



Audience Comments on the Song *Ya Sudahlah* by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black on YouTube: A Netnographic Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examines audience comments on the song *Ya Sudahlah* by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black in the comment section of the Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel. Audience comments are treated as responses, emotional expressions, accounts of lived experiences, and interpretations of the song's message. Employing a qualitative design with a netnographic approach, data were collected through non-participant online observation of selected YouTube comments posted between 2010 and 2026. The comments were selected purposively and analyzed thematically with reference to the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of audience perception. The findings indicate that audiences interpret *Ya Sudahlah* as a medium for self-reflection, motivation, nostalgia, spiritual surrender, optimism, and emotional release. Some comments convey pessimism, while others contain idiosyncratic interactions unrelated to the song, suggesting that YouTube comment sections function as open spaces for sharing experiences and engaging in social interaction. The study concludes that music on digital platforms can foster strong emotional connections between musical works and their audiences while allowing meanings to be continually reinterpreted through personal and social experiences.

Keywords: audience perception; digital music; netnography; *Ya Sudahlah*; YouTube



INTRODUCTION

The growth of the internet has transformed communication patterns in society, including the ways in which people access, enjoy, and interpret music. Digital media, particularly YouTube, function not only as channels for distributing entertainment but also as spaces for social interaction. Using features such as comments, likes, shares, and subscriptions, audiences can express opinions, emotions, and personal experiences related to the music content they consume. In the context of mass communication, this shift reflects the changing position of audiences from passive recipients of messages to active participants in media meaning-making. The findings of Wahyuni et al. (2025) regarding User-Generated Content (UGC) for the song “*Membasuh*” on TikTok also demonstrate that the comment section extends beyond a mere space for responses; it evolves into a digital social space that facilitates the reflection of personal experiences, emotional support, empathy, and connection among users.

YouTube has become an important space for digital music distribution because it enables musical works to be revisited, shared, and discussed by audiences across time. In this study, YouTube is understood as both a mass communication medium and a space of participatory culture. Bungin (2006) explains that mass communication involves delivering messages through media to broad audiences, whereas the development of digital media has made the relationship among messages, media, and audiences increasingly interactive. Jenkins (2006) describes this condition as participatory culture, in which audiences not only receive content but also participate in constructing and circulating meaning.

Ya Sudalah by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black is an Indonesian song with enduring resonance for many listeners. Released in 2010, the song conveys messages of acceptance, resilience, and the determination to move forward when facing failure. Over time, it has been perceived not merely as entertainment but also as part of the collective memory of its audience, particularly among listeners who first encountered it during adolescence and returned to it on YouTube years later.



The comment section of the *Ya Sudahlah* video on the Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel reveals diverse forms of audience response. Some comments express nostalgia, reflect on life experiences, offer motivation, convey religious attitudes, express appreciation, or reveal pessimism. These comments demonstrate that a song can function as a symbolic message that is interpreted subjectively. Mulyana (2010) explains that the process of interpreting symbols is strongly influenced by individual experience, social context, and personal background. Audience comments can therefore be understood as a form of follow-up communication that reveals how musical messages are interpreted in digital spaces.

Research on music often focuses on lyric analysis, song popularity, or the general effects of music. Studies specifically examining audience comments on popular Indonesian songs through a netnographic approach remain relatively limited. Yet YouTube comments constitute digital cultural data that can reveal audience experiences, emotions, and interpretations of a musical work. Kozinets (2015) emphasizes that conversations in online spaces can be analyzed as cultural data to understand social meaning within online communities. The study by Wahyuni et al. (2025) demonstrates that user interaction with music content on TikTok can shape collective conversations and shared meanings within the comments section. However, that study focused on TikTok User-Generated Content (UGC) and user interaction patterns, whereas the present research examines audience perceptions of a specific musical work on YouTube over an extended period; this distinction in platform and analytical focus strengthens the study's position.

Against this background, this study aims to understand and describe audience comments on the song *Ya Sudahlah* by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black in the comment section of the Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel. The study focuses on how audience comments represent responses, perceptions, emotions, lived experiences, and interpretations of the song's message through a netnographic lens.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a netnographic approach. A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to understand the subjective meanings that



audiences construct through comments rather than quantify relationships among variables. The study adopts an interpretive paradigm, which views social reality as a construction of meaning shaped through experience, interaction, and symbols. Creswell (2014) explains that qualitative research seeks to explore the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social phenomenon.

Netnography is an adaptation of ethnographic inquiry for digitally mediated environments, focusing on naturally occurring online interactions, cultural practices, and meaning-making within networked communities (Kozinets, 2015). Hine (2015) similarly emphasizes that internet-based ethnography examines online practices as embedded in everyday social life. In this study, netnography is appropriate because YouTube comments are treated as naturally occurring digital cultural artifacts through which audiences express interpretations, emotions, and lived experiences related to the song.

The units of analysis in this study are audience comments on the video of the song *Ya Sudahlah* by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black, uploaded to the Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel. These comments are treated as digital cultural artifacts because they contain audience responses, emotions, experiences, and interpretations of the song's message. Comments posted between 2010 and 2026 were observed to examine the continuity of and changes in audience interpretations over an extended period.

Data were collected through non-participant online observation. The researchers observed audience comments without directly participating in discussions in the comment section. This technique is consistent with netnographic principles, which emphasize the observation of naturally occurring digital interactions (Hine, 2015; Kozinets, 2015). The data were selected purposively from comments expressing perceptions, emotions, lived experiences, motivation, nostalgia, religious attitudes, appreciation, or interpretations of the song. The study analyzed approximately 23 comments selected for their interpretive depth and relevance to the research focus.

The data were analyzed thematically through the stages of data collection and selection, data reduction, categorization, coding, and interpretation. The comment categories were then interpreted through three dimensions of perception: cognitive, affective, and conative. The cognitive dimension concerns the audience's understanding of the song's meaning, the affective



dimension concerns emotional responses, and the conative dimension concerns attitudinal tendencies or impulses toward action. The trustworthiness of the data was enhanced through screenshots of the original comments, repeated readings of the data, theoretical triangulation, and consistency in the categorization process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel functions both as a medium for distributing the works of Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black and as a space for digital interaction between musicians and audiences. In this study, the channel serves as the site of observation because the comment section of the *Ya Sudahlah* video reveals the relationship among the music, its message, and audience experiences. *Ya Sudahlah* is part of the album *For All* (2010) and is widely known for its messages of acceptance, sincerity, and encouragement to continue moving forward in life.

The analysis shows that audience comments contain more than brief reactions to the song; they also convey complex interpretations. The comments represent processes of understanding, emotional involvement, and attitudinal tendencies toward the song's message. Nine categories of comments were identified: deeper interpretations of the song's meaning, religious comments, praise for the song's creators, unique comments, the song as a source of motivation, comments unrelated to the song, optimistic comments, nostalgic comments, and pessimistic or despairing comments.

Table 1 Summary of Audience Comment Categories Regarding *Ya Sudahlah*

Category	Audience perception	Communication aspect
Deeper interpretation of the song's meaning	Audiences interpret the song as a representation of life, particularly as they mature.	Cognitive



Category	Audience perception	Communication aspect
Religious comments / surrender to God	Audiences connect the song's message with surrender, prayer, and closeness to God.	Affective and conative
Praise for the song's creators	Audiences appreciate the quality of the lyrics, the song's moral message, and its musical composition.	Cognitive and affective
Unique comments	Audiences use the comment section to express themselves freely, engage in humor, and leave digital traces.	Supplementary data
The song as a source of motivation	Audiences feel encouraged to recover, persevere, and move forward in life.	Conative
Comments unrelated to the song	Audiences use the comment section as an open and dynamic social space.	Supplementary data
Optimistic comments	Audiences interpret the song as a message of self-acceptance and determination to keep trying.	Affective and conative
Nostalgic comments	Audiences connect the song with memories of the past, adolescence, or particular life experiences.	Affective
Pessimistic and despairing comments	Audiences express emotional exhaustion, disappointment, and despair.	Affective

Source: Primary Data (2026)



Discussion

Audience Comments Providing Deeper Interpretations of the Song's Meaning

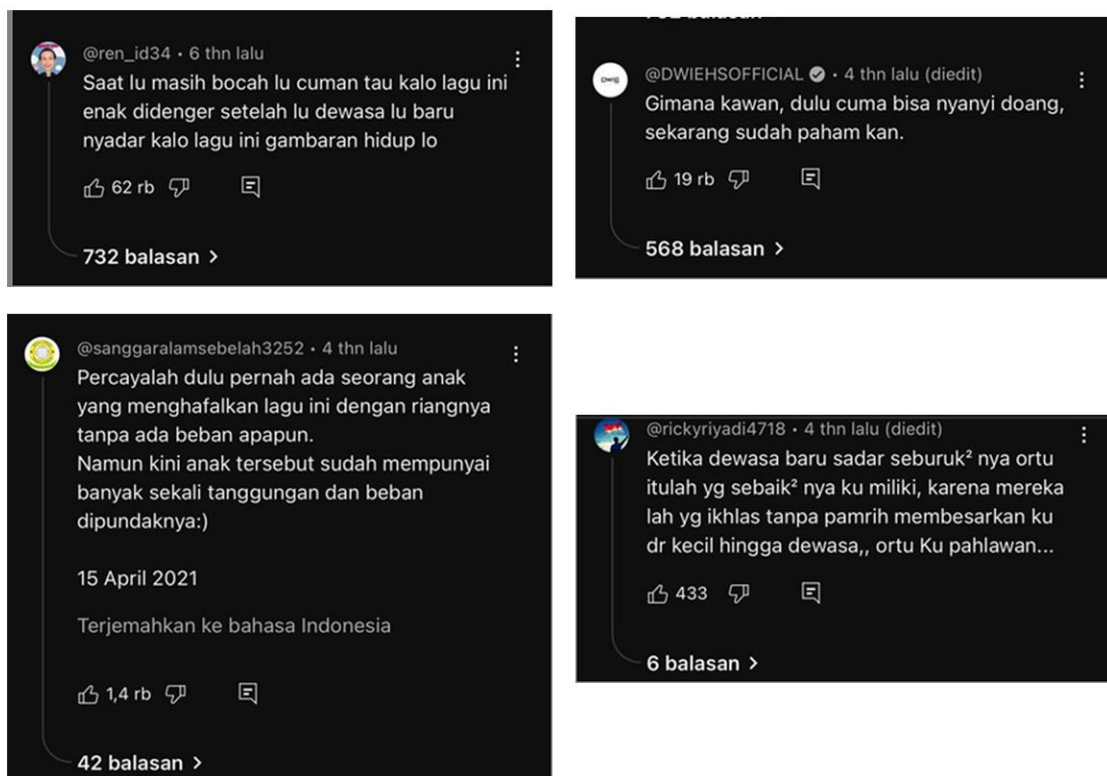


Figure 1 Audience Comments Providing Deeper Interpretations of the Song's Meaning

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

The category of deeper interpretations of the song's meaning indicates that audience perceptions evolve with age and lived experience. Some audience members stated that, as children, they enjoyed the song merely as entertainment, but as adults, they came to understand that its lyrics represent the realities of life. This finding reflects the cognitive dimension, namely the reinterpretation of the song's message in light of evolving life experiences.



Religious Comments and Expressions of Surrender to God



Figure 2 Religious Comments and Expressions of Surrender to God

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

Religious comments show that the message of *Ya Sudahlah* is interpreted not only as acceptance of life's circumstances but also as surrender to God. Audience members reinterpret the song's message as an invitation to pray, worship, and pursue spiritual values when worldly aspirations remain unfulfilled. This demonstrates the affective and conative dimensions because the comments express not only a sense of calm but also an impulse to take a religious approach when confronting failure.

Audience Praise for the Song's Creators

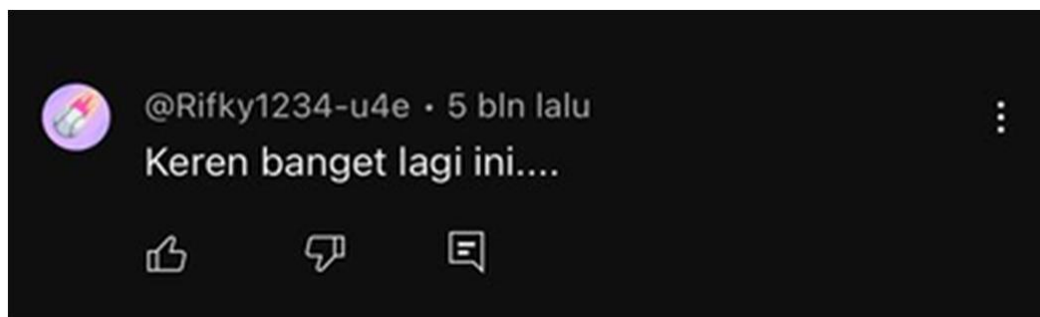


Figure 3 Audience Praise for the Song's Creators

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

Comments praising the song's creators show that audiences regard *Ya Sudahlah* as a work of high musical quality and strong moral significance. Appreciation is directed not only toward



the song's arrangement and popularity but also toward its ability to represent listeners' lived experiences. From the perspective of music as a medium of communication, this finding reinforces the view that a song can become a social symbol connecting the creators' experiences with those of the audience.

The Song as a Source of Motivation

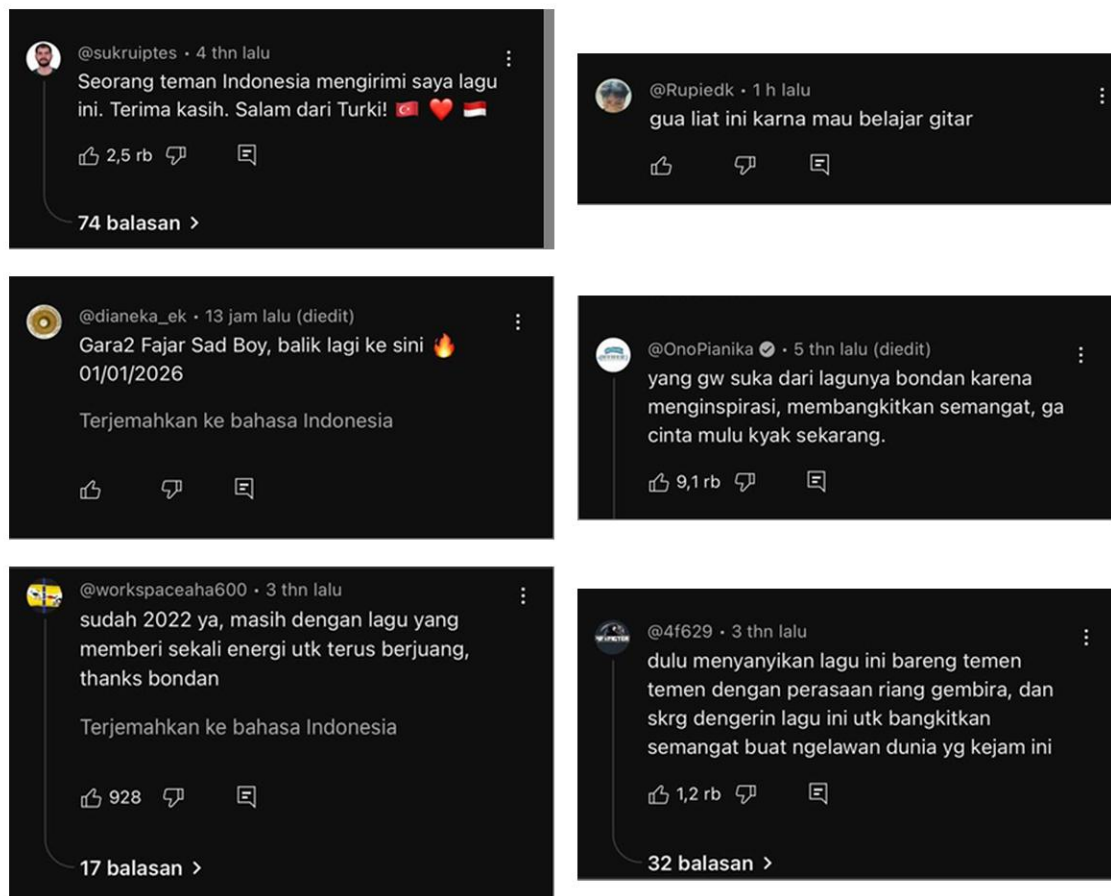


Figure 4 The Song as a Source of Motivation

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

The categories of the song as a source of motivation and optimistic comments indicate that the song's message has a persuasive effect. Audience members use the song as a source of strength to endure, recover, and move forward. The phrase *Ya Sudahlah* is not necessarily interpreted as an expression of surrender; rather, it represents a process of accepting circumstances before trying



again. This finding is consistent with uses and gratifications theory, which positions audiences as active agents who select media to satisfy needs related to entertainment, personal identity, social integration, and emotional release (Rakhmat, 2001).

Nostalgic Audience Comments



Figure 5 Nostalgic Audience Comments

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

Nostalgic comments show that *Ya Sudahlah* functions as a trigger for collective memory. Audiences associate the song with their school years, youth, economic struggles, friendships, and particular phases of life. The nostalgia that emerges is not only individual but also social because it is shared in the comment section, thereby creating collective narratives. YouTube thus functions as a digital cultural archive that enables older songs to be reinterpreted by audiences over time.



Pessimistic and Despairing Audience Comments



Figure 6 Pessimistic and Despairing Audience Comments

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

In addition to positive comments, this study also identified pessimistic and despairing comments. Some audience members use the comment section to express emotional exhaustion, disappointment, or a sense of giving up. This finding is important because it shows that the communicative effects of a song are not uniform. The song's positive message is not received in the same way by every audience member because interpretation is strongly influenced by each individual's emotional state, lived experience, and psychological circumstances.

Unique Comments and Comments Unrelated to the Song's Content

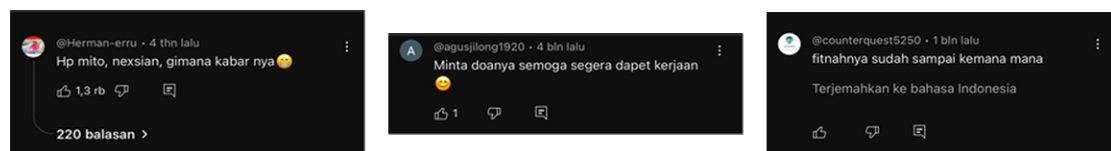


Figure 7 Unique Comments and Comments Unrelated to the Song's Content

Source: Fade2Black Rap YouTube Channel, researcher documentation (2026)

Unique comments and comments that are not directly related to the song are treated as supplementary data. Their presence demonstrates the character of YouTube comment sections as open, fluid, and dynamic spaces for social communication. Audiences do not always use the comment section to discuss the song's meaning; they may also joke, ask for support, greet other



users, or leave a digital trace. This confirms that interaction in digital media does not always conform to the main theme of the content but develops in accordance with the audience's social needs.

Overall, the findings indicate that audience comments on *Ya Sudahlah* constitute a form of digital participation that reveals how the song's meaning is constructed, shared, and reinterpreted. The song functions not only as entertainment but also as a medium for self-reflection, motivation, nostalgia, spiritual expression, and emotional catharsis. Through a netnographic approach, YouTube comment sections can be understood as digital cultural spaces in which audiences build emotional connections with musical works and other users. This similarity aligns with the findings of Wahyuni et al. (2025), which indicate that comments on music-related UGC can serve as a space for self-reflection, emotional expression, support, and the co-construction of meaning. In the context of YouTube, this study's findings expand upon that picture by demonstrating that the meaning attributed to songs can endure and be renegotiated over time through nostalgia, motivation, and personal experience.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that audience comments on the song *Ya Sudahlah* by Bondan Prakoso & Fade2Black in the comment section of the Fade2Black Rap YouTube channel represent diverse responses, perceptions, emotions, lived experiences, and interpretations. Audiences interpret the song not only as entertainment but also as a medium for self-reflection, motivation, nostalgia, spiritual surrender, and social interaction in digital spaces.

Audience comments demonstrate that the song's meaning is not singular. Some audience members understand *Ya Sudahlah* as a representation of life's realities and a source of personal strength, while others associate it with memories of the past, experiences of loss, or spiritual perspectives. Pessimistic comments, meanwhile, show that the song's positive message does not always produce a positive response because interpretation is influenced by the emotional state of each audience member.



This study therefore affirms that YouTube functions as an interactive communication medium that brings musical works into contact with audiences' lived experiences. The comment section becomes a digital cultural space in which audiences share emotions, experiences, and meanings. Future research could broaden the scope of inquiry by comparing several songs or conducting audience interviews to gain a deeper understanding of listeners' experiences.

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