

Humour as a new social movement of start-up workers on @Ecommurz Instagram

Anang Sujoko^{1 *}, Dicky Wahyudi^{1 2},
Edeliya Relanika Purwandi¹

¹Department of Communication Science, Universitas Brawijaya
Veteran Street, Lowokwaru, Malang, Indonesia

²Centre for Culture and Frontier Studies, Universitas Brawijaya
Veteran Street, Lowokwaru, Malang, Indonesia

Email: anangsujoko@ub.ac.id, Phone: +62 341575824

How to Cite This Article: Sujoko, A., et al. (2025). Humour as a new social movement of start-up workers on @Ecommurz Instagram. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 9(3). doi: 10.25139/jsk.v9i3.10999

Received: 04-09-2025, Revision: 25-09-2025, Acceptance: 06-10-2025, Published: 22-07-2025

Abstract This study examined the discourse of a new social movement of start-up workers through the modality of humour produced by the Instagram account @Ecommurz Indonesia. Using multimodal critical discourse analysis of a 150-content corpus in 2023, this analysis focuses on ideational, interpersonal, and textual symbols. This finding shows that humour on @Ecommurz serves as a mobilisation engine for startup workers. Six prominent ideas were identified: labour exploitation, low income, divestment, investment, petitions, and layoffs. Visually, direct eye contact, parallel angles, and popular personas reduce audience distance, while the opening-interruption-closing narrative pattern, clean typography, contrast in meaning, and hashtags unify interpretation and accelerate dissemination. Intertextuality (brand parody, political nostalgia) strengthens critical power and sarcasm. This combination produces shareable humour with criticism, builds collective identity and shared memory, and triggers organic participation on social media. Thus, humour expands cross-professional coalitions and affirms its role as a repertoire of new social movements on social media, particularly in the discourse of Indonesian start-ups.

Keywords: humour; new social movement; start-up worker; sarcasm; social media

INTRODUCTION

Tech winter has caused turmoil among start-ups in Indonesia, forcing them to adopt strategic defences (Gokomodo, 2023). These start-up companies have taken several measures to improve business efficiency, such as closing their offices and laying off their employees en masse (Tinc, 2023). The problem does not stop at layoffs. Harlianto et al., (2024) explains that workers at a number of well-known Indonesian start-up companies must work in conditions that do not comply with their employment contracts. Worse still, several studies mention that start-up companies impose a work system that tends to be exploitative in terms of time and workload on their employees (Snyder, 2010), causing workers to experience burnout (Eswaran, 2024).

^{*)} Corresponding Author

As labour issues in Indonesian start-up companies increase, a virtual community of start-up workers has formed and is active on social media. One of the most prominent is the Instagram account @ecommurz, with more than 392,000 followers, which has become the largest forum for start-up workers in Indonesia's technology start-ups. This account consistently raises labour issues by combining humour and sarcasm as a medium for social criticism. This strategy makes labour issues more accessible to the public, while also reflecting the dynamics of a new social movement in the digital era based on creativity and collective worker participation (Millward & Takhar, 2019; Thomas, 2019).

Interestingly, @ecommurz is not just an entertainment channel, but a digital advocacy space that accommodates the complaints of start-up workers that are often not exposed in the mainstream media. Through its content, this account amplifies the voices of workers regarding labour rights, conflicts between workers and companies, and social solidarity among fellow workers. Furthermore, the existence of social media such as Instagram has proven to be an important medium for articulating the desire for a more equitable work system (Cassinger & Thelander, 2020; Yue, 2023). Consequently, @ecommurz serves to reinforce the position of start-up workers by means of humorous content in the digital public arena.

Humour, including irony and sarcasm, is essentially a social phenomenon that is culturally shaped according to specific contexts of time, place, and purpose. When humour is linked to organised collective action oriented toward social change, it transforms into a part of social movement communication. In this realm, humour is not only entertainment, but a communicative strategy that can bring about emotional and cognitive closeness between members and with the wider community (Bonnici et al., 2023; Kutz-Flamenbaum, 2014).

Furthermore, humour plays an important role in building the identity and collective memory of a social movement (Tang, 2021). Through light-hearted yet meaningful expressions, humour helps strengthen solidarity while affirming the group's position (Kamal, 2023). In some cases, humour even becomes a symbolic weapon for weaker groups to resist the dominance of stronger groups (Korkut et al., 2022). Thus, humour serves as an effective medium for expanding the discourse of resistance and articulating social aspirations creatively.

Sarcasm, as a specific form of humour, further strengthens this communicative role in social movements. Sarcasm operates as a linguistic game that creates an emotional dimension for both the audience and the target of social movements (Tree et al., 2020). At the same time, sarcasm can be strategically utilised as a form of resistance to avoid pressure from authorities, by relying on creative and satirical diction (Eslen-Ziya, 2022; Kettioui, 2021). This dual role makes sarcasm a rhetorical tool for expression, as well as a protective mechanism for marginalised groups in the face of a tense political and social landscape.

The use of humour and sarcasm in the discourse of a new social movement of start-up workers produced by the Instagram account @ecommurz can be understood as part of the new social movement. Early trends in new social movement studies sought to criticise the exploitation of economic workers while analysing identity—including ideology, gender, ethnicity, and race—and emphasising post-material values such as emotional aspects (Edwards, 2004; Scott, 2023). New social movement also highlights the importance of individual autonomy and interaction networks facilitated by new media or the internet (Castells, 2015; Qi, 2017). Thus, @ecommurz operates within a new framework that emphasises structural criticism through symbolic expression.

In this context, social media plays an important role as a medium for new social movement that allows activists to voice alternative voices—such as environmental issues, youth rights, peace, and humanity—which are often difficult to accommodate in mainstream media (Aji, 2019; Herrmann et al., 2022; Nofrima et al., 2020). Furthermore, social media is also used to mobilise political action and rally mass participation in challenging government policies (Maher et al., 2019; Pavan & Felicetti, 2019). In this way, the humour and sarcasm on @ecommurz not only serve as social criticism, but also as a digital new social movement instrument that expands the space for resistance among start-up workers.

Although studies show the significant contribution of social media to supporting new social movements, Mundt et al., (2018) note that careful management of social media platforms is necessary to mitigate physical and concrete risks for social movement activists. According to Gordillo-García, (2023), to mitigate physical risks in new social movements, elaboration is needed between physical spaces for physical-based social movements in public spaces and

symbolic spaces for symbol-based social movements in virtual and non-virtual public spaces. Interestingly, it is precisely in this symbolic space that the ideology and interests of social movements are manifested in symbols produced by activists that reflect the collective identity of social movements (Millward & Takhar, 2019). Thus, symbols in social movements are entities that are not value-free and have dimensions of interests that social movements wish to achieve.

Studies on NSM and social media that have been reviewed discuss digital mobilisation, but few: (a) operationalise MCDA to systematically link humour-based visual-verbal patterns with start-up worker themes, and (b) map the rhetorical functions of humour (brand parody, historical irony, wordplay) as a repertoire of social movements in digital spaces. We address this by filling the gap in the two shortcomings above by posing the following research question: *How are new social movements of start-up workers represented through humorous visual modalities by the Instagram account @Ecommurz?* To reveal this, we use the MCDA (Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis) framework to analyse the composition of symbols (multi-symbols) consisting of verbal modes (text/speech) and image modes (visual) (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001; Machin & Mayr, 2012), in the content posted on the @Ecommurz Instagram account.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a critical paradigm and qualitative approach to interpret the content of @ecommurz as a discourse practice of a new social movement. The critical paradigm works based on our scepticism towards humour content in posts from the @Ecommurz Instagram account, which is not merely entertainment content but was a representation of social movement resistance by the start-up worker against the work system of startup companies. In this position, the critical paradigm is used appropriately to analyse social phenomena (represented in the uploaded content of the @Ecommurz Instagram account) in which there are structural inequalities, exploitation, injustice and resistance (Sujoko, Rahmiati, et al., 2023; Sujoko, Wahyudi, et al., 2023).

MCDA (Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis) was chosen as a method to reveal the representation of meaning behind the symbols of humour and sarcasm in posts from the Instagram account @Ecommurz, which we view as resistance from the precariat's social movement against startup companies. According to Kress & Leeuwen (2001), MCDA is an analysis method that combines semiotic modes consisting of verbal and image symbols simultaneously to obtain a deep understanding of the meaning behind the arrangement of symbols. Verbal and pictorial semiotic modes in MCDA are understood as a socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning; in other words, semiotic modes are tools and methods available in a culture that can be used to convey messages, meanings, representations of viewpoints and meanings to the world that will be offered (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001; Suh, 2021).

Data was collected by taking it directly from the uploaded content of the Instagram account @Ecommurz. A total of 150 uploaded content was selected from the period January to December 2023, considering that this period demonstrated layoffs of startups and large technology companies in the world, especially in Indonesia (Tinc, 2023). The content is selected based on the highest engagement from the number of likes and comments. This research data was not based on the quantity of content analysed, but rather on the characteristics of the content (engagement) and the depth of analysis (Elo et al., 2014)

Materials of 150 content post, we analysed using three stages of MCDA from Kress & Leeuwen (2001), which have been adapted and developed by Machin & Mayr (2012). It consists of three steps: first, analysing pictures (images and text) that realise ideational, or images that represent the viewer's experience. Images are seen to represent participants as objects in the form of living or non-living objects that represent the viewer or audience. Second, analysing images that realise interpersonal, namely how the relationship is created between the maker, the viewer, and the object in the image. In this case, the image is realised through gaze, frame and shot size, and perspective/angle. Third, the image realises the textual, which means that the arrangement of verbal symbols and images is connected, just like the textual which is arranged and presented sequentially to convey meaning (semantic).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ideational of humour in Instagram @Ecommurz

The new social movements discussed on the Instagram account @Ecommurz have unique and consistent characteristics in conveying their ideas. The ideological dimension is displayed using certain terms in the form of images, language, and wordplay. Posts on this platform generally use terms that are common and easily understood by community members. In this way, the messages conveyed are relevant and close to the daily experiences of start-up workers. In this study, the post data were analysed and classified into several main categories that describe the dominant themes related to working conditions, exploitation, and the socio-economic realities of workers.

Table 1. Theme of ideational from social movement in Instagram (@Ecommurz)

Theme	Content/data
Exploitative work practices	93 posts
Termination of employment	6 posts
Low income	19 posts
Petitions	6 posts
Investment	12 posts
Divestment	14 posts

Source: Author (2025)

A thorough ideational analysis of the @Ecommurz account revealed six predominant themes in table 1, that constituted the focal point of this online community's discourse. Themes that emerged included divestment, investment, termination of employment, low income, petitions, and exploitative work practices. Each theme reflects the issues faced by workers, especially those in precarious employment. Start-up workers are defined as those with unstable working conditions, who often experience economic uncertainty and face high pressure due to exploitative working systems that are prevalent in start-ups in Indonesia (Lee & Wie, 2015).

The six themes that were identified, three of these themes were mentioned most frequently: Exploitative work practices (93 posts), Divestment (14 posts), and Low income (19 posts). The data indicate that the online community on this platform engages in discourse pertaining to stressful work experiences, particularly those associated with labour exploitation by startup companies. Exploitative work practices are characterised by inhumane working conditions, including, but not limited to, excessive working hours without adequate compensation, high workloads, unclear contracts, and minimal protection of workers' rights (Izzati, 2021).

In addition, the issue of divestment is a frequent topic of discussion within this community. Divestment is understood as the withdrawal of investment by capital owners or investors, which often results in job instability for employees. In the context of startups, divestment is closely related to business uncertainty and strategic decisions that can lead to sudden layoffs. When investors withdraw their funds, many startups lose their main source of financing. This often triggers a wave of layoffs or workforce reductions, meaning that investment decisions have a direct impact on the fate of workers (Snyder, 2010)

The issue of low income is also often highlighted, reflecting workers' complaints about salaries that are not commensurate with their workload and responsibilities. The startup industry often requires workers to be flexible and willing to work outside normal hours without adequate compensation. This situation is exacerbated by weak regulations protecting contract and informal workers. As a result, many workers are forced to accept less than ideal working conditions just to gain experience or simply to keep their jobs. This wage inequality is one of the main structural problems in the startup ecosystem in Indonesia (Lee & Wie, 2015; Qoriawan & Apriliyanti, 2023).

Meanwhile, the topics of petitions and investment are not as prevalent as other topics, but they remain part of the discussion within the @Ecommurz community. Petitions are often used as a tool to advocate for workers' rights and pressure companies to change their policies. Demands in petitions can range from salary transparency and improvements to employment contracts to criticism of unhealthy work cultures in startup environments. The topic of Investment, on the other hand, focuses more on how capital flows influence company policies and operations, which ultimately impact working conditions and employee well-being.

Overall, the existence of this community shows that social media has become an important space for workers, especially the precariat, to share experiences, build solidarity, and fight for their rights. The @Ecommurz account serves not only as a place to vent grievances, but also as a medium for criticism of the startup work system, which is considered increasingly exploitative. Amidst business competition and weak labour regulations, this kind of digital space serves as an alternative advocacy arena that is able to voice the interests of workers (Pavan & Felicetti, 2019).

It is evident that an ideological analysis of the @Ecommurz account substantiates the interconnection between the working conditions of the precariat and the dynamics of investment, corporate strategy, and the absence of robust legal protection for workers. Discussions concerning exploitative practices, divestment, and low income reflect the structural reality experienced by a significant proportion of workers in the startup sector. The presence of themes such as petitions and investment also demonstrates the collective efforts of the worker community in understanding and responding to company policies. This phenomenon serves to confirm the role of social media as a new discursive space in the struggle of workers in the digital economy era.

The interpersonal of humour in Instagram @Ecommurz

The interpersonal dimension examines how the creator-audience-object relationship is realised through visual discourse, including gaze, angle, shooting distance, framing, and persona selection (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001; Machin & Mayr, 2012). On @Ecommurz, direct gaze (demand) with close-ups is often used to 'call out' the audience—as if the character in the image is looking back at the audience and saying: "Look at me, this is our struggle." Eye-level dominates, signifying the equal position between workers and viewers as fellow witnesses. (Suh, 2021). This strategy is important for fostering co-affection (shared feelings) with the audience.

The combination of close-up images and direct eye contact creates a strong emotional impact. When facial expressions and captions such as 'tired but wired' are paired with neat lettering and bright colours, the result is a distinctive satire that makes people laugh, but also makes them aware of how strange the situation is (Kaptan, 2016). This combination makes the message quickly understandable without losing the light tone that is easy to read on social media timelines. That way, the audience tends to pause for a moment, feeling a connection with the content created through modality. In this simple way, the humour and criticism in the content become familiar and easy for the audience to understand.

The visuals are also often directed at logos, brands, or office buildings to give an impression of grandeur and power. However, the sarcastic closing text in the caption reverses that impression. The aura of power feels ordinary, even funny. For example, in Figure 1, the luxurious visual branding is reversed in the branding, such as "Bukalapak becomes Lupabapak". This message pokes fun at the company's promise of progress, which is not felt by the workers but instead results in layoffs. As a result, viewers quickly understand that the company's luxurious appearance does not always go hand in hand with improvements in the fate of its workers.

Symmetrical compositions, such as two panels on the left and right, or before and after sequences, help viewers compare claims with reality and promises with evidence. Symmetry makes the display calm and easy to read. Then sarcastic text adds a little surprise that provokes a smile and thought. In posts with several slides, the flow often saves the most poignant closing sentence for the end. This pattern builds a neat storytelling rhythm, making the core of the criticism clear (Tree et al., 2020).

The use of public figures or well-known animated characters creates a sense of familiarity from the outset. Audiences who are familiar with these characters are quicker to grasp the underlying message, including criticism of certain working practices or policies. For example, in Figure 2, the use of Nadiem Makarim, who is the Minister of Education and owner of an online motorcycle taxi company, and the addition of the text "enak jamanku to?" (Wasn't my era great?), is personalised in a similar way to Suharto during the New Order era. The question is no longer who the character is, but what issues are being highlighted regarding the difficulty of finding work and working in a start-up company. In this way, the message reaches more people, including those who do not usually follow labour issues, because the entry point is a character who is familiar to the public.

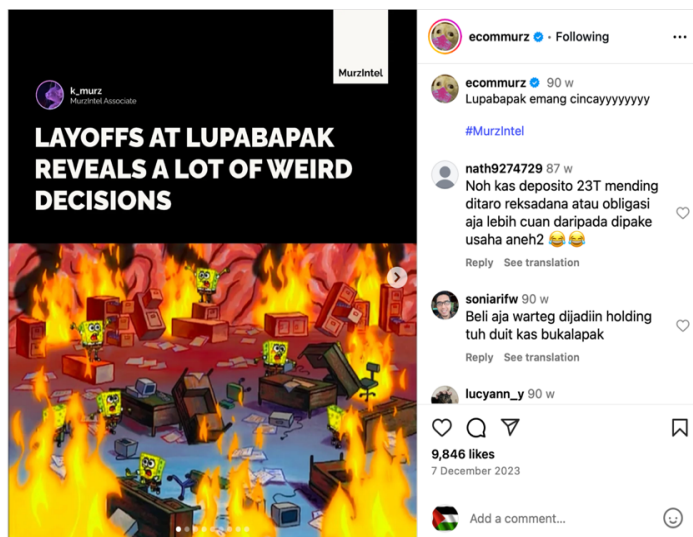


Figure 1. Interpersonal start-up workers such as the “Bukalapak to Lupabapak” brand
Source: @Ecommurz Instagram account (2023)



Figure 2: Start-up workers are treated like public figures
Source: @ecommurz Instagram account (2023)

The caption text combines everyday language with easy-to-understand work terms, such as “How are you? Is my time good?” in Figure 2. This style makes the content feel familiar to the general audience, while still demonstrating knowledge of the professional world. In this context, the humour is directed at self-deprecation, such as working while searching for ‘healing’ that never comes. This tone ensures that criticism does not come across as patronising. The audience feels invited to chat, not judged. As a result, the message is more easily accepted and discussed, becoming a discourse that changes mindsets and attitudes and even sparks social movements (Pavan & Felicetti, 2019).

Direct eye contact with the image and a parallel perspective make the audience feel addressed. A short and sharp closing sentence makes it easy for people to remember and repeat the message. Hashtags such as #MurzFam and #WorkLifeImbalance serve as a sign of togetherness. When viewers use them, they feel like they are part of a circle that understands the

humour of the joke as well as its criticism. On a personal level, people are more likely to like, comment, or share. On a group level, a sense of togetherness grows, keeping the discourse alive over time.

The inter-textual of humour in Instagram @Ecommurz

The textual dimension explains how text and images are arranged to create messages that are concise, sharp, and easy to share (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001; Machin & Mayr, 2012). On @Ecommurz, three main patterns are apparent. First, the conflict between the image of luxury and the reality of work. Second, parodies of history and popular references that are familiar to the public. Third, the role of captions and hashtags as explanations and connectors of meaning between panels. In addition, many posts use a regular three-step flow: a familiar opening, a section that disrupts expectations, and a poignant and memorable closing.

Contrasting pairs such as luxury brands and modest salaries or success stories and overtime hours are presented in a clean layout with neat fonts and bright colours. The visual cheerfulness acts as bait to attract attention. The satirical text then draws readers in to see the real issues (Eslen-Ziya, 2022). As a result, the audience quickly grasped the message that a glossy appearance does not always indicate prosperity. They understood the gap between image and reality without the need for lengthy explanations on each slide.

Some posts misquote familiar political slogans or widely recognised brand names. This strategy capitalises on collective memory, eliminating the need for lengthy explanations (Riesch et al., 2021; Tunali, 2020). The audience already understands the background of the story, so they immediately grasp the target. Parodies also encourage other accounts to imitate the format, so the message spreads further (Davis, 2013). With this simple method, the criticism feels relatable, is quickly understood across age groups, and remains poignant because it sticks to symbols that have long lived in the minds of the public.

Captions serve to guide the reader, while images enrich the content in each panel. For example, figure 3, which displays the phrase 'Dior style', clearly explains the meaning. The visuals of neat clothing and an aesthetic office setting provide a contrast that makes the satire feel strong. Hashtags such as MurzFam help link posts to broader conversations. Viewers can more easily find similar topics, follow a series of stories, and recognise the common thread between one post and another that discusses work issues.



Figure 3. Inter-textual of start-up worker as "Dior's style, but low salary"
Source: @Ecommurz Instagram account (2023)

The tendency is to use an opening, a disruption, and then a closing. The first slide gives a familiar premise, such as a slogan about life balance. The next slide shows a reality that does not match expectations, such as overtime, increased targets, or staff reductions. The last slide closes with a short sentence that brings all the messages together into a clear criticism. This gradual

pattern fits well with the habit of reading on mobile phones. The audience can follow the story bit by bit, then close with a conclusion that is easy to retell to others.

Clean fonts and bright colours make the content easy to read when scrolling through the screen. White space is used to hold information so that there is a pause before the closing sentence. The box or grid layout makes it easy for the eye to scan important elements. There is a clear hierarchy between bold headlines and thinner captions so that the focus is immediately on the core message. This combination makes the message feel light, neat, and still conveys criticism without burdening the reader with overly dense text.

Inter-textuality to discuss start-up company employees also often features office workers, labourers, artists, athletes, animated film characters, and various types of animals. In Figure 4, for example, the celebrity Syahrini and the badminton doubles pair Ahsan-Hendra appear. Both are used as material for funny satire, to reprimand the type of worker who is unstable and wants to resign from an exploitative company but does not actually resign. This kind of humour pokes fun without judging start-up company employees, but the message is still clear in that it aims to make employees aware of the purpose of resigning.



Figure 4. Intertextual of workers discourse through public figures and athletes
Source: @ecommurz Instagram account (2023)

Animals such as cats, monkeys, jaguars, dogs, lions, and tigers are often used to describe human characteristics in the workplace, as shown in Figure 5. Cats are used to represent laid-back workers, monkeys for those who are agile but careless, dogs for loyal colleagues, lions and tigers for dominant superiors, while jaguars symbolise the speed of pursuing targets. The diverse choice of objects makes the humour feel fresh and easy for many people to understand. Animal symbols also help convey social criticism without hurting individuals, because the message is wrapped in a light-hearted story.



Figure 5. Intertextual discourse of workers through animals and conversations
Source: @Ecommurz Instagram account (2023)

A series of concise, clear, and mutually reinforcing texts and images produces content that is easy to quote and share. In the world of platforms, this pattern forms interconnected stories. Posts refer to one another, hashtags unite topics, and comments add to the real story. Gradually, a shared memory of unfair work experiences is formed. Thus, the textual dimension provides a form of message to encourage support, expand reach, and keep public conversation alive and sustain the discourse of the startup company workers' social movement.

Humour as a new social movement on @Ecommurz

Humour at @Ecommurz works as a cheap and safe collective action. It takes the form of memes, puns, and light parodies that nevertheless convey a strong sense of togetherness (Miczo, 2019; Ramsey & Meyer, 2019). Viewers feel like they are part of a group that understands each other. They share the same terminology, jokes, and memories about the world of work. In this way, humour is not just entertainment. Humour becomes a tool to bind many people to similar experiences, then encourage them to voice issues without fear of appearing to blame a particular party (Kaptan, 2016).

Humour discourse in the ideational, interpersonal, and intertextual dimensions shows a change in purpose, which is not only a matter of creating a funny context, but also inviting the audience to subjectify start-up company workers to address the issue of exploitation. Furthermore, this humour offers a collective intertextuality by circulating the discourse that startup company workers are not experiencing exploitation alone, but that they have many comrades who are also being exploited. In the long term, this pattern can embrace many sectors and keep the voices of workers heard in the digital public sphere.

Humour on @Ecommurz facilitates the formation of a loose network that grows from the bottom up, linked by similar work experiences. This pattern is in line with the characteristics of new social movements according to Castells (2015), Edwards (2004), and Scott (2023), namely identity-based mobilisation and shared meaning outside of formal organisational structures. Through easily accessible posts, communities build a sense of shared destiny, a safe space for naming problems, and a shared vocabulary regarding justice in the workplace. This process strengthens symbolic cohesion and clarifies the orientation of collective action.

The literature on movement communication and humour suggests that laughter can lower barriers to participation and channel emotions toward constructive ends (Cann et al., 2009; Ramsey & Meyer, 2019). Findings on @Ecommurz are consistent with Eslen-Ziya (2022), Kutz-Flamenbaum (2014), and Tang (2021): Memes, puns, and parodies bring criticism closer to the audience's daily lives without sounding patronising. This makes light participation more likely, such as signing petitions, sharing testimonials, or giving support to affected colleagues. In this case, humour serves as a cognitive and emotional prerequisite for sustained engagement (Kamal, 2023; Ramsey & Meyer, 2019).

In line with the findings of Kamal (2023) study, collective identity and shared memory are prerequisites for the sustainability of a movement. @Ecommurz cultivates both through memorable symbols such as hashtags, short phrases, and visual icons. These symbols act as a form of representational action that marks membership and willingness to take sides. The accumulation of symbol use builds an archive of shared experiences regarding overtime, unreasonable targets, and inadequate compensation. It is from this communal memory that moral legitimacy, solidarity, and readiness to act can be maintained over time.

As a result, this study adds to our understanding of how social media shapes new social movements through humour that is concise, easy to share, and low risk. @ecommurz shows that memes, puns, and parodies are not just entertainment, but an effective way to build a shared language, group identity, and real support for start-up workers. Its main contribution lies in the evidence that platform-native formats can bridge personal grievances to public issues, shape collective memory, and open measurable small-scale action pathways—from sharing stories to driving policy change.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Instagram account @ecommurz mobilises humour as a discourse device for a new social movement among start-up workers. The modality of humour is identified in the ideational dimension, which focuses on issues of labour exploitation, wage inequality, and capital volatility. In the interpersonal dimension, direct gaze, equal perspective, and the use of popular personas and animals reduce distance and invite engagement. In the textual dimension, the opening-interruption-closing narrative pattern, clean typography, and use of hashtags unify interpretation and accelerate dissemination. The collaboration of these three elements produces 'shareable criticism', forming a collective identity and shared memory, while transforming personal grievances into public issues. Through this mechanism, humour functions as a repertoire for new social movements that amplify collective participation, expand cross-professional coalitions, and maintain the consistency of the labour justice agenda in the digital space, particularly in the startup ecosystem in Indonesia. We recommend further research to conduct a netnography study to explore interactions between viewers in the comment column or sharing reels/stories produced by @Ecommurz's new social movement discourse.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank the Directorate of Research and Community Empowerment at Brawijaya University for providing funding for this research, with contract number: 259/UN10.F11/2023. We would also like to thank Edeliya Relanika Purwandi for her contribution as a research assistant in this research project.

REFERENCES

- Aji, A. P. (2019). The role of social media in shaping the animal protection movement in Indonesia. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 3(3), 389. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jsk.v3i3.1666>
- Bonnici, T., Briguglio, M., & Spiteri, G. W. (2023). Humor Helps: An Experimental Analysis of Pro-Environmental Social Media Communication. *Sustainability*, 15(6), 5157. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15065157>
- Cann, A., Zapata, C. L., & Davis, H. B. (2009). Positive and Negative Styles of Humor in Communication: Evidence for the Importance of Considering Both Styles. *Communication Quarterly*, 57(4), 452-468. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370903313398>
- Cassinger, C., & Thelander, Å. (2020). Voicing the organization on Instagram: Towards a performative understanding of employee voice. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 9(2), 195-212. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2046147X20920820>
- Castells, M. (2015). *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (2nd Edition). Wiley Publisher.
- Davis, J. M. (2013). Humour and its cultural context. In *Humour in Chinese Life and Culture* (pp. 1-22). Hong Kong University Press. <https://doi.org/10.5790/hongkong/9789888139231.003.0001>
- Edwards, G. (2004). Habermas and Social Movements: What's 'New'? *The Sociological Review*, 52(1_suppl), 113-130. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.2004.00476.x>
- Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative Content Analysis. *SAGE Open*, 4(1), 215824401452263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014522633>
- Eslen-Ziya, H. (2022). Humour and sarcasm: expressions of global warming on Twitter. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01236-y>
- Eswaran, M. (2024). The Nature of Labor's Vulnerability to Exploitation. *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 56(4), 554-575. <https://doi.org/10.1177/04866134231224043>

- Gokomodo. (2023, April 14). Terkena badai tech winter, Indonesia mampu menduduki sepuluh besar jumlah start-up terbanyak di dunia. *Gokomodo*. <https://gokomodo.com/terkena-badai-tech-winter-indonesia-mampu-menduduki-sepuluh-besar-jumlah-start-up-terbanyak-di-dunia/>
- Gordillo-García, J. (2023). Social movements and political-emotional communities: an approach from the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity in Mexico. *Social Movement Studies*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2023.2216646>
- Harlianto, J., Prabowo, H., Rahim, R. K., & Setiadi, N. J. (2024). From Old to New Ways of Working. *International Journal of Asian Business and Information Management*, 15(1), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJABIM.356503>
- Herrmann, C., Rhein, S., & Dorsch, I. (2022). #fridaysforfuture - What does Instagram tell us about a social movement? *Journal of Information Science*, 016555152110636. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01655515211063620>
- Izzati, N. R. (2021, March 26). Eksploitasi pekerja magang di start-up bisa terjadi karena aturan hukum yang ketinggalan zaman. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/eksploitasi-pekerja-magang-di-start-up-bisa-terjadi-karena-aturan-hukum-yang-ketinggalan-zaman-157353>
- Kamal, N. (2023). Humour under occupation: Jokes and humorous anecdotes and their reflections in Palestine. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494231188912>
- Kaptan, Y. (2016). Laugh and Resist! Humor and Satire Use in the Gezi Resistance Movement. *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 15(5), 567-587. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15691497-12341407>
- Kettioui, A. (2021). Sarcasm and Taboo in the Moroccan Mediascape after the February 20 Movement. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 33(4), 405-423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13696815.2019.1701426>
- Korkut, U., McGarry, A., Erhart, I., Eslen-Ziya, H., & Jenzen, O. (2022). Looking for truth in absurdity: Humour as community-building and dissidence against authoritarianism. *International Political Science Review*, 43(5), 629-647. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192512120971151>
- Kress, G. R., & Leeuwen, T. Van. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. Oxford University Press.
- Kutz-Flamenbaum, R. V. (2014). Humor and Social Movements. *Sociology Compass*, 8(3), 294-304. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12138>
- Lee, J.-W., & Wie, D. (2015). Technological Change, Skill Demand, and Wage Inequality: Evidence from Indonesia. *World Development*, 67, 238-250. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.10.020>
- Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2012). *How to Do Critical Discourse Analysis: A Multimodal Introduction* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Maher, T. V., Martin, A., McCarthy, J. D., & Moorhead, L. (2019). Assessing the Explanatory Power of Social Movement Theories across the Life Course of the Civil Rights Movement. *Social Currents*, 6(5), 399-421. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2329496519850846>
- Miczko, N. (2019). A review of communication approaches to the study of humor. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 43(4), 257-272. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2019.1658123>
- Millward, P., & Takhar, S. (2019). Social Movements, Collective Action and Activism. *Sociology*, 53(3), NP1-NP12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038518817287>
- Mundt, M., Ross, K., & Burnett, C. M. (2018). Scaling Social Movements Through Social Media: The Case of Black Lives Matter. *Social Media + Society*, 4(4), 205630511880791. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118807911>
- Nofrima, S., Nurmandi, A., Kusuma Dewi, D., & Salahudin, S. (2020). Cyber-activism on the dissemination of #Gejayanmemanggil: Yogyakarta's student movement. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi* 4(1), 103. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jsk.v4i1.2091>
- Pavan, E., & Felicetti, A. (2019). Digital Media and Knowledge Production Within Social Movements: Insights From the Transition Movement in Italy. *Social Media + Society*, 5(4), 205630511988967. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119889671>
- Qi, X. (2017). Social Movements in China: Augmenting Mainstream Theory with Guanxi. *Sociology*, 51(1), 111-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038516656993>
- Qoriawan, T., & Apriliyanti, I. D. (2023). Exploring connections within the technology-based entrepreneurial ecosystem (EE) in emerging economies: understanding the entrepreneurship struggle in the Indonesian EE. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 15(2), 301-332. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-02-2021-0079>
- Ramsey, M. C., & Meyer, J. C. (2019). Exploring communicative functions of humor: the development and assessment of a new functions of humor scale. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 27(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2019.1540417>
- Riesch, H., Vrikki, P., Stephens, N., Lewis, J., & Martin, O. (2021). "A Moment of Science, Please": Activism, Community, and Humor at the March for Science. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 41(2-3), 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02704676211042252>
- Scott, A. (2023). *Ideology and the New Social Movements*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003363156>
- Snyder, J. (2010). Exploitation and Sweatshop Labor: Perspectives and Issues. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 20(2), 187-213. <https://doi.org/10.5840/beq201020215>
- Suh, E. K. (2021). Adoptees SPEAK: a multimodal critical discourse analysis of adult Korean adopted persons' adoption narratives on Instagram. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 18(1), 65-84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2020.1796486>
- Sujoko, A., Rahmiati, D., & Rahman, F. (2023). The role of radio as the public sphere for public political education in the digital era: Challenges and pitfalls. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2239627>
- Sujoko, A., Wahyudi, D., & Abdillah, M. (2023). The Discourse of Corruption in Mass Media: Polarization, Ideology, and Challenges. *ETTISAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION*, 8(1), 53-70. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21111/ejoc.v8i1.9477>
- Tang, T. Y. (2021). Collective memories, emotions, and spatial tactics in social movements: The case of the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 38, 100767. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2021.100767>

- Thomas, P. N. (2019). Social Movements, Communications and Social Change: An Introduction. In *Communication for Social Change: Context, Social Movements and the Digital* (pp. 93-119). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9789353287658.n4>
- Tinc. (2023, January 23). Startup Indonesia 2023: Akankah tech winter berlanjut? *Telkomsel Accelerator*. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/startup-indonesia-2023-akankah-tech-winter-berlanjut-tinc-id/?originalSubdomain=id>
- Tree, J. E. F., D'Arcey, J. T., Hammond, A. A., & Larson, A. S. (2020). The Sarchasm: Sarcasm Production and Identification in Spontaneous Conversation. *Discourse Processes*, 57(5-6), 507-533. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0163853X.2020.1759016>
- Tunali, T. (2020). Humour as political aesthetics in street protests during the political Ice Age. *The European Journal of Humour Research*, 8(2), 129-145. <https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2020.8.2.Tunali>
- Yue, C. A. (2023). Exploring Employees' After-Hour Work Communication on Public Social Media: Antecedents and Outcomes. *Social Science Computer Review*, 41(3), 827-847. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393211055322>