



## The Role of TikTok in Shaping Cultural Identity and Social Behavior: Content Analysis of “Joget Sadbor” in Sukabumi

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### **Abstract**

This study analyzes the viral TikTok content phenomenon from the account @sadborgunawan86, focusing on the “Joget Sadbor” dance as an expression of cultural identity and social psychology within the community of Bojongkembar Village, Sukabumi. Employing a qualitative approach and narrative analysis, the research examines how this content constructs a narrative of social transformation from farmers to dynamic and innovative digital content creators. Furthermore, the study explores the social and economic impacts arising from this trend, including behavioral changes among villagers and social challenges triggered by cultural and economic shifts induced by digital trends. The interaction between content and netizen comments is also analyzed as a collective cultural identity negotiation process, enriching cultural meaning and social psychology. Findings reveal that TikTok functions as a cross-cultural communication space facilitating local cultural expression while challenging society to critically respond to change. This phenomenon illustrates how social media can serve as a medium for economic empowerment and inclusive cultural dialogue in the digital era, balancing innovation with the preservation of traditional values.

**Keywords:** *Culture; Village; Identity; Psychology; TikTok*

### **Introduction**

TikTok users have experienced rapid growth, becoming one of the most popular communication channels among the younger generation (Rahimullah et al., 2022). TikTok is recognized as a social media platform used for creating and sharing short videos (Kaye et al., 2021). Its production process incorporates various elements such as entertainment, education, and cultural reflection. According to the Indonesia Digital Report 2025, TikTok ranks among the top four most widely used social media platforms in Indonesia (We Are Social & Melwater, 2025). Approximately 77.4% of Indonesia’s 285 million population are estimated to be active TikTok users. This indicates that TikTok is not merely an entertainment platform but also a space where cultural identity and social psychology can be explored and expressed.

TikTok holds the power to shape social movements through the culture it disseminates (Lee & Abidin, 2023). This has led to the emergence of cultures originating from TikTok content consumption.

Expressions of cultural identity and social psychology are inseparable from user interactions on social media. Identity negotiation occurs through popular culture constructed via TikTok content (Firdausiyah et al., 2022). In practice, this also happens through diverse interactions in live chat columns and social media comments. The dynamic communication woven around content can make it trending and capable of shaping specific cultural psychologies. One viral TikTok account in Indonesia that produces entertaining content and drives social change is @sadborgunawan86.

The TikTok account @sadborgunawan86 gained fame from the phenomenon of Gunawan, a traveling tailor who produced TikTok content. While working as a traveling tailor in Jakarta, he frequently live-streamed on TikTok, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. One of his popular contents was the “chicken peck dance” movement. This dance, often performed by him, went viral and eventually became known as the “Joget Sadbor.” His popularity brought him many gifts and economic benefits. This phenomenon encouraged him to return to his hometown in Sukabumi and influenced villagers to participate in content creation.

This action triggered a domino effect, where villagers began participating in making “Joget Sadbor,” creating a unique phenomenon in their village. The domino effect refers to a condition where one event triggers subsequent events. In this case, the domino effect caused a shift from a majority farming community to TikTok content creators. This impacted the social conditions, particularly villagers’ occupations and incomes, which increased (de Queiroz & Motta-Veiga, 2012). This effect led the “Joget Sadbor” trend to transform social conditions in the village and increase the number of creators in Sukabumi. However, the content they produced was uniform and aimed at increasing the gifts they received.

Media audiences are heterogeneous, with diverse backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, education, and more. Utilizing social media as a tool to convey messages, including producing entertainment content, becomes a platform facilitating cross-cultural communication (Yuna et al., 2022). Specifically, content goes viral due to cultural proximity between message producers and audiences, triggering strong acceptance.

This study adopts a cultural psychology perspective to analyze content published by @sadborgunawan86. Cultural psychology refers to how values, norms, and cultural practices influence individual and group behavior. Psychology is understood as the scientific study of mind and behavior (Hayes, 2023), while culture encompasses human habits including meanings, values, and norms shaping group identity (Heyes, 2020). Based on these views, cultural psychology is used to analyze how culture influences individual development, self-perception, motivation, emotions, and thinking (Valsiner, 2019).

In the TikTok phenomenon of @sadborgunawan86, this is evident through various content produced. The content reflects behavioral changes and daily life of Bojongkembar Village residents, Sukabumi. This essentially creates social challenges, especially as villagers shift from farming to mass content creation. Although this is seen as improving the village economy, audiences need to be more critical in filtering information to avoid negative influences from these changes.

The TikTok account @sadborgunawan86, known for “Joget Sadbor” content, exemplifies how this platform can be used to express cultural identity and transform everyday village life culture. Sadbor’s content is not only entertaining but also reflects complex social and cultural dynamics. Using humor and appealing visual elements, Sadbor attracts attention and creates trends among audiences.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze how TikTok content produced by @sadborgunawan86 reflects expressions of cultural identity and social psychology of Bojongkembar Village, Sukabumi. Additionally, the study examines the impact of the viral “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon on social and economic behavioral changes among villagers transitioning from farmers to content

creators. Understanding this allows analysis of social challenges arising from cultural and economic changes triggered by TikTok content trends in the village community.

## ***Methods***

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method focusing on text analysis. The primary data analyzed are TikTok video content produced by @sadborgunawan86 and various netizen comments interacting with the content. Data collection involved documenting video content and gathering relevant comments from the TikTok platform. The purpose of these steps is to understand cultural messages, expressions of social psychology, and communication patterns emerging in the content and audience responses.

The main method used is narrative analysis. The analysis focuses on how stories or narratives are constructed in TikTok content and netizen comments. The researcher traces the narrative of “Joget Sadbor” as a new cultural symbol and social change, such as the shift from farming to content creation. Besides identifying main and sub-narratives, the analysis includes narrative structures such as characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions appearing in the videos. The narrative built by content producers is then linked to narratives emerging from netizen comments to observe how cultural meaning and social psychology are negotiated and reinforced or challenged by audiences.

The analysis process involves observing interactions between content narratives and netizen comments in depth to understand communication dynamics and cultural identity negotiation. Data validity is ensured through triangulation between content and comments and rechecking the socio-cultural context underlying the phenomenon. The study aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the viral “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon’s impact on social and cultural life in Bojongkembar Village.

## ***Results and Discussion***

### **Viral Phenomenon and Cultural Narrative Construction**

The viral “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon produced by TikTok account @sadborgunawan86 constructs a strong and dynamic new cultural narrative in Bojongkembar Village, Sukabumi. This narrative has grown to become a national issue recognized by Indonesian society. It creates a new trend potentially influencing public perception of TikTok’s potential and assessments of human resource capacity, especially regarding Sukabumi residents. The main narrative in the videos includes social transformation from traditional farming to digital content creation, fulfilling staple food needs like rice simply by dancing on TikTok, and ease of job applications as Sadbor employees. This narrative emerges because social media serves as a space for expression and interaction, with discussions in comment sections reinforcing the phenomenon.

By combining humor and local cultural symbols such as distinctive dance moves, language, and village settings, the narrative not only entertains but also becomes a medium for expressing evolving cultural identity. The cultural identity displayed is flexible and innovative, blending tradition with digital modernity, reflecting the social psychology of a community adapting to changing times. Rural communities, often stereotyped as backward, now demonstrate their ability to keep pace with modern developments and even build a digital village as content creators.

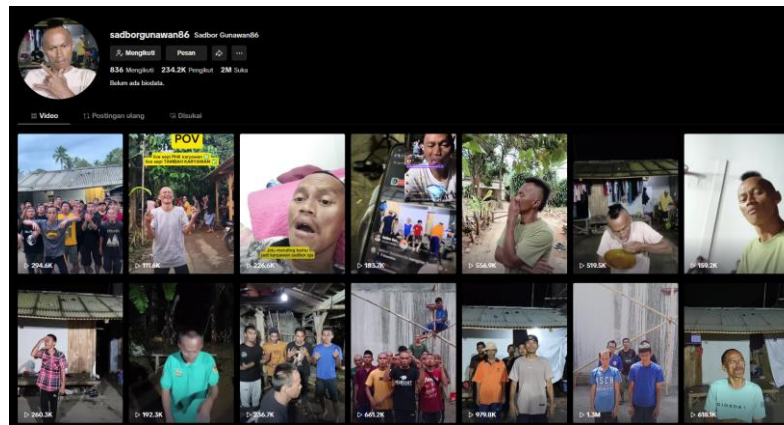


Figure 1. TikTok account @sadborgunawan86

Figure 1 shows follower data for @sadborgunawan86 and several videos viewed by over 100,000 viewers. Some content features dancing and waiting for job applications. The main frame underpinning the message frequently raised in these videos is the need to meet basic necessities, motivating them to become content creators with clear income. The narrative structure involves the main character, Gunawan, as creator and symbol of change; Bojongkembar Village as cultural and social setting; and conflicts involving social and economic adaptation challenges faced by villagers.

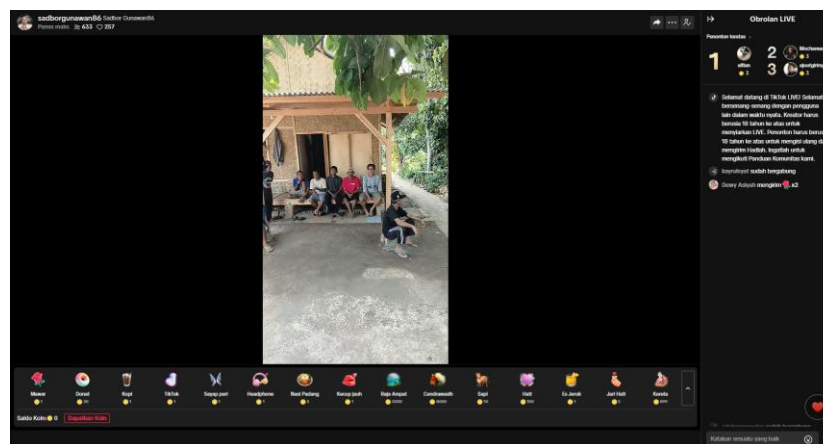


Figure 2. Live streaming @sadborgunawan86

The narrative resolution is seen in villagers' acceptance and participation in the "Joget Sadbor" trend, opening new economic opportunities while strengthening collective identity and togetherness. Figure 2 shows villagers live streaming together in a prepared area, dancing when receiving gifts from viewers. Icons displayed represent gift values convertible into economic value to meet basic needs. Although the account is personally owned by Gunawan, content production is a collaborative effort with villagers forming a team. This fosters a new culture influencing their psychology. Traditional values and norms previously upheld in the village now shift toward modern living through digital technology livelihoods.

However, this narrative does not stand alone; interaction with netizen comments forms sub-narratives enriching cultural and social psychological meanings. Comments range from positive support to critiques emphasizing the importance of preserving traditional values, creating a collective cultural identity negotiation space. Comment analysis reveals active audience participation in shaping and negotiating content meaning. Positive comments appreciate creativity and socio-economic impact, while critical comments warn of cultural homogenization risks and the need to maintain traditional values.

Sample comments are shown in Table 1. This dialogic process reflects cultural psychology where identity is dynamic, evolving through social interaction. TikTok as a cross-cultural communication platform enables rapid and broad exchange of values and cultural practices, challenging society to critically respond to change. Cultural negotiation in this digital space is key to balancing innovation and tradition preservation.

Table 1. Sample Comments on @sadborgunawan86 Content

Account	Comment
dorayaki157	- What's the difference with mud bath?
septianstore234	- The whole village is a dark system
Blod	- Sunda dark system 🤔
EdoPS	- Sent my job application a week ago, no call yet
si_AWIE	- The application is empty, bro 😞😞😞
<i>karlitu</i> TLMY	- This is Indonesia, boss
Tukangngemis	- Similar
Hambur Heucet	- Now many live street performers on TikTok 🤔🤔🤔
Isna	- Bro, the paper is blank
Alexndr	- The paper is blank, sis
Modal Receh	- Hopefully PT Sadbor opens CPNS job vacancies later
Ringgo	- The rice field is drying up, bro, as expected...
by	- Bro, you said you'd go live at 9 earlier
Rio&Indah	- Only certain people can read the application content 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔
Tiga Satu Satu	- My application hasn't been accepted yet 😞
Rumah Tangerang 'Worth To Buy'	- Danceeeeet 🤔
tank_1922 ;♡;	- 🤔 low
AG ♡ 147	- Towards an anxious Indonesia 🤔

Source: <https://www.tiktok.com/@sadborgunawan86/video/7402093653847477510>

Despite this, overall viewer comments tend to be negative, reflecting pessimism about the situation. Technology was initially created to demonstrate civilization progress, but the “Joget Sadbor”

viral phenomenon in Sukabumi suggests a regression, evoking concerns about an anxious Indonesia, poor human resources, and labeling the village as a 'dark system.' The narratives built by content and comments depict a complex social process where cultural identity and social psychology of Bojongkembar Village are continuously shaped and renewed collectively. The "Joget Sadbor" phenomenon is not merely an entertainment trend but also an economic empowerment medium and inclusive cultural dialogue space. Through this narrative, the community expresses aspirations, faces social challenges, and adapts to technological developments without losing cultural roots. Thus, this narrative analysis confirms that social media, especially TikTok, plays a crucial role in cultural identity formation and social change in the digital era.

### New Cultural Narrative Production

The "Joget Sadbor" phenomenon popularized by TikTok account @sadborgunawan86 has successfully constructed a strong and captivating new cultural narrative, especially in Bojongkembar Village, Sukabumi. The narrative portrays a significant social transformation, shifting community identity from traditional farming to active digital content creation on social media. This change is not merely occupational but also involves shifts in perspectives and social interactions within the community. Through "Joget Sadbor," villagers do not only present entertainment but also express their cultural identity in a modern and technologically relevant manner. This narrative symbolizes how rural communities can adapt and utilize digital platforms to expand their local culture's reach to broader audiences.

A key factor contributing to the viral acceptance of "Joget Sadbor" content is the strong use of humor and local cultural symbols embedded in each video. Humor fundamentally enhances the positive effect of content by providing entertainment (Putri et al., 2023). The humor in this content functions not only as entertainment but also as an effective communication tool to convey cultural messages lightly and impactfully (Chiew et al., 2019). For example, the simple yet unique dance moves become a recognizable hallmark easily followed by many, fostering a sense of togetherness and collective identity among viewers and content creators. Additionally, local cultural symbols such as regional language, traditional clothing, and village backgrounds strengthen emotional attachment between content and audience (Siregar & Rochelman, 2021). Cultural symbols in Indonesia tend to build bonds due to physical and non-physical proximity, especially among those familiar with the culture, particularly those sharing the same ethnicity or race. The combination of humor and cultural symbols makes "Joget Sadbor" not just a fleeting trend but a cultural phenomenon capable of enduring and evolving.

Furthermore, "Joget Sadbor" content serves as a medium for expressing a dynamic and innovative cultural identity. In cultural psychology, cultural identity is not static but continuously developed and negotiated through social interaction and communication media. Cultural identity is always dynamic and adaptive to social changes (Purnama et al., 2021). TikTok, as a social media platform, has the power to construct new social values and norms agreed upon by society (Sharif et al., 2023). TikTok provides rural communities space to express their values, norms, and customs creatively through @sadborgunawan86's content. Through this content, villagers showcase not only their traditional side but also integrate modern elements relevant to youth and global trends. This creates a flexible and adaptive cultural identity bridging tradition and modernity. Thus, "Joget Sadbor" exemplifies how local culture can thrive and evolve in the digital era without losing its roots and meaning.

Moreover, this new cultural narrative production demonstrates how social media can empower communities. This is inseparable from social media's strong influence on human life, especially through TikTok utilization (Anwar & Muniruddin, 2023). Through collaboratively produced content, Bojongkembar villagers gain recognition, popularity, and economic opportunities previously difficult to access, especially given their challenging agricultural land conditions due to climate change in Indonesia.

The transformation from farmers to content creators opens new avenues for income improvement and welfare enhancement. This narrative inspires other communities seeking to leverage digital technology to promote their culture and local potential. However, behind this success lies the challenge of balancing content commercialization and cultural value preservation to avoid erosion by market dynamics and fleeting trends.

The production of this new cultural narrative through “Joget Sadbor” content illustrates a complex creative and social process where culture, technology, and economy interact. The narrative reflects not only local social changes but also how culture continuously transforms and adapts in the context of digital globalization. With the right approach, this phenomenon can model sustainable and inclusive digital culture development that respects diversity and local cultural richness while opening new opportunities for community growth.

### **Responses and Identity Negotiation through Comments**

The interaction between TikTok content from @sadborgunawan86 and netizen comments presents a fascinating dynamic in the construction of cultural narratives and social psychology within the community. The comments reflect a broad spectrum of views from a heterogeneous audience, highlighting the diversity of cultural backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Many comments express positive support, appreciating the creativity and innovation demonstrated through the “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon. This support extends beyond mere entertainment, recognizing the social and economic impacts felt by the residents of Bojongkembar Village. Numerous netizens perceive this phenomenon as an example of how local culture can be elevated and introduced to the digital realm in an engaging and accessible manner. They regard the content as a fresh and relevant expression of cultural identity aligned with contemporary developments, even though some segments of society view the phenomenon as a regression in rural civilization.

Critical comments emphasize the importance of preserving traditional cultural values that form the community’s roots, particularly concerning daily occupations. These critiques arise from concerns that the TikTok trend has led villagers to abandon their everyday livelihoods in favor of content production. While TikTok serves as a medium to expand popular cultural values, it simultaneously poses a threat to the survival of local cultural values within community life (Hasan et al., 2023). Critics worry that the popularity and commercialization of digital content may displace or erase long-held cultural values passed down through generations. Some netizens highlight the risk of cultural homogenization due to uniform trends and the dominance of modern lifestyles that may not align with local contexts. This is partly because social media can reinforce cultural hegemony through algorithms that amplify certain content (Subawa & Widhiasthini, 2020). Such criticism reflects an awareness of the need to balance cultural innovation with tradition preservation to maintain cultural identity’s meaning and continuity. Consequently, these comments serve not only as social evaluations but also as critical dialogues enriching the understanding of culture and social psychology within the community.

Moreover, these comments generate additional narratives that deepen the cultural and social psychological meanings embedded in the “Joget Sadbor” content. These supplementary narratives emerge from active audience engagement, where netizens do not passively receive messages but contribute to meaning-making processes. Through their comments, netizens express diverse interpretations, experiences, and values, creating new layers of meaning that complement or challenge the primary narrative constructed by content producers. This process illustrates that culture and social identity are not fixed but continuously evolve through social interaction and communication. Netizen comments become a negotiation space where multiple perspectives converge and interact, resulting in richer and more complex understandings.

Communication plays a crucial role as an interaction skill in developing and negotiating cultural identity (Mahmud et al., 2023). The interplay between content and comments demonstrates a collective cultural identity negotiation process occurring in the digital space. From a cultural psychology perspective, identity formation is not solely an internal process within individuals or groups but also occurs through dialogue and interaction with others (Konyukova & Sydorovska, 2022). TikTok, as a social platform, facilitates intense two-way communication between content creators and audiences, making cultural identity a product of dynamic collective processes. The narrative constructed by @sadborgunawan86 does not exist in isolation but is continuously shaped and expanded by diverse netizen responses. This process exemplifies how popular culture can serve as an inclusive arena for negotiating meaning and identity, accommodating various voices and experiences.

Netizen comments function not only as feedback or reactions but also as integral components of cultural production. Through this interaction, the community expresses aspirations, concerns, and hopes related to ongoing social and cultural changes. The cultural identity negotiation occurring in comment sections reflects efforts to balance maintaining cultural roots with adapting to contemporary developments. This phenomenon demonstrates that social media, particularly TikTok, is not merely an entertainment tool but also a vital social dialogue space for cultural identity formation and preservation in the digital age.

### **Social and Cultural Psychological Impacts**

The viral phenomenon of TikTok content from @sadborgunawan86, especially the “Joget Sadbor,” signifies substantial social changes within Bojongkembang Village and its surroundings. One of the most tangible changes is the occupational shift from predominantly farming to active digital content creation using social media platforms. This shift transcends mere employment changes, reflecting altered community perspectives on technology and digital media as tools for communication, expression, and livelihood. This transformation illustrates the village’s capacity to adapt to contemporary developments and seize opportunities presented by the digital era, simultaneously reshaping traditional social and cultural interaction patterns.

TikTok plays a pivotal role as a cross-cultural communication platform enabling rapid and broad exchanges of ideas, values, and cultural practices. As a medium of information, it offers multimodal messages facilitating cultural communication (Liu & Li, 2023). Content like “Joget Sadbor” spreads beyond local boundaries, reaching national and even international audiences, thereby amplifying local culture’s visibility and triggering broader social changes (Jumali & Mustaffa, 2024). However, TikTok also challenges users to critically evaluate the content they consume. Users face diverse information and trends that can positively or negatively influence their values and norms. Therefore, the platform is not only a source of entertainment but also a space where society must discern and assess cultural messages to preserve identity and essential traditional values.

In this context, cultural negotiation processes become crucial to maintaining a balance between innovation and traditional value preservation. Cultural negotiation is necessary because new cultural forms can alter community life and potentially erode long-standing noble values (Han et al., 2021). Changes brought by digital phenomena like “Joget Sadbor” should be understood as part of evolving cultural dynamics rather than threats to be wholly rejected. This negotiation involves dialogue between younger generations more open to innovation and technology and older generations who uphold tradition and established values. Through such interactions, communities can find common ground that allows local culture to remain vibrant and relevant amid globalization and digitalization. This negotiation process is also evident in interactions between content producers and audiences on social media, where cultural meanings and social identities are collectively shaped and renewed.



The “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon and its TikTok interactions represent more than a mere entertainment trend; they reflect broader and more complex social transformations. TikTok, as a cross-cultural communication space, offers opportunities and challenges for communities to continuously adapt and innovate without losing cultural roots. The cultural negotiation occurring in digital spaces is a key factor in sustaining cultural identity while paving the way for inclusive and sustainable social development in the modern era.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that TikTok content from @sadborgunawan86, particularly the “Joget Sadbor” phenomenon, clearly reflects expressions of cultural identity and social psychology within Bojongkembar Village through a narrative of social transformation from farmers to dynamic and innovative digital content creators. This phenomenon brings significant changes in villagers’ social and economic behaviors, as they begin leveraging digital technology to improve welfare and expand social networks. The interaction between content and netizen comments reveals a collective cultural identity negotiation process, where diverse perspectives and cultural values interact, enriching cultural meanings while challenging society to balance innovation with traditional value preservation. Consequently, this research successfully uncovers the social and economic impacts of the TikTok content trend and the social challenges arising from cultural and economic changes in the village community, aligning with the study’s objectives.

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