

## CHAPTER IV

This chapter explains the results of the research presented in Chapter III by interpreting how TikTok users respond to the #kaburajadulu campaign. By connecting the empirical results with the participation theory, collective action theory, and the public opinion theory, this chapter explains how users express sentiments, how shared emotional orientations emerge, and how public opinion is expressed within the comment section.

### **4.1 Audience Participation in the #kaburajadulu Campaign**

The comment section of TikTok functions as a participatory space where users actively interpret, evaluate, and respond to the #kaburajadulu campaign. Rather than remaining as passive viewers, users contribute their perspectives, share personal experiences, and engage in discussions related to employment opportunities, economic challenges, and future aspirations. Digital media platforms often enable audiences to actively participate in meaning-making processes by sharing interpretations and experiences within online discussions (Jenkins, 2006; Carpentier, 2011).

The findings of this research demonstrate how participatory culture, as explained by Henry Jenkins (2006) operates within the TikTok comment section. Unlike previous research that interprets from visual contents, this research shows that participation occurs through textual interaction, where users actively engage by expressing emotions, sharing personal experiences, and responding to others.

Empirically, the analysis of 500 comments shows that users collectively construct meaning through recurring themes such as dissatisfaction with socio-economic conditions, aspirations to migrate, and emotional expressions of frustration and hope. These findings indicate that audience engagement is not merely individual but becomes a collective interpretative process, aligning with Public Opinion Theory and Collective Action Theory.

Furthermore, the presence of repeated narratives and shared sentiments across comments shows that users' comments are not acting in isolation but are participating in a broader discursive environment. This reinforces the idea that digital platforms such as TikTok function as spaces where participatory culture is enacted through textual interaction and audience-driven interpretation.

*kerja di negara sendiri emang susah itu cuy udah gaji kecil* (Commented by fern\_art.07 on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

*inilah mengapa gua pengen kuliah diluar negri. soalnya kalo kuliah disini belum tentu dapet kerjaan.* (Commented by kaktitikkesayanganmu on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

These comments above shows how users express their agreement, disagreement, and personal perspectives regarding the campaign. For instance, users express struggles in finding jobs and respond critically to the social implications of migration. These responses demonstrate how audiences actively participate in constructing meanings and interpretations within the comment section. Such interactions illustrate participatory communication processes where audiences contribute to public discourse by articulating their viewpoints and experiences (Carpentier, 2011).

## 4.2 Collective Emotional Alignment and Collective Orientation

The comment section shows recurring patterns of shared concerns and emotional responses among users engaging with the #kaburajadulu campaign. Across numerous comments, users express similar struggles such as through employment difficulties, which includes on low wages, limited career opportunities, and economic uncertainty. At the same time, other users express aspirations for improved living standards and broader opportunities abroad. The repetition of similar grievances and emotional expressions indicates the presence of shared grievances, which collective action theory identifies as an important condition that motivates individuals to recognize common social problems affecting their lives (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008).

*Mau kerja di jepang tapi belum bisa bahasa jepang semoga aja bisa.* (Commented by rafi707b on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

*lagi belajar bahasa korea semoga bisa terbang dan kerja disana* (Commented by secrecutie75 on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

*emang muak tinggal di indo, gwa muak SE muak muak nya Ampe pengen semua negara tahu kalau Indonesia itu seburuk ini* (Commented by fadli69696 on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

Numerous users show the struggles in obtaining a stable job to fulfill daily needs, while others highlight the benefits of working or learning abroad. For example, some users express aspirations to work abroad by developing language skills, such as learning Japanese or Korean in hopes of securing career abroad. At the same time, expressions of frustration toward living conditions in Indonesia also emerge, reflecting the social-economic issues that are experienced by different users.

These shared grievances are accompanied by emotional reactions such as frustration, dissatisfaction, and aspiration for better opportunities. The presence of similar emotional responses suggests the emergence of collective emotional responses, where individuals express comparable affective reactions toward the same socio-economic conditions. When individuals observe that others experience similar challenges and emotions, they begin to interpret their personal experiences within a broader shared social context rather than as isolated individual situations.

Based on collective action theory, the combination of shared grievances and collective emotional responses contributes to the emergence of collective awareness. Through repeated expressions of concern, dissatisfaction, and hope, users become aware that their experiences are shared by others within the same social environment. This process gradually produces a collective orientation, in which individuals begin to interpret social issues through a shared perspective rather than purely individual viewpoints (Snow & Benford, 1988).

Hashtag-driven discussions such as #kaburajadulu enable users to express shared experiences within visible digital spaces. This shared emotional connection reflects early dynamics associated with collective awareness, where individuals recognize shared grievances and aspirations through interaction. In the context of #kaburajadulu, the comment section functions as a space where collective emotional responses and collective awareness become visible despite the absence of organized collective action. Through repeated expressions of concern, dissatisfaction, and hope, users become aware that their experiences are shared by others within the same social environment (Papacharissi, 2015).

### 4.3 Public Opinion Formation in the Digital Sphere

The comment section of the #kaburajadulu campaign reflects the expression of public opinion within a digital environment. Responses posted by users show different perspectives, including positive views of living abroad as a strategy to improve living standards, as well as criticism directed towards the government particularly regarding domestic employment conditions and economic challenges. Both supportive and critical comments shows that public opinion related to the campaign does not represent a single perspective, but instead reflects a range of viewpoints shaped by individual experiences and broader socio-economic contexts.

*kerja di negara sendiri emang sesusah itu cuy udah gaji kecil* (Commented by fern\_art.07 on February 18th, 2025)

*bagus lahhhh, gw kerja di Jepang, justru pengen ngincer bisa dapet visa tinggal permanent disana lewat tokutei ginou 2 wkwk* (Commented by kakrahma\_17 on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

Supportive responses frequently emphasize that improved quality of life can be achieved through financial stability, career advancement, and future security by working or studying abroad. On the other hand, critical responses express dissatisfaction with Indonesia's current employment conditions, increasing living costs, and limited opportunities. These contrasting perspectives show how the campaign stimulates discussion that goes beyond personal preference, encouraging users to express on broader concerns about socio-economic realities.

Public opinion theory explains that opinions are shaped through interaction and the exchange of perspectives within public spaces where individuals discuss issues that affect collective interests (Habermas, 1989). In this context, the TikTok comment section functions as such a space, enabling users to express perspectives,

respond to shared concerns, and engage with different perspectives. Both supportive and negative comments show that public opinion is continuously shaped through participation rather than existing as a static form. Users engage in an ongoing conversation in which experiences, concerns, and aspirations are expressed and interpreted collectively. In this sense, digital platforms facilitate the formation of networked publics where opinions emerge and evolve through online interaction (Papacharissi, 2015). In this context, the TikTok comment section becomes a digital area where public opinion regarding the #kaburajadulu campaign is expressed, discussed, and refined through interaction.

The interaction among users within the comment section further demonstrates how public opinion is formed through the continuous exchange of viewpoints. When individuals replies comments that reflect similar experiences or concerns, they may reinforce, challenge, or reinterpret their own perspectives regarding the campaign. Through this process, opinions are not formed in isolation but emerge from ongoing interaction between participants within the digital discussion space. As users respond to each other's comments and perspectives, the comment section becomes a dynamic environment where interpretations of the #kaburajadulu campaign are collectively shaped (Habermas, 1989; Papacharissi, 2015).

The diversity of supportive and critical responses also illustrates how digital platforms enable multiple perspectives to exist within the same discussion space. Rather than making a single dominant interpretation, the comment section allows users to express contrasting viewpoints regarding migration, employment

conditions, and socio-economic challenges in Indonesia. This diversity reflects the plural nature of public opinion in digital environments, where individuals negotiate meanings and evaluate social issues through open interaction with other participants (Papacharissi, 2015).