions. In “Koruptor,” the metaphor of the rat exposes this biopolitical condition. The repeated imagery of consumption (“makan uang rakyat”) reflects how the survival of the powerful depends on the deprivation of the periphery. The song constructs a discursive truth in which marginality is not accidental but produced through exploitative power relations. This finding aligns with research on hip-hop in other peripheral contexts. In Nigeria, Aboh and Ishamali (2) found that hip-hop artists similarly use animal metaphors to dehumanize corrupt elites and expose systemic extraction. In Brazil, Lima (14) documented how rap artists on the periphery employ consumption imagery to articulate how state corruption directly impacts the survival of marginalized communities. In “Mama,” the biopolitical critique is extended from financial extraction to ecological extraction. The lines “gunung jadi lubang, sajaratun tumbang, bumi jadi liang” (mountains become holes, trees fall, earth becomes a grave) visualize how biopower operates not only through the management of populations but also through the transformation of territory. What Foucault described as “making live and letting die” (11) is here given material form: certain lands are allowed to be destroyed so that resources can be extracted to sustain the center. This finding resonates with Moassab's (15) analysis of

Brazilian periphery hip-hop as "insurgent communication" that resemanticizes the periphery, transforming sites of extraction into sites of political articulation

Hyperreality and Counter-Discourse

The findings from Ecko Show's "#SavePapua" are best interpreted through Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality (12). Baudrillard argues that in contemporary media environments, representations no longer reflect reality but instead produce it. Simplified or stereotypical images circulate repeatedly through media and institutional discourse, eventually becoming accepted as "truth"—a condition in which the map precedes the territory.

In Indonesian national discourse, Papua is often reduced to such hyperreal representations: a place of exotic nature ("Cendrawasih"), a region of conflict, or a source of natural resources. These representations, as Tsing (8) and Li (7) have documented, circulate through development discourse, news media, and popular culture, often obscuring the complexity of lived realities in Papua.

The song's rhetorical question "Indonesia kah kami ini?" (Are we Indonesia?) exposes the gap between the hyperreal image of a unified nation and the lived reality of racial discrimination and conditional belonging. This strategy aligns with what Rogers (13) describes as "resistant discursive practice"—a counter-discourse that exposes the gap between representation and reality. Unlike the colonial gaze that reduces Papua to exotic nature or primitive conflict, "#SavePapua" insists on the reality of Papuan suffering and agency: "Kami manusia dengan luka yang nyata" (We are humans with real wounds).

Furthermore, the chorus's use of "#SavePapua" as a hashtag operates as what could be termed "digital counter-discourse." In the context of restricted media freedom in Indonesia, where open discussion of Papuan issues carries legal risks, the hashtag functions as a form of what Bennett and Segerberg (26) call "connective action"—enabling solidarity and visibility without direct confrontation. This finding complicates

Baudrillard's framework by showing that hyperreality is not total; counter-discourses can emerge from within mediated environments. Taken together with the findings from HHLF and Majelis Lidah Berduri, the three songs analyzed in this study demonstrate distinct but complementary discursive strategies. HHLF's "Koruptor" employs dehumanizing metaphor to expose corruption as a form of biopolitical extraction, constructing marginality as the result of elite predation on peripheral resources. Majelis Lidah Berduri's "Mama" deploys maternal resistance and ecological imagery to challenge neocolonial extractivism, constructing marginality as material violence against land and body. Ecko Show's "#SavePapua" uses hyperreal deconstruction and hashtag activism to contest racial discrimination and conditional belonging, constructing marginality as exclusion from national recognition.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia represents marginality, challenges dominant narratives, and functions as a space of meaning-making. Drawing on a postmodern framework informed by Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard, the analysis demonstrates that marginality is not simply a material condition but a discursive construct shaped by power relations and mediated representations.

The findings of this study have implications for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Indonesia, particularly SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia articulates forms of marginality that are often overlooked in official development indicators, yet these lived experiences are essential for understanding the persistent gap between centers and peripheries. By amplifying local voices that challenge dominant representations and expose systemic inequities, hip-hop functions as an informal but powerful mechanism for social accountability—complementing formal efforts to 'leave no one behind' as mandated by the SDGs [26]. Ignoring

these cultural expressions risks perpetuating the very hyperreal representations that this study has sought to deconstruct. The findings reveal that hip-hop lyrics do not merely describe marginality but actively participate in its construction through language, metaphor, and narrative strategies. Across the three songs analyzed—HHLF's "Koruptor," Majelis Lidah Berduri's "Mama," and Ecko Show's "#SavePapua"—three distinct but complementary discursive strategies emerge. First, HHLF employs dehumanizing metaphor to construct marginality as the result of biopolitical extraction, where corrupt elites sustain themselves by consuming the resources of the periphery. Second, Majelis Lidah Berduri deploys maternal resistance and ecological imagery to construct marginality as material violence against land and body, challenging the neocolonial logic of resource extraction. Third, Ecko Show uses hyperreal deconstruction and hashtag activism to construct marginality as conditional belonging within the nation-state, challenging the racial discrimination that produces Papuans as "stepchildren" rather than full citizens. At the same time, these texts function as counter-discourses that challenge dominant representations of Eastern Indonesia, particularly those that frame the region as passive, peripheral, or deficient. By foregrounding local voices and lived experiences, hip-hop disrupts the authority of dominant narratives and exposes the constructed nature of widely circulated "truths." Each song names a different face of marginality—economic, ecological, and representational—yet all three converge in challenging the hierarchical imagination of the nation in which Eastern Indonesia is continuously positioned as "the other."

The findings of this study also carry implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) [26]. Hip-hop in Eastern Indonesia articulates forms of marginality that are often overlooked in official development indicators, yet these lived experiences are essential for understanding the persistent gap between centers and peripheries. By amplifying local voices that challenge

dominant representations and expose systemic inequities, hip-hop functions as an informal mechanism for social accountability—complementing formal efforts to 'leave no one behind' as mandated by the SDGs. Theoretically, this study contributes to postmodern cultural analysis by demonstrating how discourse and representation function in the construction of marginality within non-Western contexts. By integrating Michel Foucault's concept of power/knowledge with Jean Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality, the study offers a nuanced understanding of hip-hop as a discursive practice that both produces and destabilizes meaning. This shifts the perspective from viewing hip-hop as merely a form of resistance to understanding it as an active site of knowledge production. Empirically, the study highlights the importance of examining cultural production from geographically and discursively marginalized regions. Eastern Indonesian hip-hop provides valuable insight into how global cultural forms are localized and mobilized to negotiate identity, power, and representation. In doing so, the study contributes to the broader effort to decenter cultural studies from dominant Western perspectives and to foreground voices from the periphery. Finally, this study opens avenues for further research. Future studies may explore audience reception, digital circulation, or comparative analyses across regions to better understand how hip-hop continues to evolve as a global yet locally grounded cultural practice. Such research would further illuminate the complex interplay between discourse, power, and representation in contemporary cultural production.

Abbreviations

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis, HHLF: Hip Hop Lembata Foundation, MLB: Majelis Lidah Berduri, NTT: Nusa Tenggara Timur, RQ: Research Question, SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals, UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Author Contributions

Dwi NCS Kusumaningtyas: conceptualisation, methodology, formal analysis, investigation, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing, visualisation, project administration. Fariq S Tasauy: conceptualisation, validation, supervision, writing, review and editing. Muhammad A. Syahsurya: Data collection, analysis of the lyric, review and editing. Bayu A. Nugroho: Review and editing for the finalisation.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest related to the publication of this manuscript.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study consist of song lyrics that are publicly available on digital platforms (Spotify and YouTube). All lyrics cited in this manuscript are accessible through these platforms and have been properly referenced within the text.

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Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

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Ethics Approval

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