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Analysis of TikTok Users' Motivational Factors Regarding Their Interest in Participating in the Re-Contextualization Trend of the Film "The Notebook"

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the relationship between TikTok user motivation and participation interest in the trend of re-contextualizing scenes from the film "The Notebook" combined with the song "The Man Who Can't Be Moved". The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method of 70 respondents selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through a 4-point Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment correlation. The results showed a strong positive relationship between motivation and participation interest with a correlation value of 0.768. Validity and reliability tests showed that all instruments were valid and reliable (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.896). These findings strengthen the Uses and Gratifications Theory that media users are active in fulfilling their needs for entertainment, self-expression, and social interaction. In addition, the decoding process and emotional strength of the content also encourage user participation. This study confirms that motivation is an important factor in increasing user engagement in participatory digital culture on TikTok.

Keywords: user motivation, participation interest, TikTok trend, uses and gratifications theory, participatory culture.

INTRODUCTION

The development of short-video-based social media, particularly TikTok, has significantly transformed the patterns of content consumption and production among digital society. This platform no longer positions users as passive consumers, but as

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active actors who selectively choose, use, and produce content according to their personal needs and goals. The main characteristic of TikTok, which is algorithm-based with ease of content production, gives every user an equal opportunity to create and distribute messages widely. From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, media users have autonomy in determining media use to fulfill psychological and social needs, such as entertainment, social interaction, and identity formation (Suliyana et al., 2024).

This transformation shows that social media not only functions as a means of entertainment, but also as a space for self-expression and the construction of digital identity. Users utilize platforms such as TikTok to follow trends, manage their self-image, and gain social recognition from the online environment (Rachmaniah, 2025). In this context, digital identity becomes something dynamic and continuously shaped through social interactions occurring on the platform. Research shows that users tend to adjust the content they produce to audience expectations and digital community norms in order to obtain positive responses such as likes, comments, and shares (Montag et al., 2021; Omar & Dequan, 2020). In addition, the increasing popularity of TikTok is also supported by its ability to create a participatory digital cultural ecosystem. This culture is characterized by high levels of interaction between users, ease of collaboration, and ongoing practices of content reproduction and modification. One concrete form of this phenomenon is the re-contextualization trend, namely the practice of reinterpreting popular works into new forms that are more relevant to current contexts. In the TikTok context, re-contextualization occurs through the reuse of content which is then combined with user creativity, thereby encouraging active engagement and participation in digital content production (Rizanul et al., 2025; Tanvaltin et al., 2024). This phenomenon can be seen in the reuse of scenes from the film The Notebook combined with the song The Man Who Can't Be Moved. The combination of these visual and audio elements produces a new construction of meaning that is emotional and reinterpretative. Users do not merely copy content, but also add personal context, thereby creating diverse variations of meaning. This practice reflects the characteristics of a participatory digital culture based on user creativity (Rahmah et al., 2023).

User participation in the re-contextualization trend does not occur randomly, but is influenced by various motivational factors. From the Uses and Gratifications perspective, individuals actively use media to fulfill certain needs which can then drive further actions, including participation in content production. Motivations such as the need for entertainment, self-expression, social interaction, and the search for social recognition

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play a role in shaping individuals' interest in engaging with a digital trend. Research shows that the higher the need for social validation, the greater the tendency of individuals to participate in trends that are currently popular (A & Putri, 2023; Maulana et al., 2025).

In addition, the self-concept factor also influences individuals' tendency to display their identity through the content they produce (Khofifah, 2023). A positive self-concept can encourage individuals to be more confident in expressing themselves in digital spaces, while a self-concept that is more sensitive to social judgment may make individuals more selective in following trends. In the TikTok context, this can be seen in how users choose the type of content that matches the self-image they want to present to their audience.

Another phenomenon that influences user participation is Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), namely the fear of being left behind from ongoing trends or social activities. FOMO drives users to immediately participate in viral trends in order to remain relevant within their digital community. Research in Indonesia shows that FOMO has a significant influence on the intensity of social media use as well as individuals' tendency to follow digital trends (A & Putri, 2023). In the TikTok context, FOMO can be a major driver for users to participate in re-contextualization trends, including trends involving the reinterpretation of popular works.

A number of previous studies have examined re-contextualization practices in the context of other social media, such as the use of retweets accompanied by comments as a form of re-meaning on Twitter (Rezeki et al., 2020), as well as the phenomenon of trend participation on Instagram influenced by users' social and emotional motivations (Maulana et al., 2025). However, research specifically examining the relationship between user motivational factors and participation interest in audiovisual-based re-contextualization trends on TikTok remains limited. Moreover, studies linking motivational dimensions with content reinterpretation practices in the context of participatory digital culture have not been widely explored empirically, particularly in the Indonesian context.

A number of previous studies have examined social media usage motivations and user participation across various digital platforms. However, research specifically examining the influence of motivational factors on participation interest in audiovisual-based re-contextualization trends, particularly those featuring scenes from popular films such as "The Notebook", remains limited. In addition, studies linking motivational dimensions with content reinterpretation practices in the context of participatory digital culture on TikTok have also not been widely explored empirically, especially among users in Indonesia. Based on this research gap, this study is important to conduct in order to

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understand the relationship between user motivational factors and participation interest in re-contextualization trends on TikTok. This understanding is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of social media user behavior dynamics, particularly in the context of digital culture that increasingly emphasizes creativity and participation. Thus, this study aims to analyze the motivational factors of TikTok users regarding their interest in participating in the re-contextualization trend of scenes from the film "The Notebook" combined with the song "The Man Who Can't Be Moved". This study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of digital communication studies, particularly regarding the participatory behavior of social media users, as well as enrich the literature on the application of Uses and Gratifications Theory in the context of new media. In addition, this study is also expected to provide a practical contribution for creative industry players, content creators, and other researchers in understanding the dynamics of contemporary digital culture that increasingly emphasizes creativity, participation, and the reproduction of meaning.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

TikTok user motivation can be explained through the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). Social media use among Generation Z students is not only influenced by social needs, but also by the high level of creativity possessed by this generation (Putra et al., 2022). The Uses and Gratifications Theory assumes that users have alternative choices to satisfy their needs. This theory emphasizes an audience that actively determines its choice of mass media (Angkari et al., 2007). TikTok, as a platform based on the For You Page algorithm, forms a strong participatory culture. Users are not only consumers, but also content producers who follow and modify trends. Technological development has brought major changes to people's lives, especially in how they communicate. Social media, as one of the most significant technological innovations, has become an essential need in the modern era and can be accessed at any time (Tesalonika et al., 2024).

The encoding-decoding concept introduced by Stuart Hall explains that audiences are not passive in receiving media messages, but actively interpret meaning according to their social and cultural backgrounds and individual experiences. Simply put, encoding can be understood as a process of production, construction, and framing of reality, which generally uses the ideology of the dominant group or serves hegemonic values. Decoding, meanwhile, is the process of meaning-making and interpretation of messages by the audience based on their experiences and social context (Fauzi & Prasetyo, 2023).

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TikTok presents a concept of short videos combined with music, visual effects, and interactive features. This platform encourages its users to actively create content, rather than merely being passive viewers. This participatory culture makes TikTok a space for expression favored by Generation Z (Putri & Anggreni, 2025). This shows a shift from a passive audience to a participatory audience. This can also be seen in the re-contextualization trend of the film "The Notebook" combined with the song "The Man Who Can't Be Moved". A film scene that originally carried a classic romantic meaning can be reinterpreted as a representation of waiting, loss, or a user's personal experience. According to (Ratnasari, 2016), music is a medium of entertainment and also a medium for expressing adolescents' feelings. Various music genres provide different nuances, allowing a listener to choose according to the genre they desire or their current mood. Observational results have proven that music can heal the feelings of someone who is angry or sad; everyone who listens to music will experience a positive impact in regulating their emotions, because music can express oneself as desired.

The combination of user motivation, the active interpretation process (decoding), the emotional power of the content, and social influence within the TikTok ecosystem ultimately drives participation interest in the trend. Users are not only interested in watching, but are also encouraged to recreate their own versions as a form of expression and engagement. According to (Anggraini et al., 2024), if a person lacks enthusiasm in studying a subject, it is unlikely that they will perform well in it. Interest refers to an individual's tendency to focus their attention and actively participate.

It can be concluded that TikTok user motivation (variable X), reinforced by the active decoding process of content, influences participation interest in the re-contextualization trend (variable Y), especially when the content has high emotional power and social relevance.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the relationship between TikTok user motivation and participation interest in the re-contextualization trend of the film "The Notebook". A quantitative approach was used because this study aims to test the relationship between variables objectively and measurably through numerical data (Sugiyono, 2021).

The type of research used is explanatory, which aims to explain the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Neuman, 2019). The research design is a survey using a questionnaire instrument.

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The population in this study consists of TikTok users who are aware of or have been exposed to the re-contextualization trend of the film The Notebook, although the exact number is unknown. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, namely a sample selection technique based on certain criteria determined by the researcher according to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). The respondent criteria include: (1) active TikTok users, (2) at least 17 years of age, and (3) aware of or have seen the trend. The sample size in this study was 70 respondents.

This study involves two variables, namely user motivation as the independent variable (X) and participation interest as the dependent variable (Y). The research instrument was designed in the form of a questionnaire consisting of a number of statements based on the indicators of each variable.

The measurement scale used is a 4-point Likert scale. The validity test was conducted using Pearson correlation, with items declared valid if the calculated r value is greater than the table r value. The reliability test used Cronbach's Alpha, where the instrument is declared reliable if the alpha value is greater than 0.7.

The data used in this study is primary data obtained directly through the distribution of questionnaires to respondents. Data analysis was conducted using the Pearson Product Moment correlation test to determine the relationship between the motivation and participation interest variables.

DISCUSSION

Respondent Profile

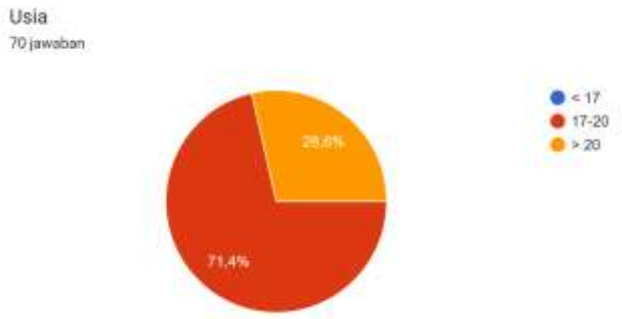
From the results of data collection through a questionnaire distributed using Google Forms, 70 respondents were obtained. The respondent profile in this study was observed to provide a picture of what the research sample looks like. Respondents are categorized based on age and the frequency of TikTok use per day.

Based on age group, there are two dominant age groups: respondents aged 17-20 years totaling 50 people (71.4%) and respondents aged above 20 years totaling 20 people (28.6%). Meanwhile, there were no respondents under the age of 17. (See Figure 1)

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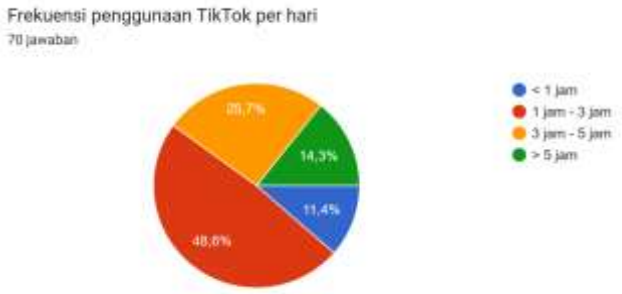
Figure 1. Age of Respondents



Source: Data processed by researchers (2026)

Based on daily TikTok usage, respondents who used TikTok for 1-3 hours numbered 34 people (48.6%) and respondents who used TikTok for 3-5 hours numbered 18 people (25.7%). Meanwhile, respondents who used TikTok for more than 5 hours numbered 10 people (14.3%) and those who used TikTok for less than 1 hour numbered 8 people (11.4%). (See Figure 2)

Figure 2. Daily TikTok Usage



Source: Data processed by researchers (2026)

Questionnaire Results

The analysis in this study uses a correlation test to determine the relationship between the TikTok user motivation variable as the independent variable (X) and the participation interest variable as the dependent variable (Y). The correlation test is used to examine the extent of the relationship between the two variables, whether it is weak, moderate, or strong.

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Table 1. Correlation Coefficient

Variable	Motivation (X)	Participation Interest (Y)
Motivation (X)	1	0.768
Participation Interest (Y)	0.768	1

Source: Data processed by researchers (2026)

A value of 1 in the table indicates a perfect correlation between the same variable, while a value of 0.768 indicates a strong relationship between the motivation and participation interest variables. Based on the calculation results, the motivation variable (X) has an average value of 10.91, which falls into the moderate category. This indicates that TikTok users' motivation to follow the re-contextualization trend of the film "The Notebook" is at a fairly good level. Meanwhile, the participation interest variable (Y) has an average value of 13.31, which also falls into the moderate category. Although both variables fall into the moderate category, the strong relationship indicates that motivation plays an important role in increasing participation interest. The correlation value of 0.768 indicates that this relationship is positive. This value shows that there is a strong relationship between TikTok user motivation and participation interest in the re-contextualization trend of the film "The Notebook".

Table 2. Research Instrument Validity Test Results

Statement Item	*r calculated*	*r table (0.235)*	Description
Q1	0.728	0.235	Valid
Q2	0.796	0.235	Valid
Q3	0.709	0.235	Valid
Q4	0.672	0.235	Valid
Q5	0.710	0.235	Valid
Q6	0.614	0.235	Valid
Q7	0.858	0.235	Valid

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Q8	0.764	0.235	Valid
Q9	0.634	0.235	Valid

Source: Data processed by researchers (2026)

Table 3. Research Instrument Reliability Test Results

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Standard Alpha	Description
Motivation & Participation Interest	9	0.896	0.70	Reliable

Source: Data processed by researchers (2026)

The validity test results show that all statement items have a calculated r value greater than the table r value of 0.235. The calculated r values range from 0.614 to 0.858, so all items are declared valid and able to accurately measure the research construct.

Instrument validity shows the ability of a measuring tool to accurately represent the construct being studied. A high item-total correlation value indicates that each item makes a significant contribution to the variable being measured and is able to explain the construct consistently. This is in line with research (Fadli et al., 2023), which states that a correlation value greater than the table r value indicates that the instrument item has high validity and is suitable for use in research.

Furthermore, the reliability test results show a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.896. This value is above the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument has a very high level of internal consistency.

Reliability indicates the extent to which an instrument is able to produce consistent data in measurement. A high Cronbach's Alpha value indicates that the items in the instrument are strongly related and are able to measure the construct stably. This is supported by research (Nurhasanah et al., 2025), which shows that a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.90 falls into the very good category and reflects a high level of internal consistency of the instrument.

Thus, based on the validity and reliability test results, the research instrument has met the criteria as a good measuring tool, so it can be used in the data analysis at the next stage.

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DISCUSSION

The research results show that the higher the user motivation, the higher their interest in participating in the re-contextualization trend. This is in line with the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which states that individuals use media to fulfill certain needs, such as entertainment, self-expression, and social interaction.

In addition, the decoding process also plays a role in driving participation. Users do not only receive content passively, but also reinterpret the meaning of the content according to their personal experiences, then re-express it in the form of new content.

The emotional power of the combination of film visuals and music further strengthens user engagement. Content with emotional relevance tends to more easily trigger participation, as users feel personally connected to the resulting meaning.

This finding is supported by previous research stating that motivations such as self-expression, enjoyment, and the need for social recognition significantly influence user participation on social media (Montag et al., 2021; Omar & Dequan, 2020). Thus, motivation can be considered a major factor driving user engagement in digital trends, particularly in the context of content re-contextualization on TikTok.

In addition, although the average values of motivation and participation interest fall into the moderate category, the high correlation value indicates that the relationship between the two variables is consistent and significant. This indicates that an increase in motivation, even if not very high in aggregate, still has a strong influence on increasing user participation interest.

In the context of the re-contextualization trend of scenes from the film “The Notebook”, this finding shows that content with strong emotional content has a greater appeal to be reinterpreted by users. The combination of visual and audio narrative provides space for users to connect their personal experiences, thereby increasing the drive to participate in the trend.

Participation interest in this study represents users’ psychological tendency before taking actual action. Thus, participation interest becomes an important indicator in understanding social media user behavior, as it reflects the potential for engagement that can develop into real actions, such as creating or resharing content.

Practically, these findings imply that content creators can increase user participation by presenting content that is able to fulfill the audience’s emotional, social, and self-expression needs. Emotionally relevant content has been proven to be more effective in driving user engagement in digital trends.

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CONCLUSION

This study comprehensively shows that TikTok user motivation has a strong and significant relationship with participation interest in the re-contextualization trend of scenes from the film “The Notebook” combined with the song “The Man Who Can’t Be Moved”. The correlation analysis result of 0.768 indicates that the relationship between the two variables falls into the strong and positive category, so that an increase in user motivation is directly followed by an increase in interest in participating in the trend. This finding confirms that participatory behavior on social media does not occur by chance, but is the result of users’ internal drives related to their psychological and social needs.

From the perspective of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, the results of this study reinforce the assumption that audiences are active parties in selecting, using, and producing media content to fulfill various needs, such as entertainment, self-expression, social interaction, and the pursuit of recognition. TikTok, as an algorithm-based platform, provides ample space for users to be not only consumers but also content producers. This creates a digital ecosystem that encourages active engagement, where users are driven to participate in emerging trends as a way of fulfilling these needs.

This study also found that the process of decoding, or active interpretation, has a very important role in shaping user participation. Referring to Stuart Hall’s encoding-decoding concept, users do not merely receive the meaning constructed by content creators, but actively reinterpret messages based on their own backgrounds, experiences, and social contexts. In the context of the re-contextualization trend, this process is clearly visible when users adapt scenes from the film “The Notebook” into more personal versions, thereby producing new meanings that differ from the original.

This reinterpretation process shows that media content is open and dynamic, where meaning is not singular but can develop according to the audience’s experiences. This also reinforces the characteristics of a participatory digital culture that emphasizes creativity, collaboration, and the ongoing reproduction of meaning. Thus, user participation in trends is not merely following the flow, but is also a form of self-expression and the construction of digital identity.

In addition to motivational factors and the decoding process, this study also highlights the importance of emotional power in driving user engagement. The combination of visually meaningful film scenes with emotional musical elements has been proven to create a strong impact on the audience. Content with emotional depth tends to be more easily connected to users’ personal experiences, thereby increasing the likelihood of being reinterpreted and reproduced in the form of new content or meaning.

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Thus, the emotional dimension becomes one of the key factors in increasing the appeal and sustainability of a trend on social media.

The research results also show that although the average levels of motivation and participation interest fall into the moderate category, the strong relationship between the two variables indicates a consistent and significant influence. This indicates that, even at a not-too-high level of motivation, users still tend to participate if other supporting factors are present, such as content relevance, social pressure, or trend popularity. Thus, motivation does not stand alone, but interacts with various other factors in shaping social media user behavior.

In a broader context, these findings also reveal the role of social factors such as the need for validation and the tendency toward Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which indirectly drive individuals to participate in viral trends. The desire to remain relevant within the digital community and to gain social recognition is one of the important drivers in increasing participation. This shows that TikTok user behavior is not only based on individual factors, but is also influenced by the social dynamics occurring within the platform.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of digital communication studies by integrating three main aspects, namely user motivation, the active interpretation process, and the emotional power of content, in explaining participatory behavior on social media. This study extends the application of the Uses and Gratifications Theory by linking it to the practice of content re-contextualization, and reinforces the relevance of encoding-decoding theory in the context of new, interactive, and participatory media.

In summary, the results of this study provide implications for content creators, creative industry players, and digital media practitioners. To increase user participation, the content produced needs to consider emotional aspects, social relevance, and opportunities for reinterpretation by the audience. Content that provides space for users to add personal meaning tends to more easily develop into a viral and sustainable trend. In addition, an understanding of user motivation can help in designing more effective and targeted content strategies.

On the other hand, this study also has limitations, particularly the relatively limited sample size and the use of a quantitative approach that has not been able to deeply explore users' subjective experiences. Therefore, future research is recommended to develop a larger and more diverse sample size so that the research results can be generalized more broadly. In addition, a qualitative approach can be used to explore in

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more depth how users interpret content and the emotional experiences they feel during the process of participation.

Future research could also consider other variables that potentially influence participation interest, such as the role of the TikTok algorithm, the intensity of social media use, the level of digital literacy, and the influence of users' community or social networks. By including these variables, the analysis of social media user participatory behavior can become more comprehensive and in-depth.

Overall, this study confirms that the re-contextualization trend on TikTok is a phenomenon driven not only by content popularity, but also by the complex interaction between individual motivation, active interpretation, emotional power, and social dynamics within the digital ecosystem. User participation in this trend reflects a paradigm shift from a passive audience to an active audience that not only consumes but also produces and distributes meaning. Thus, social media such as TikTok is no longer merely an entertainment platform, but has developed into a dynamic space for the construction of meaning, identity, and social interaction in the digital era.

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