

Discourse Fragmentation of Pesta Babi Documentary Audiences: A Social Network Analysis on YouTube

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ABSTRACT

The screening of the documentary film *Pesta Babi: Kolonialisme di Zaman Kita* (Pig Feast: Colonialism in Our Time) on YouTube in May 2026 triggered thousands of comments from viewers across Indonesia. This study analyzes how conversation patterns formed in the comment section, and specifically whether they constituted a balanced discussion space or instead became fragmented into groups that did not engage in dialogue with one another. Using Social Network Analysis (SNA) through YouTube Data Tools (YTDT) and Gephi, data from 28,328 comments and 5,525 user interactions were mapped into a visual network. The results reveal a very sparse network (density 0.01), divided into 41 disconnected components, with 50 discourse clusters and a modularity score of 0.472. All five of the largest clusters exclusively represented pro-film and pro-Papua discourse, and not a single cluster was found that consistently supported government policy. Even an account that self-identified as a member of the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) confirmed the film's truthfulness. Although discourse fragmentation in digital public spheres has been widely studied, no prior research has applied SNA to YouTube comments of indigenous rights documentary films in Indonesia. These findings are interpreted through Habermas's public sphere theory. Rather than serving as an arena for rational and balanced discussion, the YouTube comment section of the *Pesta Babi* film instead reveals discourse fragmentation that is ideologically consolidated, a condition the researchers characterize as a deliberative illusion.

Keywords: Social Network Analysis (SNA), Gephi, *Pesta Babi*, Discourse Fragmentation, Digital Public Sphere, YouTube.

INTRODUCTION

On 22 May 2026, a documentary film was uploaded to YouTube free of charge. YouTube, as a video-sharing platform that has evolved into a space for public participation (Burgess & Green, 2018). Up to the period of data collection on 25 May 2026, the video had received 28,328 comments. People expressed anger, were moved, shared, and replied to one another. From the outside, the scene looked like a vibrant public discussion space: a place where diverse voices met and openly debated arguments openly. But was that really the case? This is where this study

begins: not from what is visible on the surface, but from what lies hidden beneath the structure of its conversations.

The film in question is *Pesta Babi: Kolonialisme di Zaman Kita*, a documentary work directed by Dandhy Dwi Laksono and Cypri Jehan Paju Dale (Laksono & Dale, 2026). Dandhy Dwi Laksono is known as a senior journalist and founder of Watchdoc Documentary, while Cypri Jehan Paju Dale is a social anthropologist who has long researched Papua-related issues. The 95-minute film was screened through the Redaksi JubiTV YouTube channel, in collaboration with the Watchdoc Documentary, Ekspedisi Indonesia Baru, Bentala Rakyat, and Greenpeace Indonesia channels (Wijaya, 2026). Its content documents the struggle of indigenous peoples of the Marind, Yei, Awyu, and Muyu tribes in South Papua, whose living space is threatened by massive investment expansion under the National Strategic Projects (PSN) framework.

This film had circulated on YouTube before its official release. Prior to the official version being uploaded, several unofficial versions had already been posted by anonymous accounts. This study selected the Redaksi JubiTV channel for one simple reason: it is the official channel agreed upon by all institutions involved in the film's production (Wijaya, 2026). JubiTV is the channel of Jubi.id, an independent journalism outlet long recognized for its critical and consistent coverage of Papua, and is part of a digital civil media ecosystem that has grown as an alternative to national media conglomerates (Tapsell, 2017). This means that the audience commenting there was not an arbitrary audience; they were people who consciously chose to watch from a source they trusted.

This film was released at a moment that cannot be called coincidental. In 2025 to 2026, major government projects in South Papua were in full swing, ranging from food estates to sugarcane and palm oil based bioenergy, all operating under the National Strategic Projects framework under the government of President Prabowo Subianto (Trend Asia, 2025). These projects proceeded without socialization and without consultation to obtain the free and informed consent of indigenous communities, with heavy machinery entering indigenous territories and clearing natural forests, villages, and swamps (Tempo, 2024). Indigenous peoples whose lands were affected rarely appeared in national television reporting. What frequently appeared instead was a narrative of development and security (Tapsell, 2017). Many people had long harbored anger about Papua related issues but found no space to express it in mainstream media. The film *Pesta Babi* arrived precisely in that gap. This explains why, as soon as the film was released, its comment section immediately filled with expressions of anger, sadness, and disappointment, all directed at the same address, namely the government.

Not long after its release, the film sparked controversy. A female indigenous figure who appeared in the film, Yasinta Moiwend, publicly stated that she had not known that footage of herself would be used. This statement went viral on the platforms X, TikTok, and Threads and immediately divided public opinion. Some viewed it as a violation of production ethics, while others suspected political pressure lay behind the statement. The question that arose was whether this controversy generated measurable fragmentation in the film's official YouTube comment section, or whether the YouTube audience was already a group with ideologically

uniform views before they typed their first comment. This is the empirical question this study seeks to answer.

Previous research has shown that conversations on Indonesian social media about sensitive issues tend to form closed groups that rarely cross-pollinate (Lim, 2017). Studies on YouTube comments generally confirm that this space is more often filled with emotional expression than constructive argument exchange (Oz et al., 2018; Rieder et al., 2018). However, studies that specifically use Social Network Analysis to map audience fragmentation in advocacy documentary films in Indonesia remain very limited. This study aims to fill that gap.

This study employs a mixed methods approach, with Social Network Analysis (SNA) as the primary methodological framework and Habermas's public sphere theory as the theoretical analytical framework. SNA is used to map the structure of user interaction networks in the YouTube comment section, namely who speaks to whom, what clusters form, and which actors are most influential. Habermas's public sphere theory is then used to interpret these findings, examining whether the network patterns reflect a healthy deliberative space or instead reveal distortion and fragmentation that contradicts the democratic public sphere ideal. Data were collected using YouTube Data Tools (YTDT) and analyzed using Gephi software, supplemented by qualitative content analysis to give ideological meaning to each identified cluster.

Based on this background, this study poses two research questions. First, how does the audience conversation network structure form in the YouTube comment section of the film *Pesta Babi*? Second, what ideological discourse groups dominate that network? The aim is to structurally map discourse fragmentation and identify the ideological positioning of each cluster, which is then interpreted within the framework of Habermas's public sphere theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Habermas's Public Sphere Theory in the Context of Digital Media

Habermas (1989, 2022) defines the public sphere as a social arena in which citizens discuss shared matters openly, rationally, and free from the pressures of power. In its ideal conception, three conditions must be met for a space to qualify as a healthy public sphere. Everyone may participate without exception, no one is considered more important merely on account of their popularity, and the ultimate goal of discussion is to reach mutual understanding based on the most rational argument rather than on who receives the most approval.

Habermas (2022) himself acknowledges that digital platforms present formidable challenges to this ideal. Fuchs (2021) explains that social media is never neutral, because it is designed to maximize user engagement rather than to facilitate healthy dialogue. The concept of the colonization of the lifeworld developed by Habermas, in which power interests infiltrate a space that should be free, finds its new form in the logic of YouTube's algorithm, which prioritizes comments with the most likes rather than comments with the best arguments. In the Indonesian context, Tapsell (2017) shows that the digital media ecosystem is marked by competition between media oligarchy interests and the digital civil movement, while Poell et

al. (2019) assert that platform logic silently shapes and constrains the types of conversations that can develop within it.

Social Network Analysis as a Measurement Tool for the Public Sphere

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a way of studying patterns of relationships between individuals within a network (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Its strength lies not only in its ability to show who speaks with whom, but also in its capacity to uncover hidden structures that cannot be seen by reading comments one by one. González-Bailón and Wang (2016) demonstrate that social media network maps can reflect the actual dynamics of power and ideological coalitions.

The relevance of SNA to this study lies in its ability to operationalize the three normative conditions of Habermas's public sphere into concrete measurable indicators. First, the condition of participant equality is tested through the distribution of degree centrality and eigenvector centrality, where an equal space should show an even distribution of influence rather than concentration among a handful of actors. Second, the condition of dialogue orientation is tested through graph density and average degree, where very low values indicate the absence of genuine dialogue. Third, the condition of a unified public arena is tested through connected components and modularity score, where higher values mean more conversation islands disconnected from one another and further distance from Habermas's ideal.

This approach is consistent with Nurnafia et al. (2025), who used SNA to analyze YouTube comments on the discourse of Indonesia Darurat Judi Online, or Indonesia's Online Gambling Emergency, using Gephi, as well as Shevtsov et al. (2023), who found that communities within YouTube comment networks correlate directly with users' ideological affiliations. Both studies provide the methodological foundation that SNA of YouTube comments is a valid approach to empirically mapping discourse fragmentation.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study employs a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative analysis through SNA to map the network structure with qualitative content analysis to give meaning to the clusters that form. SNA answers the question of who interacts with whom, while content analysis answers what they are debating. Combining both is necessary to draw comprehensive conclusions about ideological fragmentation.

The object of study is all comments and reply interactions on a single full-length video of the documentary film *Pesta Babi: Kolonialisme di Zaman Kita* by Dandhy Dwi Laksono and Cypri Jehan Paju Dale (Laksono & Dale, 2026), screened on the Redaksi JubiTV YouTube channel in collaboration with the Watchdoc Documentary, Ekspedisi Indonesia Baru, Bentala Rakyat, and Greenpeace Indonesia channels (Wijaya, 2026). The selection of a single video maintains data consistency, because all comments respond to identical content, so differences in responses can be attributed to differences in user perspectives rather than differences in video content. The unit of analysis is user accounts (nodes) and reply relationships between accounts (edges).

Data were collected using YouTube Data Tools (YTDT), available at <https://ytdt.digitalmethod.net>, a tool developed by the Digital Methods Initiative (Rieder, 2015) and widely used in digital communication research (Nurnafia et al., 2025). The Video Comments feature was used to download all comments from the target video, including user IDs, comment text, upload dates, like counts, and reply information. Data were collected from the release date, 22 May 2026, up to 30 days afterward, the period during which discourse was most active. In addition, word frequency analysis was conducted using the WordCloud and NLTK libraries in the Google Colaboratory environment to generate a word cloud visualization from all 28,328 comments that had undergone a text cleaning process.

YTDT data were processed into two files before being imported into Gephi. The first file, nodes.csv, contains a list of unique user accounts. The second file, edges.csv, contains reply relationships between accounts, with the replying user recorded as Source, the user being replied to recorded as Target, and interaction frequency recorded as Weight. Both files were imported into Gephi 0.10.1 as a directed weighted graph.

A minimum degree filter of 5 was applied to focus the analysis on actors with meaningful discursive engagement, in accordance with standard practice in SNA studies (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Himelboim et al., 2017). Four statistical measures were then computed. First, Degree Centrality was used to identify the most active actors. Second, Betweenness Centrality was used to identify accounts that bridge different clusters. Third, Modularity using the Louvain algorithm was used to automatically detect community clusters (Fortunato & Hric, 2016). Fourth, Graph Density was used to measure the overall network density. Visualization was produced using the Force Atlas 2 algorithm.

Once clusters were structurally formed by Gephi, the 15 comments with the highest likes from each cluster were read and thematically categorized using reflexive analysis procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Categorization focused on identifying ideological positioning, namely whether a comment supported the film's narrative, opposed government policy, or took another position. Each cluster was then verified with 5 additional randomly selected comments to ensure the consistency of the assigned labels.

All data are public and openly accessible on YouTube. This study does not publish usernames or account IDs beyond those whose comments have already gone widely viral. This procedure follows the internet research ethics guidelines of the Association of Internet Researchers (franzke et al., 2020).

RESULTS

Overview of the Network

From the 28,328 rows of data collected through YTDT, there were 22,803 main comments and 5,525 reply interactions. These reply interactions form the foundation of the network. After processing, an initial network of 22,339 nodes and 4,247 edges was formed. After applying a

minimum degree filter of 5, 191 nodes (4.91%) and 349 edges (8.22%) remained as objects of analysis. Complete statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Network Statistics Comment on YouTube Movie Pesta Babi

Metric	value	Meaning
Total Nodes (entire network)	22.339	All user accounts that have interacted
Total Edges (entire network)	4.247	All reply relationships between accounts
Nodes setelah filter (degree ≥ 5)	191	Active actors analyzed (4.91%)
Edges setelah filter	349	Interactions between active actors (8.22%)
Average Degree	1,093	On average, each user has only 1 connection
Graph Density	0,01	Only 1% of possible connections actually occur
Network Diameter	3	Maximum distance between any two users is 3 steps
Connected Components	41	41 groups with no connections between them
Avg. Path Length	1,106	Almost all connections are direct single step replies
Modularity Score	0,472	Community fragmentation rated as moderate to strong
Number of Communities	50	Total clusters detected automatically

The two figures that speak most loudly here are graph density (0.01) and connected components (41). A graph density of 0.01 means that of all the conversations that could theoretically occur, only 1% actually took place. This means that the majority of users did not engage in dialogue. They merely left comments without genuinely responding to one another. Meanwhile, the existence of 41 disconnected components means there are 41 conversation islands with absolutely no communication channels between them.

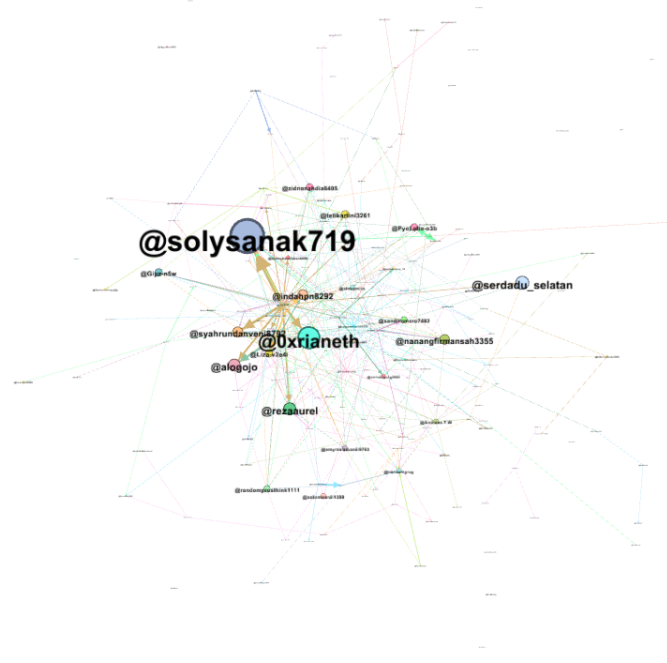


Figure 1. Network After Degree ≥ 5 Filter (191 Nodes, 349 Edges, Gephi 0.10.1)

Community Clusters and Fragmentation Patterns

The Louvain algorithm run in Gephi detected 50 community clusters with a modularity score of 0.472. This value exceeds the 0.3 threshold that serves as the standard in SNA research (González-Bailón & Wang, 2016), meaning these clusters are statistically real rather than coincidental. The distribution of community sizes is shown in Figure 3, revealing a highly uneven spread in which some clusters contain hundreds of members while the majority of clusters contain only one or two users.

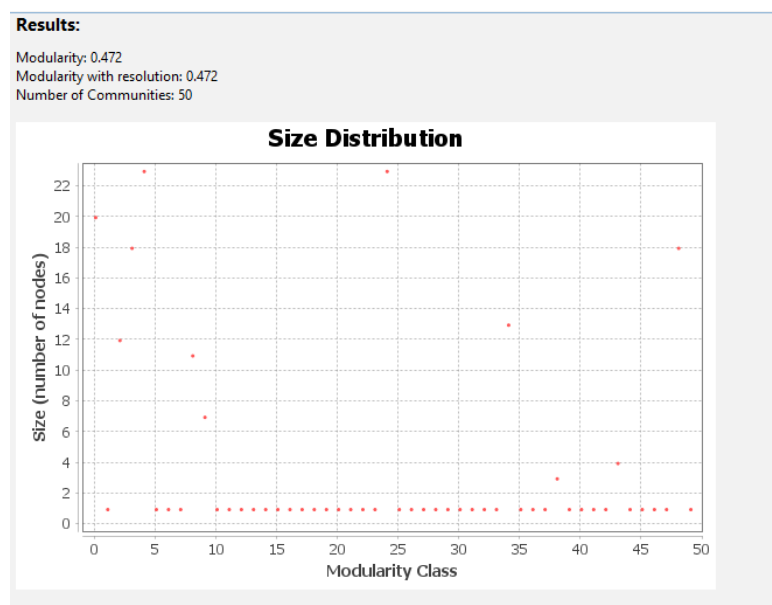


Figure 2. Community Size Distribution (Modularity Score 0.472, Number of Communities 50)

This study focuses its analysis on the 5 largest clusters. The total of 41 disconnected components confirms that this comment space is not a unified discussion arena, but rather dozens of conversation groups that are unaware of one another's existence. This condition directly contradicts the requirement of a unified public arena in Habermas's theory (2022). The characteristics of each cluster are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Five Largest Clusters

Kluster	Nodes	Comen	Avg. Degree	Lead Actor	Discourse Label
1	313	620	2,35	@solysanak719	Pro-Film and Indigenous Rights Solidarity
2	199	331	2,29	@0xrianeth	Pro-Film Distribution and Anti-Censorship
12	171	393	2,64	@emindopung4594	Film Appreciation and Indigenous Community Voice
9	165	334	2,56	@indahpn8292	Public Awareness Mobilization
11	127	281	2,43	@rezaaurel	Anti-Government Radicalization

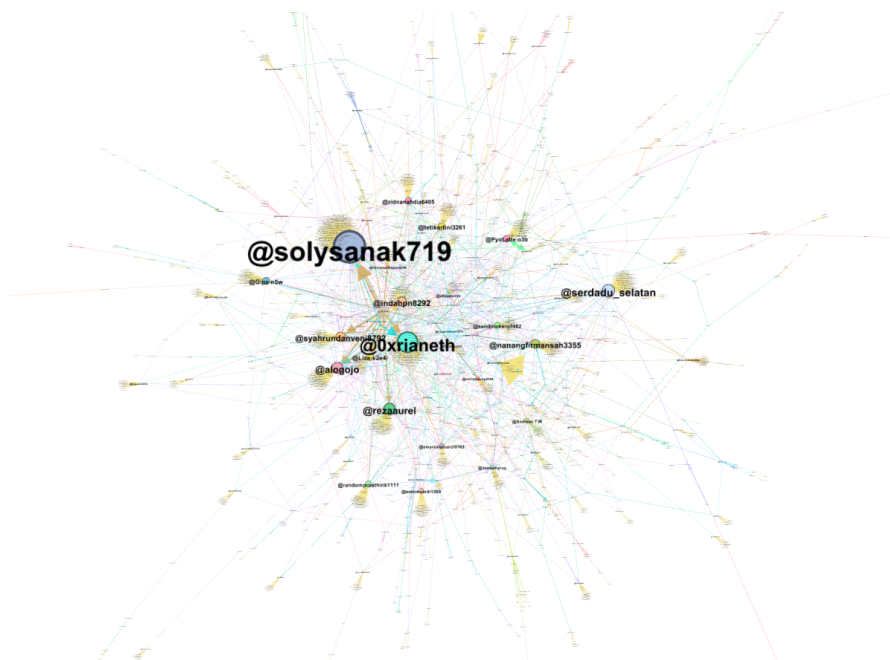


Figure3. Comment Network Visualization Based on Modularity Class. Each Color Represents One Community Cluster

Most Influential Actors in the Network

The degree centrality analysis reveals who received the most responses. In other words, it shows whose comments most frequently prompted replies from other users. Table 3 presents the top five actors along with their respective discourse positions.

Rank	Account	In-Degree	Representative Comment	Discursive Position
1	@solysanak719	373	"...they're just defending their land and themselves from the state" (23,408 likes)	Pro-Indigenous Rights
2	@0xrianeth	238	"... upload it again. The truth will always prevail" (23,548 likes)	Anti-Censorship
3	@serdadu_selatan	142	"...this movie is based on real events; I say this because I'm also a member of an indigenous community" (3,949 likes)	Confirmation from Within the Military
4	@rezaaurel	130	"Watching this video just makes me hate the government, the military, and the police even more" (6,349 likes)	Anti-Military
5	@alogojo	128	"This movie is expensive, and we're getting it for free" (12,029 likes)	Pro-Film

Table 3. Five Most Influential Actors

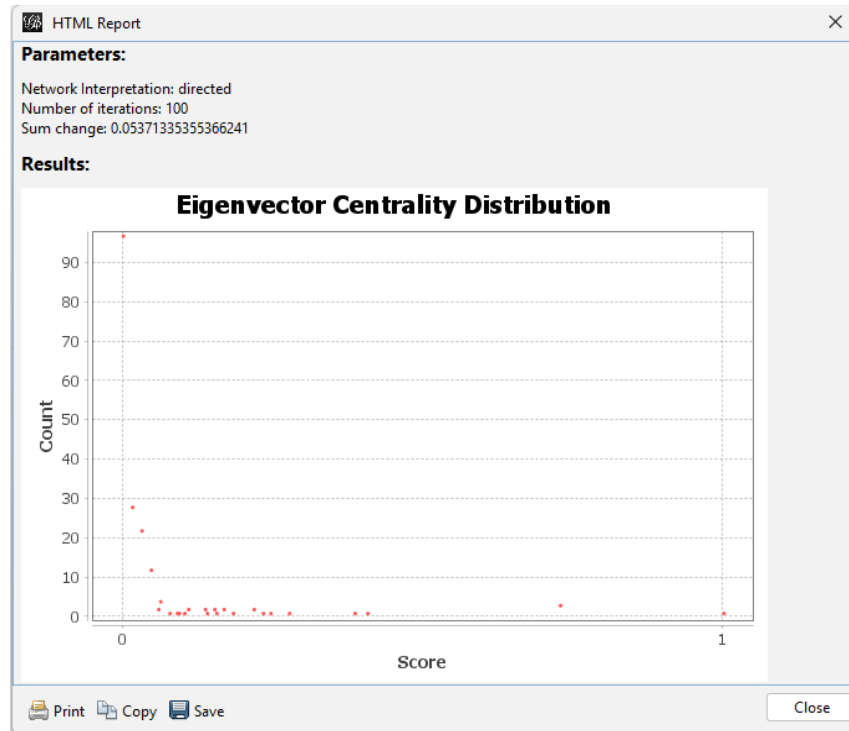


Figure 4. Eigenvector Centrality Distribution. One node dominates approaching a score of 1.0, all other nodes approach zero

The eigenvector centrality distribution in Figure 5 reveals an extreme disparity. Of the 191 nodes, almost all cluster around scores approaching zero. Only one node approaches a score of 1.0. This is visual proof that the force of the best argument idealized by Habermas (2022) has been replaced by the force of the most viral comment.

Ideological Discourse Map, Representative Quotes, and the @serdadu_selatan Finding

A reading of the comment content from each cluster produces the discourse map shown in Table 4. The clusters selected for citation are based on four considerations. Cluster 1 is the largest and most dominant cluster. Cluster 2 has a qualitatively distinct discursive focus. The account @serdadu_selatan represents the sole empirical anomaly. Cluster 11 shows the spectrum from solidarity to radicalization. Clusters 9 and 12 are sufficiently explained through Table 4, as they add no new analytical dimension. The most striking finding is that not one of the five largest clusters consistently defended government policy or supported the PSN. All clusters represent variations of the same unidirectional discourse, namely pro-film and pro-Papua, with differences only in focus and intensity. Before entering the per-cluster analysis, an overview of the discourse can be seen in the word frequency visualization of all 28,328 comments in Figure 6. The dominance of the words negara (state), pemerintah (government), and papua confirms that the overall discourse centers on the power relations between the state and the Papuan community.

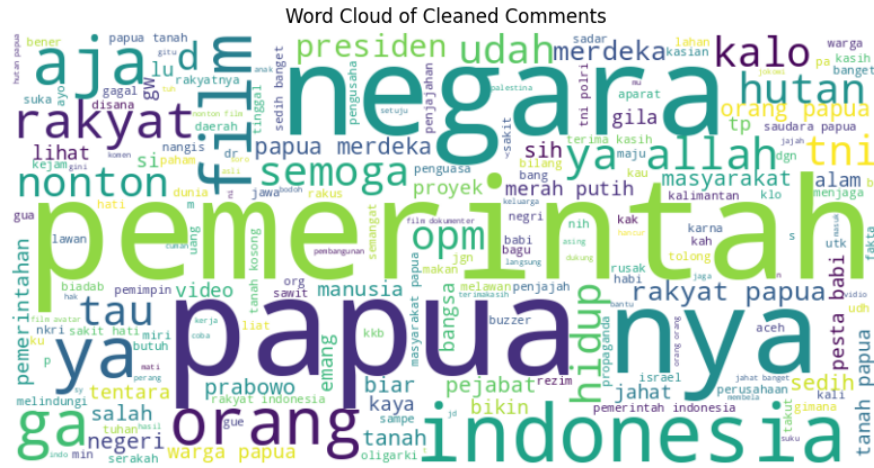


Figure 5. Word Cloud of YouTube Comments for the Film Pesta Babi (Total of 28,328 comments, generated using Python WordCloud Library via Google Colaboratory)

Table 4. Ideological Discourse Map by Cluster

Kluster	Label	Dominant Narrative	Density	Habermas Meaning
1	Pro-Film and Indigenous Rights Solidarity	Papua as victim, state as perpetrator	0,0064	Echo chamber, no dissenting voices
2	Pro-Distribution and Anti-Censorship	Film must remain available, censorship suppresses truth	0,0101	Strategic action, distribution rather than dialogue
12	Film Appreciation and Indigenous Voice	Affirmation toward directors and Papuan community	0,0128	Affective space, collective emotion dominates
9	Public Awareness Mobilization	Viralize the film, expose the government	0,0123	Dissemination rather than mutual understanding
11	Anti-Government Radicalization	Explicit hatred, calls to action	0,0160	Communicative distortion, affect replaces argument

Cluster 1, Pro-Film and Indigenous Rights Solidarity

The most frequently responded-to comment in this cluster comes from @solysanak719 (in-degree: 373). With 23,408 likes, this comment is the most responded-to in the entire network.

"It turns out that all this time they were not fighting against the state. They were only defending their land and themselves from the state 😭" (@solysanak719, YouTube comment, 2026)

This comment precisely encapsulates the dominant narrative of Cluster 1, namely a reframing of indigenous Papuan people's actions from resistance against the state to defense of

ancestral land. Its extraordinarily high resonance indicates that this framing effectively resonates with an audience that already holds sympathy toward indigenous rights issues.

Cluster 2, Pro-Film Distribution and Anti-Censorship

This cluster focuses not on the content of the film, but on the struggle to keep it viewable. The comment from @0xrianeth (in-degree: 238) received the most responses with 23,548 likes, slightly surpassing @solysanak719's comment.

"Crazy!! It gets deleted, uploaded again, deleted, uploaded again. Keep going, admin, keep trending. Truth will prevail ♥" (@0xrianeth, YouTube comment, 2026)

Within Habermas's framework (2022), this comment represents strategic action. The user does not intend to engage in dialogue, but rather to mobilize support to keep the film in circulation. This cluster shows that some members of the audience treat YouTube not as a discussion space, but as an arena of resistance against censorship.

Anomalous Finding, @serdadu_selatan

This account is the most unexpected finding of this study. Based on its name, prajurit selatan or southern soldier, this account was presumed to represent a military or pro-government viewpoint. The reality was the opposite. With an in-degree of 142 and 3,949 likes, @serdadu_selatan delivered a lengthy testimony confirming the film's truthfulness from within the military institution itself.

"I am a member of the TNI stationed in South Papua since 2022. The documentary is indeed factual, and I say this because I am also a child of this land [...] Why do my mother, father, and siblings resist this? Because we in Papua live from the products of the land, and then you come and destroy our home where we search for food every day, as if this Republic belongs to you. Do not be so greedy." (@serdadu_selatan, YouTube comment, 2026)

The position of @serdadu_selatan, somewhat separated from the main clusters in the Force Atlas 2 visualization (Figure 2), is not because it carries a contrary narrative, but because of its different interaction pattern. It does not enter the mainstream of conversation, yet it becomes a point of reference for multiple clusters simultaneously. This makes it the only genuine bridging node in the network.

Cluster 11, Anti-Government

In contrast to Cluster 1, which is relatively moderate, Cluster 11 displays far more intense expression. The two comments with the highest likes in this cluster are as follows.

"Watching this video has increased my hatred toward the government, the army, and the police" (@rezaaurel, YouTube comment, 2026)

"The TNI and Police are no more than pets serving their masters. Utterly disgraceful!!" (@nanangfirmansah3355, YouTube comment, 2026)

These comments represent what Habermas (2022) refers to as communicative distortion, in which affective expression entirely replaces the exchange of rational arguments. Notably, this cluster has the highest internal density (0.0160) among all clusters, meaning that users with the strongest sentiments interact most intensely with one another, forming the most closed echo chamber in the network.

DISCUSSION

The most fundamental finding of this study is not merely that the YouTube comment space is fragmented. More importantly, the fragmentation occurs within a community that already shares the same views, rather than between groups with different opinions. This differs from the study's initial assumption that the Yasinta Moiwend controversy would split the audience into two camps. In reality, all five dominant clusters move within the same ideological orientation, namely pro-film and pro-Papua, differing only in the way and intensity of their expression. The researchers conclude that the audience who came to this video is not a reflection of a diverse public, but rather a community formed through two layers of selection. The first layer is YouTube's algorithm, which tends to recommend this film to users with viewing histories relevant to Papua and environmental issues (van Dijck, 2013; Poell et al., 2019). The second layer is the viewers' own conscious choice, because someone willing to watch a 95 minute documentary about indigenous rights has almost certainly already carried a level of concern about these issues long before typing a single word in the comment section. This finding is consistent with what Lim (2017) identified in Indonesia's digital ecosystem, namely that discourse on sensitive issues tends to form closed groups that rarely cross-pollinate, and this study demonstrates that structurally through the figure of 41 connected components with no connections between them.

In terms of network structure, the researchers found that what occurs in this comment section more closely resembles acclamation than discussion. A graph density of 0.01 and an average degree of 1.093 show that of all the conversations that could theoretically occur, only 1% actually did. Even of that 1%, the majority were simply replies to already popular comments, not responses to the arguments presented. The researchers view this as concrete evidence of what Habermas (2022) feared as the degeneration of the public sphere, occurring when discourse is no longer oriented toward mutual understanding but toward the accumulation of mutually reinforcing expressions. Shevtsov et al. (2023) found a similar pattern in the context of YouTube election comments in the United States, where communities within the network correlate directly with users' ideological affiliations rather than with the quality of arguments exchanged.

The most original finding of this study is the case of @serdadu_selatan. The researchers argue that this account represents something that cannot be explained by a simple model of ideological fragmentation. Someone who is institutionally affiliated with the military, which is the state apparatus most frequently targeted by criticism in this film, confirmed the film's truthfulness and positioned themselves as part of the indigenous community being harmed. This shows that institutional identity does not always determine a person's ideological position, and

that in the case of Papua, the boundary between state apparatus and victim of state policy is far more fluid than assumed. The position of @serdadu_selatan, separated from the main cluster in the network visualization, makes it the only genuine bridging node, namely an actor capable of speaking across communities because it holds legitimacy from two worlds simultaneously.

Can the YouTube comment section become a healthy public sphere in the Habermasian sense? Based on all the findings above, the researchers argue that the answer is no, at least not under current conditions. This is not because the audience is uninterested or uncritical, but because the structure of the platform itself is not designed to facilitate deliberation. YouTube's algorithm prioritizes content for users who are most likely to agree with it, thereby creating what van Dijck (2013) and Poell et al. (2019) call platformization, namely a platform logic that silently shapes who speaks with whom. The result is a space that looks bustling and democratic from the outside, but inside contains only one voice echoing repeatedly. Within Habermas's framework, this is the most contemporary manifestation of the colonization of the public sphere, occurring not directly through the state or corporations, but through the invisible logic of algorithms that operate at every moment. Nurnafia et al. (2025), in the Indonesian context, found the same pattern, in which the YouTube comment space reflects identity consolidation more than productive exchange of arguments. The film *Pesta Babi* may have successfully reached millions of viewers, but its comment section has not yet succeeded in becoming a space where truth is tested through dialogue. It has only become a space where belief is reinforced through acclamation.

CONCLUSION

This study mapped the conversation patterns in the YouTube comment section of the documentary film *Pesta Babi: Kolonialisme di Zaman Kita* through Social Network Analysis using YTDT and Gephi. From the 28,328 comments collected, a network of 22,339 nodes and 4,247 edges was formed. After filtering, 191 active actors with 349 meaningful interactions remained. A modularity score of 0.472 confirms statistically significant fragmentation, with 50 clusters and 41 sub-networks that are not connected to one another.

There are three main findings. First, the YouTube comment space for this film does not function as a deliberative space in the Habermasian sense (2022), because a graph density of 0.01 and an average degree approaching 1 indicate an accumulation of statements rather than dialogue. Second, all dominant clusters represent variations of pro-film discourse without meaningful counter-discourse, indicating that the audience was ideologically selected before they typed their first comment. Third, the anomaly of @serdadu_selatan, who self-identifies as a TNI member and confirmed the film's truth as an indigenous person, shows that a person's ideological position cannot always be predicted from their institutional identity.

Theoretically, this study shows that the colonization of the public sphere in the digital era does not always come directly from the state, but can be mediated by the algorithmic logic of platforms that structures visibility unequally (Poell et al., 2019). This finding extends and contextualizes Habermas's public sphere theory into the reality of Indonesia's digital platform landscape, particularly in the context of indigenous rights advocacy movements.

Methodologically, this study demonstrates that the combination of YTDT for data collection and Gephi for SNA visualization constitutes a replicable methodological framework for analyzing digital discourse fragmentation. This pipeline does not require advanced programming skills, making it accessible to communication researchers with varying technical backgrounds. The framework can be applied to other cases, including other advocacy documentary films, cross-platform political discourse, and social issues that require empirical structural mapping of public conversations.

Practically, the findings carry implications for three groups of stakeholders. First, for documentary filmmakers and digital activists, YouTube comment sections are insufficient as deliberative public arenas and must be complemented by cross-platform engagement strategies that reach more ideologically diverse audiences. Second, for platform designers and policymakers, the findings indicate the need to reform recommendation algorithms to promote exposure to diverse viewpoints rather than reinforcing existing ideological positions. Third, for future researchers, it is recommended to expand the scope to platforms such as X/Twitter, TikTok, and Threads to compare whether ideological fragmentation there differs, particularly in response to the Yasinta Moiwend controversy, which appears far more alive outside of YouTube.

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