

# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In recent months, the hashtag *#KaburAjaDulu*, which can be translated as “lets escape for now,” has gained popularity among Indonesian youth on social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter). X is known as a platform that supports open and real-time conversations, allowing users to respond quickly to emerging social and economic issues. The use of hashtags enables acceleration of the spread of discussions about issues, such as those represented through *#KaburAjaDulu*. The majority of active X users in Indonesia are young people who are digitally literate and actively involved in discussing various social issues. Based on the (Social & Kepios, 2024) report, the majority of X users in Indonesia are in the 18–34 age range, the group that feels the most impact on economic health and job instability. Therefore, this platform is the right space for them to express their concerns through the use of the hashtag *#KaburAjaDulu*.

The hashtag *#KaburAjaDulu* first appeared on social media X in December 2024. Initially, this hashtag was used as a constructive discussion forum, where the younger generation shared information regarding job opportunities abroad, educational scholarships, and tips for adapting to the culture of the destination country. However, over time, the use of this hashtag has shifted its function to become a medium of expression of collective disappointment towards various domestic problems, such as rising prices of basic necessities, high tax burdens, limited job opportunities, and rampant corruption cases in the government. (Fahmi, 2025) found that the hashtag *#KaburAjaDulu* is predominantly used by young adults aged 19-29 years, making up 50.81% of its users. Meanwhile, 38.10% are teenagers under 18 years old. In terms of gender, the majority are men (59.92%), while women account for 40.08%. These numbers paint a stark picture this hashtag is not just a fleeting trend; it is used to communicate

a digital outcry from Indonesia's youth. It is a form of symbolic resistance that takes place in the digital space through certain discourses and communication patterns (Dahlgren, 2018; Fuchs, 2021).

The digital outcry voices Indonesian youth is resistance towards the country socio-economic condition in Indonesia, especially among the younger generation, are often marked by challenges such as high unemployment rates, job uncertainty, and rising costs of living. *#KaburAjaDulu* phenomenon is closely related to brain drain, which is the tendency of skilled and highly educated individuals to work or settle abroad in order to obtain a better quality of life. Based on data from the ((BPS), 2024) there are 7.47 million productive-age people in Indonesia who are still unemployed, while the average worker's salary is only around IDR 3.27 million per month. This income is considered insufficient to meet basic needs, so many young professionals choose to seek employment opportunities abroad.

*#KaburAjaDulu* is not just a trend on social media, but also reflects the aspirations, disappointments, and forms of constructive criticism from Indonesian youth towards the socio-economic realities they face. This phenomenon emphasizes the need for more attention from the government and related parties in creating an environment that is favorable for the growth and welfare of the younger generation, so that they remain optimistic and see a promising future for their own country. The use of social media as a means to express dissatisfaction is in line with various theories of political and social communication, which emphasize that digital platforms can function as a space for individuals to participate in public discourse (Castells, 2012) By analyzing conversations that occur on X, this study aims to understand how the younger generation of Indonesia uses the hashtag *#KaburAjaDulu* as a form of resistance to the socio-economic conditions they face. In addition, this study will identify key themes in the discussions and explore how the narratives formed contribute to building collective identity and solidarity among users.

Several previous studies have examined the use of hashtags as a form of digital activism and expression of social resistance, both in the Indonesian and global contexts. For example, Bate and Amrullah (2023) study examined the use of the hashtag *#100HariKanjuruhan* as a means of commemorating the Kanjuruhan football tragedy and building collective solidarity. This hashtag plays a role in maintaining public memory of the humanitarian tragedy and is a tool to demand accountability and justice. In another context, Wuriani (2021) assessed the hashtag

*#PercumaLaporPolisi* as a form of public disappointment with the police institution. This hashtag reflects the zeitgeist in Indonesia's digital democracy, where people convey their aspirations and criticisms directly through cyberspace. Globally, movements such as *#BlackLivesMatter* and *#MeToo* also demonstrate the power of hashtags in shaping collective consciousness and driving social change. The hashtag *#BlackLivesMatter* has become a symbol of resistance to systemic racism, especially in the United States, and has become a forum for uniting the voices of victims of racial injustice. Meanwhile, *#MeToo* plays an important role in exposing the experiences of sexual violence experienced by women in various parts of the world, while also urging structural change against patriarchal culture and impunity.

Although the various studies above emphasize the power of hashtags in mass mobilization, justice campaigns, and the formation of social solidarity, there are not many studies that explore the use of hashtags as an expression of resistance that is personal and not collectively organized, such as in the case of *#KaburAjaDulu*. Unlike hashtags that encourage direct institutional or social change, *#KaburAjaDulu* represents a form of symbolic refugee and irony towards the socioeconomic pressures faced by young Indonesians. This hashtag becomes a kind of digital catharsis not to demand policies, but for the beginning of a bitter reality in a light way but with critical meaning.

Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap in the literature by examining how *#KaburAjaDulu* is used in conversations on Twitter as a form of expression of socio-economic resistance by young Indonesians who are not formally mobilized, but still reflect critical awareness of their living conditions.

This study aims to analyze the use and meaning behind *#KaburAjaDulu* by applying Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model. To understand this phenomenon more deeply, this study applies the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach developed by Norman Fairclough. According to (Fairclough, 2015) discourse not only functions as a form of communication, but also as a social practice influenced by the power structure and ideology in society. Therefore, an analysis of the use of *#KaburAjaDulu* needs to be conducted by examining the relationship between the text, the practice of its use, and the social context that surrounds it which includes: text analysis (how this hashtag is constructed in tweets), discursive practices (how this hashtag is used and disseminated), and the broader social context (how this phenomenon reflects the socio-economic conditions of young Indonesians). *#KaburAjaDulu* represents a form of digital resistance to the socio-economic system that is considered oppressive to the younger generation. Instead of protesting openly or joining conventional collective movements, they choose to express their concerns through humor, sarcasm, and personal narratives on social media. Therefore, this hashtag can be understood as part of a new pattern of socio-economic resistance in the digital era, where individual expressions on social media contribute to shaping collective discourse on social dissatisfaction and injustice.

Based on the above discussion, the researcher proposes to conduct a study on Indonesian's youth use of the *#KaburAjaDulu* hashtag. The study is entitled: *#KABURAJADULU AS A DIGITAL EXPRESSION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESISTANCE AMONG INDONESIAN YOUTH: A CASE STUDY OF CONVERSATIONS ON X.*

## **1.2 Problem(s) of the study**

Based on the rationale discussed in the Background, the study will be conducted by addressing the following problems:

1. What common themes and discourse strategies emerge in *#KaburAjaDulu* tweets on X?
2. How Indonesian youth use *#KaburAjaDulu* to express socio-economic resistance on X?

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

Based on the problems, the objectives of this study are:

1. To identify common themes and discourse strategies in *#KaburAjaDulu* tweets, particularly those related to societal pressures such as work, economy, and social expectations.
2. To examine how Indonesian youth use *#KaburAjaDulu* to express socioeconomic resistance on X.

By achieving these aims, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of how social media platforms function as spaces for emotional expression, coping, and subtle resistance.

## **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic challenges faced by Indonesian youth, as articulated through their interactions on social media platforms. By examining these expressions, this study can help the government identify and understand the underlying issues that drive youth to seek opportunities outside their home countries. Such insights are critical to developing targeted policies and programs that address the needs and aspirations of young people. In addition, this study contributes to a broader understanding of the role of social media as a powerful tool for social activism. It highlights how young people

use these platforms not only to voice their concerns and frustrations, but also to mobilize support and encourage collective action. By analyzing the ways in which dissent is expressed online, this study highlights the potential of social media to facilitate dialogue and drive social change. Ultimately, this study serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, academics, and activists interested in the relationship between youth, socio-economic issues, and digital communication in Indonesia.

### **1.5 Limitation of the study**

This study has several limitations. Firstly, it only focuses on X, so it may not capture how *#KaburAjaDulu* is used on other platforms like Instagram or TikTok. Additionally, the study analyzes tweets from a specific period between December 2024 until April 2025, meaning it might not reflect changes in how the hashtag is used over time. Despite these limitations, this study provides useful insights into how Indonesian youth use *#KaburAjaDulu* as a form of digital resistance and can serve as a basis for future research.