

Creative Labor Responses to Neoliberal Precarity: Mapping a Typology through LEGO® Serious Play®

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia's creative industry significantly contributes to economic growth and cultural production, yet creative workers face precarious conditions: contractual insecurity, income volatility, project-based employment, and limited labor protection. This study maps a typology of creative labor responses to neoliberal precarity through an Critical Organizational Communication lens, examining how organizational discourses of flexibility, passion, creativity, and self-development function as communicative mechanisms reproducing neoliberal power and shaping worker subjectivities. Using Foucault's governmentality framework, it analyzes how discursive formations normalize precarity while enabling adaptation, negotiation, and reflexive resistance. A qualitative interpretive-critical approach was applied through play-based focus group discussions using LEGO® Serious Play® with ten creative workers. Confirmation interviews and SINDIKASI reports strengthened contextual interpretation. Symbolic model building and narrative interaction reveal patterned communicative orientations from adaptive resilience to subtle resistance. Organizational discourse constitutes precarious worker subjectivities, while participatory spaces enable collective meaning-making and reflexive agency.

INTRODUCTION

The creative industry in Indonesia is widely regarded as a principal driver of economic growth and cultural advancement. Policy documents as well as public discourse consistently frame creative work as a source of innovation, adaptability, and resilience, thereby aligning it with the aspirations of a modern knowledge-based economy (Alacovska et al., 2024). However, beneath this celebratory narrative lies a fundamental contradiction. Many creative workers confront unstable working conditions, characterized by short-term contracts, volatile income, blurred boundaries between personal and professional life, and limited formal protection of labor rights. This tension between symbolic recognition and material vulnerability constitutes the central problem of this study. Although the creative sector holds strategic significance, the workers who sustain it remain structurally vulnerable, insufficiently protected, and frequently marginalized, thus facing barriers that constrain career development and weaken their social security. Rather than treating this condition as a singular experience, this study conceptualizes precarity as a field of diverse responses, within which workers interpret, adapt to, negotiate, or even contest instability through multiple strategies.

Empirical evidence underscores the severity of this condition. Data from SINDIKASI, the Media and Creative Industry Workers Union for Democracy, indicate that more than 68% (percent) of workers in the media and creative sectors in Indonesia do not possess written employment contracts, while 75% (percent) report not receiving health insurance from their employers (SINDIKASI, 2022). Thus, rather than representing cultural and economic progress, creative work is often associated with inequality and vulnerability, particularly in its relation to labor authority. This condition is reinforced by the national policy framework. Government Regulation Number 24 of 2022 concerning the Creative Economy emphasizes innovation, intellectual property protection, and skills development, yet continues to provide limited attention to labor protection and contractual certainty for informal and project-based creative workers (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2022). Consequently, precarity is not resolved but institutionalized, thereby shaping a structural environment that generates diverse orientations and patterns of adaptation among workers.

The dynamics of creative labor within the neoliberal economy have transformed the ways in which workers experience and communicate conditions of precarity. In this context, instability, performance pressures, and the demand for self-management not only shape work practices but also influence how creative workers construct meaning around their occupations. From a communication perspective, understanding how these workers articulate their positions becomes crucial, as the responses that emerge are varied, ranging from adaptation and accommodation to negotiation and resistance. Previous research has often overlooked the communicative processes through which workers in vulnerable conditions share experiences, build collective narratives, and position themselves in relation to dominant norms. LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) offers an innovative and participatory platform to explore these processes, enabling participants to externalize complex ideas, engage in reflective dialogue, and collaboratively construct visual representations of their working realities. By positioning LSP as a medium of communication, this study examines how creative workers narrate, interpret, and differentiate their responses within the overarching structure of neoliberal precarity.

Academic scholarship has increasingly examined creative labor within the context of neoliberal economic restructuring. Numerous studies demonstrate that insecurity and instability are normalized through discourses that encourage workers to internalize values such as passion, flexibility, and self-entrepreneurship, thereby positioning precarity as an acceptable marker of professional commitment, and even as an ideal (Archibugi, 2008). Creative workers are simultaneously celebrated as autonomous and innovative subjects, yet also confronted with intensified exploitation and weakened protections, rendering creative labor both a model and a casualty of neoliberal governance. The existing literature further explores how workers navigate these contradictions through resilience strategies, such as building portfolio careers, engaging in personal branding, and adaptively accumulating skills. Nevertheless, the diversity of worker orientations remains insufficiently conceptualized, as research tends to separate resilience or resistance into distinct categories, rather than mapping a spectrum of responses that illustrates how workers interpret and position themselves in relation to conditions of precarity (Yasih, 2023). This debate intersects with broader critical perspectives on subjectivity, identity, and the negotiation of power in everyday practices under neoliberalism.

This study is grounded in Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality, which views power not primarily as a form of direct control or coercion, but as a set of rationalities and practices that encourage individuals to govern themselves (Barszczewski, 2021; Bratich et al., 2003; Wyatt & Trevena, 2021). In the neoliberal

context, governmentality operates by shifting responsibility for security, productivity, and success from institutions to individuals, thereby shaping subjects who internalize values such as flexibility, passion, and self-responsibility. Within the realm of creative labor, this perspective is particularly relevant, as precarious working conditions are often normalized through narratives of autonomy and self-fulfilment. Creative workers may interpret instability as opportunity, inevitability, compromise, or even injustice, indicating differentiation in processes of subject formation. At the same time, governmentality provides conceptual space to examine counter-conduct, namely when individuals critically reinterpret dominant discourses and construct alternative meanings of work. This study is informed by Critical Organizational Communication, which examines how power, ideology, and discourse operate within and through organizational life to shape worker subjectivities, silence dissent, and reproduce or contest dominant arrangements (Mumby, 2016). By applying the governmentality framework within an organizational communication perspective, this study offers a theoretical contribution through the identification of patterned orientations that form a typology of worker responses, rather than treating them as a single behavioural category.

Despite its significant contributions, several research gaps remain. First, much of the literature focuses on creative industries in Western contexts, where institutional arrangements and labor regulations differ substantially from those in developing countries such as Indonesia. Second, prior studies tend to conceptualize resilience and resistance as outcomes or strategies, rather than as communicative orientations shaped by discourse, power, and identity negotiation which dimensions that Critical Organizational Communication foregrounds as central to understanding how workers make sense of and respond to structural conditions. Third, methodological approaches in this field generally rely on interviews or surveys, potentially overlooking the symbolic, embodied, and affective dimensions of working under conditions of precarity. These limitations constrain our understanding of how creative workers in Indonesia experience, interpret, and position themselves in relation to neoliberal precarity in their daily lives (Wood et al., 2019; Yasih, 2023). To address these gaps, this study poses the following research question: how can the diverse responses of creative workers to neoliberal precarity be mapped? Drawing from an organizational communication perspective, this study conceptualizes responses as communicative orientations through which meaning, identity, and power relations are continuously negotiated.

The novelty of this study lies in the theoretical and methodological integration it advances. Theoretically, it bridges organizational communication and the concept of neoliberal governmentality to uncover patterned subject positions that form a typology of responses to precarity (Gormley, 2020). Methodologically, the study employs LEGO® Serious Play® in game-based focus group discussions, repositioning a tool commonly used in managerial contexts as a critical research method. Through the construction of symbolic models and collective reflection, this approach reveals differentiated narratives of precarity and enables the identification of recurring orientations among participants. In doing so, the study enriches debates on creative labor, communication, and power relations, while offering a contextual and relevant understanding of the lived realities of Indonesia's creative workforce, which continues to expand yet remains vulnerable. The central argument of this article is that creative workers in Indonesia do not respond to neoliberal precarity uniformly; rather, they demonstrate patterned communicative orientations that can be systematically mapped into a typology. These orientations, rendered visible through game-based group discussions using LEGO® Serious Play®, illustrate how workers interpret, negotiate, accommodate, and contest the structures that shape their everyday working lives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Precarity of Creative Labor in Indonesia

The literature on the precarity of creative workers in Indonesia situates this issue within the framework of political economy and neoliberal governance. Creative workers, as understood in this study, encompass individuals engaged across a broad spectrum of cultural and knowledge-intensive occupations, including media and broadcasting, content creation, graphic and visual design, advertising, event organizing, digital industries, film and animation, music, fashion, and other sectors in which symbolic, aesthetic, or informational value constitutes the primary output of labor (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2013). These workers operate under highly varied contractual arrangements, ranging from formal employment to freelance, project-based, and platform-mediated work, and are therefore not confined to a single organizational form or institutional setting. What unites them, rather, is their shared exposure to the structural conditions of flexible labor markets, in which

income volatility, short-term engagements, and limited institutional protection are pervasive features of everyday working life.

Although the creative sector is promoted as a driver of growth and innovation, employment relations within it are often flexible, project-based, and minimally protected. Reports from SINDIKASI (2022) indicate a high proportion of creative workers without written contracts and without health insurance, reflecting the weak bargaining position of labor within the industrial structure. Meanwhile, Government Regulation No. 24 of 2022 concerning the Creative Economy places greater emphasis on ecosystem development, intellectual property, and financing, rather than on strengthening labor protection, particularly within the creative industries (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2022). Rather than being positioned as subjects entitled to job security and social protection, creative workers are frequently treated as individual entrepreneurs assumed to be capable of managing risk independently. Consequently, precarity cannot be understood merely as a matter of personal capacity or individual adaptive strategy, but as a direct consequence of policy configurations, labor market flexibilization, and unequal power relations within the creative industries.

Neoliberalism and Governmentality of Creative Labor

The literature on neoliberalism and governmentality views the transformation of creative labor not merely as economic restructuring, but as a political project of subject formation. Neoliberalism, as theorized by Harvey (2005), constitutes a political-economic ideology that prioritizes market mechanisms, deregulation, privatization, and the withdrawal of state intervention from economic and social life. Extending this foundation, Brown (2015) argues that neoliberalism functions not only as an economic doctrine but as a governing rationality that comprehensively restructures social relations, institutions, and subjectivities in accordance with competitive market logic (Schwarzmantel, 2007). More recently, Tommasi et al. (2025) demonstrate that neoliberal ideology permeates subjective reasoning and everyday practices to the extent that workers increasingly internalize ideals of freedom and self-fulfillment through work, even when such ideals actively produce less secure working conditions. At the level of labor, this rationality manifests through the systematic flexibilization of employment arrangements, whereby stable, long-term contracts are progressively displaced by short-term engagements, freelance agreements, outsourcing schemes, project-based work, and platform-mediated gig economy arrangements (Faraoun, 2024; Lata et al., 2023). Rather than representing exceptional or transitional conditions, these arrangements have become normalized as the dominant mode of organizing creative work, producing a labor market in which workers bear increasing responsibility for managing their own income, skills, career trajectories, and occupational risks independently of institutional support.

Within Michel Foucault's framework of governmentality, power operates not primarily through coercion but through the production of rationalities that shape how individuals understand themselves, their risks, and their responsibilities. Neoliberal governmentality transfers the burden of job security from institutions to individuals, encouraging creative laborers to reconstitute themselves as entrepreneurs of the self (Bratich et al., 2003). This process of subject formation carries significant political implications, as it produces workers who not merely are subjected to market conditions but who actively internalize and reproduce market values as expressions of personal identity and professional virtue (Pertierra et al., 2024). Concretely, this is evident in how creative workers are shaped to self-govern: accepting flexible contracts as signs of independence rather than insecurity, managing career instability as a personal portfolio rather than a structural failure, and absorbing occupational risks including income volatility, absence of health coverage, and lack of pension entitlements as the natural price of creative freedom. Values such as passion, flexibility, autonomy, and self-branding are naturalized as professional ethos, thereby blurring the boundary between exploitation and personal choice (Simola, 2022). In this context, uncertainty is presented as opportunity, while failure is reduced to individual incapacity. The governmentality perspective highlights how such normalization operates through motivational discourses, performance-based evaluation systems, and managerial practices that promote self-surveillance (Morgan et al., 2013). Consequently, creative labor is shaped as a subjectivity that voluntarily aligns itself with market logic, productive and adaptive, yet structurally exposed to vulnerabilities that are legitimized as the inevitable consequence of freedom.

Gamification in LEGO® Serious Play®

The literature on gamification in LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) positions this method as a play based practice that extends beyond a mere creative facilitation technique. Gamification in LSP operates through

structured rules, challenges, and the use of material metaphors to encourage equal participation and deep reflection. Unlike gamification models oriented toward points and competition, LSP emphasizes narrative processes and the collective construction of meaning (Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014). From an organizational communication perspective, play functions as a symbolic medium that enables the articulation of latent experiences, including emotions and ambivalences that are difficult to express verbally. In this context, the concept of the *homunculus* becomes relevant in explaining how embodied cognition operates during the building process. Rather than assuming a purely abstract cognitive subject, LSP recognizes that thinking emerges through the coordinated activity of mind and hand. The *homunculus* metaphor illustrates how participants project aspects of themselves into the models they construct, allowing internal reflections, tensions, and identities to be externalized in tangible form. Through this projection, complex and often tacit experiences of precarity can be materialized, observed, and collectively interpreted (Ward, 2023). Theoretically, this approach aligns with social constructivism, which views reality as the outcome of interaction and negotiated meaning. Thus, gamification in LSP is not simply a creative tool, but an epistemological mechanism that facilitates participatory knowledge production and critical reflection on work experiences (Popan et al., 2023).

Critical Organizational Communication in Precarious Work

Critical Organizational Communication (COC) constitutes a theoretical tradition that examines how power, discourse, ideology, and identity operate within and through organizational life to shape worker subjectivities, reproduce dominant arrangements, and either suppress or enable forms of resistance and negotiation (Mumby, 2016). Unlike mainstream approaches that treat communication primarily as a transfer of information, COC conceives of communication as a constitutive force that does not merely reflect organizational reality but actively produces it, a distinction that becomes especially consequential in precarious work contexts, where the meanings assigned to flexibility, risk, and self-governance are not self-evident but are discursively constructed and institutionally reinforced in ways that shape how workers understand their own conditions. Organizational discourses of passion, autonomy, and personal development serve precisely this function by translating structural insecurities into individual orientations, positioning workers as entrepreneurial subjects who freely choose their conditions rather than as actors constrained by institutional arrangements. Plotnikof & Mumby (2024) further demonstrate that organizational discourse under neoliberal capitalism operates through the normalization of temporal uncertainty, embedding precarity into the very rhythms of working life such that instability becomes a background condition rather than a structural problem to be addressed, while Izak et al. (2024) extend this argument by showing that much of what is communicated in organizations belongs to the domain of the unsaid, that which is implied, taken for granted, or suppressed through communicative regimes that discourage explicit articulation of dissent, a condition particularly pronounced in flexible work environments where informal ties and reputation substitute for formal protections.

Yet COC attends not only to control and suppression but equally to the communicative constitution of resistance and negotiation, as Sahay & Goldthwaite (2024) demonstrate that resistance is constituted interactionally, emerging through the ways workers interpret, reframe, and selectively engage with participatory practices, while Vatanserver (2023) further shows that precarity itself can function as a mobilizing frame through which workers construct shared identities around their experiences of instability, creating the communicative foundations for collective awareness even when formal advocacy channels remain closed. Connecting these dimensions to the present study, COC provides an analytical lens for understanding how creative workers in Indonesia do not simply experience precarity as an external condition but actively produce and negotiate its meanings through their communicative orientations, wherein discourses of passion, self-development, and affective team relations function simultaneously as mechanisms of subject formation and as potential sites of reflexivity and counter-narrative (Mumby, 2016; Plotnikof & Mumby, 2024), and by applying a COC perspective in conjunction with Foucault's governmentality framework, this study positions the typology of worker responses as communicative orientations that are shaped by and in turn reproduce the structural logic of neoliberal precarity in Indonesia's creative industry.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design grounded in a critical interpretive perspective to examine how creative labor in Indonesia experience and make meaning of precarious working conditions

within the context of organizational practices and neoliberal regulation (Neuman, 2014). The study focuses on everyday communication practices through which flexible work is normalized and, at the same time, problematized. Primary data were obtained through game-based Focus Group Discussions using the LEGO® Serious Play® method, complemented by field notes, visual documentation of symbolic models, and relevant policy and institutional documents. Ten creative labor participants from various subsectors were purposively selected to take part in the discussions, all of whom were engaged in contractual, freelance, or project-based work arrangements with limited job security. In addition, five creative labor participants were involved as confirmation informants to validate and compare the FGD findings with reports from SINDIKASI.

The LEGO® Serious Play® sessions were conducted in three stages, namely Challenge, Build, and Share. Participants reflected on their working conditions, translated these reflections into symbolic LEGO models, and subsequently narrated and collectively interpreted their meanings (Kristiansen & Rasmussen, 2014). Analytically, this method enables the exploration of creative labor lived experiences from a phenomenological perspective while simultaneously examining processes of interactional meaning making through the lens of ethnomethodology, thereby capturing nuanced subjective realities and collective dynamics, which enriches methodological triangulation and enhances interpretive validity of emergent analytical themes. Confirmation data and SINDIKASI reports were used as comparative references to situate the findings within the broader structure of labor precarity (Bryman & Bell, 2016).

Data Collection

This section outlines the sources and types of data collected in the study and explains their role in supporting the analytical process. Data collection was conducted in multiple layers to capture the experiences of creative labor, everyday communication practices, and the broader structural conditions that shape creative work within flexible and contractual work arrangements.

Table 1. Data Collection Sources and Analytical Functions

Data Type	Data Origin	Analytical Role
FGD Interaction Data	Game based Focus Group Discussions using LEGO® Serious Play® with 10 creative labor participants from various sectors	To explore work experiences, communication practices, and processes of collective meaning making
Symbolic Data	Individual and collective LEGO models constructed and presented by participants	To represent abstract experiences related to flexibility, precarity, and power relations
Reflective Data	Participant observation and researcher field notes during and after the FGD sessions	To capture interactional dynamics, gestures, emotions, and situational contexts
Confirmation Data	Semi-structured confirmation interviews with 5 additional creative labor participants	To validate, enrich, and provide comparative perspectives on the main findings
Structural Data	Analysis of SINDIKASI reports and labor policy documents	To situate the empirical findings within the broader structural framework of labor precarity

Source: Fieldwork Data Collected by the Author (2026)

Table 1 demonstrates that this study does not rely on a single data source, but rather integrates verbal, symbolic, reflective, and structural materials. The LEGO® Serious Play® based FGD functions as the primary source for exploring creative labor experiences and processes of collective meaning making within a participatory context. Symbolic and reflective data enrich the analysis by revealing affective and interactional dimensions that are not always verbally articulated. Confirmation interviews strengthen the credibility of the findings, while SINDIKASI reports and policy documents provide a structural lens that connects individual experiences to broader labor conditions.

To capture the experiences and communication practices of creative labor in depth, this study involved 10 (ten) participants who engaged in LEGO® Serious Play® based Focus Group Discussions and 5 (five) key informants selected for the purpose of data validation and triangulation. Purposive sampling prioritized diverse creative sectors, ensuring rich contextual variation while maintaining ethical confidentiality through anonymized transcription protocols and iterative member checking procedures, enhancing credibility transferability and contextual relevance of emergent qualitative research insights. The combination of FGD sessions and substantive input from key informants ensures a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of both individual and collective strategies employed in responding to the realities of precarious work. The demographic and professional backgrounds of all participants are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants and Informants' Background as Creative Labor

Name	Role	Unmet rights
RFQ (Participant) (F)	Private Radio Broadcast	Radio workers in Malang face below-minimum wages, irregular hours, heavy workload, unclear job status and security, minimal facilities, limited career opportunities, often under freelance contracts without formal protection or benefits.
RZK (Participant) (M)	Marketing Communication	Employees face below-minimum wages, no benefits beyond salary, unclear workload and job roles, discrepancies between offered and actual positions, lack of company support for skill development, and no opportunities for career advancement or promotion.
HRS (Participant) (M)	Digital Arabic Calligrapher	Freelance workers face unpredictable hours, unclear job status, no job security, self-funded resources, and lack of career advancement, as their work operates independently without support or organizational backing.
KML (Participant) (F)	Freelance Content Writer	Content writers receive no job security, must provide their own equipment, and have limited career growth, with positions restricted to content writing and no access to supporting facilities or advancement opportunities.
TRA (Participant) (F)	KOL Specialist &Content Creator	KOL specialists and content creators earn below-minimum wages, receive no benefits, lack clear job status or security, rely on personal equipment, and face short-term, project-based work with minimal career advancement opportunities.
CLZ (Participant) (F)	Model, Entrepreneur & Content Creator	Models, entrepreneurs, and content creators face uneven workload distribution, with responsibilities often differing from contract terms, and receive no financial or material support for the resources required to perform their tasks effectively.
DAN (Participant) (F)	Content Creator & Social Media Specialist	Social media specialists and content creators handle broad, solo workloads, receive no job security, rely on personal devices, and face stagnant career positions with no access to supporting facilities or opportunities for advancement.
TLT (Participant) (F)	Social Media Handler (Admin & Content Creator)	Intern and freelance social media handlers receive no training, job security, or supporting facilities, must use personal equipment, develop skills independently, and have no opportunities for career advancement or transition to permanent positions.
EST (Participant) (F)	Marketing & Social Media Specialist	Marketing and social media specialists have no formal job security agreements covering health, safety, or legal protection, but mutual respect is maintained when workplace issues arise.

FQN (Participant) (F)	NGO Staff for Child Welfare & Protection	NGO staff face low wages despite demanding fieldwork, inadequate health insurance, no overtime pay, excessive workload, limited skill development, and minimal career advancement opportunities, resulting in poor benefits, overburdened roles, and stagnant professional growth.
ARN (Informant) (F)	Social Media Brand Agency	Informants shared their work challenges, from heavy workloads and unequal treatment to unclear regulations. They described adapting to foreign clients and offered personal reflections and suggestions, giving a real glimpse into their daily experiences.
FTY (Informant) (F)	Crew of Event Organizer	Event Organizers shared workload, emotional strain, unclear pay, and limited career growth, highlighting team dynamics and lack of regulations, while offering practical advice on contracts and negotiation.
ARN (Informant) (F)	Social Media Specialist (fashion Brand)	Ariani shared her role, extra workload, and contract issues, highlighting pay discrepancies, limited knowledge of labor rights, management responses, workplace pressures, freelance opportunities, and reflections on fairness, benefits, and practical suggestions for improvement.
HLG (Informant) (L)	Intern Youtube Cameraman	Emerging creative workers shaped their identities through experiences across SMEs and corporations, normalizing unpaid internships, high flexibility, and unclear responsibilities, internalizing trade-off(s), and navigating mismatched expectations due to project flexibility and lack of standardized work guidelines.
DIN (Informant) (P)	Online Media Content Writer	Creative workers develop compliance through internships, contracts, and permanent roles, adapting to productivity pressures, unclear agreements, expanded responsibilities, and limited regulatory knowledge, relying on self-discipline, informal learning, flexibility, and rational strategies to meet industry demands.

Source: Fieldwork Data Collected by the Author (2026)

Based on Table 2, creative work practices in the media, marketing, content creation, and non-governmental organization sectors reveal a paradoxical configuration in which strong professional commitment coexists with conditions of precarity. A number of workers receive wages below the minimum standard, lack employment benefits, and are bound to short term contracts or freelance arrangements, resulting in limited job security and restricted career mobility. Workloads tend to be heavy, disproportionate, and frequently extend beyond formal job descriptions, ultimately compelling workers to use personal devices and self-fund resources to support their professional activities. Limited access to formal training and institutional support requires workers to develop competencies independently amid multi role demands. Internship schemes and flexible work arrangements have become normalized, necessitating the internalization of structural compromises and adaptation to fluctuating expectations.

Irregular working hours, wage disparities, and low literacy regarding labor rights further intensify both emotional and professional pressures. Despite these constraints, creative labor demonstrates significant resilience. They draw upon informal learning, self-discipline, and adaptive strategies to respond to structural limitations, organizational inconsistencies, and industry dynamics. These findings indicate an inherent tension between creativity and exploitation, in which passion and dedication function as mechanisms sustaining work continuity in contexts with minimal formal protection. This context not only reflects systemic gaps in labor governance but also underscores the agency, endurance, and innovative capacity of creative labor in navigating an industry landscape that is simultaneously dynamic and vulnerable.



Figure 1. Shows a Play-based FGD Where Creative Labors' Use Lego® Serious Play®

Analytical Procedure

This section outlines the data analysis procedures employed in the study to understand the experiences of creative labor and the processes of meaning making that emerged through interactions in LEGO® Serious Play® based Focus Group Discussions (Bryman & Bell, 2016). The analysis was conducted in a systematic and reflexive manner to meaningfully connect the empirical data with the theoretical framework adopted in this study, as follows:

1. Data Corpus Construction

The analysis began with the construction of a comprehensive data corpus derived from LEGO® Serious Play® based Focus Group Discussions, which were conceptualized as spaces of organizational communication, social interaction, and meaning production. Primary data included verbatim discussion transcripts, visual documentation of individual and collective LEGO models, and the researcher's reflective field notes capturing gestures, interactional dynamics, and participants' symbolic expressions during the sessions. Supplementary data comprised labor policy documents, reports from creative labor organizations, and institutional documents related to contractual work practices, providing broader structural and contextual insights. All data were carefully transcribed, systematically organized, and repeatedly reviewed to develop a deep, nuanced, and data grounded understanding prior to entering the formal stage of analysis.

2. Layered Coding and Analytical Process

The subsequent stage was conducted through a layered coding process, beginning with inductive open coding to identify initial themes such as contractual work experiences, flexibility, precarity, power relations, and participants' adaptive strategies. These initial codes were then further developed through axial coding to generate more conceptual analytical categories, including discursive constructions of flexibility, the normalization of work practices, and the marginalization of creative labor voices. At this stage, ethnomethodological analysis was employed to examine how meaning and social order were produced through interaction within the FGD, while phenomenological analysis focused on revealing the essence of participants lived experiences related to contractual work.

3. Synthesis and Critical Interpretation

In the final stage, ethnomethodological and phenomenological findings were synthesized through symbolic and discursive interpretation of the LEGO models and participants' narratives, drawing upon perspectives of governmentality and critical organizational communication. This analysis positions work flexibility as a discursive regime that shapes practices of self-governance among creative labor, while also revealing how precarity is legitimized within organizational structures and policy frameworks. Analytical rigor was maintained through data triangulation, an audit trail, and researcher reflexivity to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. The results are intended to offer critical and transformative contributions to

the study of creative labor, organizational communication, and the development of LEGO® Serious Play® as a gamification-based research method.

Data Analysis

This analysis explores how creative labor experiences work, rights, and coping strategies across sectors. Data from LEGO® Serious Play® FGD notes, assessment letters, interviews, and 2022 SINDIKASI reveal recurring patterns of precarious work. Following research procedures, a rich data corpus was built, carefully coded, and interpreted through ethnomethodological and phenomenological lenses. Table 3 highlights analytical dimensions, evidence, and synthesized meanings, showing how creative labor navigates uncertainty, internalizes challenges, and manages precarious conditions while balancing personal agency, organizational demands, and social realities.

Table 3. Patterns of Precarious Work in Creative Labor

Analytical Dimension	Data Categorization	Explanation
Contractual Work Structure	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Contracts are modeled as fragile, temporary, and easily changeable structures without worker control.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Considered a central factor contributing to uncertainty in work relations.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Informants accept short-term contracts as a normal condition in creative work.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	Data indicate the dominance of project-based work without formal contract protection.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Contractual uncertainty is structurally embedded and subjectively normalized.
Work Flexibility	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Represented ambiguously as symbolic freedom but without clear work boundaries.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Recorded as flexibility without formal rules governing working hours, task allocation, or workload.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Recognized as a necessary form of adaptation to stay relevant in the evolving work environment.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI notes that flexibility is often used to avoid normative obligations.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Flexibility functions as a mechanism for shifting risk from the organization to the worker.
Work Distribution & Jobdesk	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	The model shows overlapping roles and simultaneous multitasking.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Considered to increase workload without providing adequate compensation or recognition for the extra tasks.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Considered to increase the workload without fair or adequate compensation..

	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI data confirms the absence of standardized jobdesk in the creative sector.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Work ambiguity is legitimized through narratives of personal development.
Wages & Benefits	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Wages are visualized as a weak foundation supporting a heavy workload.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Recognized as the most persistent issue appearing repeatedly in all collected data.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Informants rarely renegotiate wages even when workload increases.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI records low wages and the absence of social benefits.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Low wages constitute a structural condition internalized individually.
Work Safety & Protection	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Minimal symbols of protection were present, such as no fences, roofs, or supports.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Recorded as the complete absence of formal social security and work protection.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Work risks are perceived and managed as personal responsibilities by workers.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	Data indicates that workers have limited access to BPJS and legal protection.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Work protection is replaced by workers' responsibility for their safety.
Affective Relations & Comfort	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Numerous symbols of social relations, bright colors, and team closeness were present.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Considered potentially effective in reducing conflicts and addressing structural criticism.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Informants highlighted the importance of comfort and fostering a sense of camaraderie.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI notes that affect often conceals exploitative work relations.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Affect functions as a symbolic compensation for the absence of normative rights.
Survival Strategies	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	The model illustrates workers' adaptation strategies rather than active structural resistance.

	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Considered a form of collective coping that is non-confrontational and adaptive.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Informants lower expectations and adjust themselves accordingly.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI data indicates that workers have minimal access to effective advocacy channels.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Survival strategies are individually adaptive rather than collectively political.
Subjective Position of Labor	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Labor is positioned as the primary guardian ensuring continuity of the work system.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Recorded as widespread acceptance of imperfect or non-ideal work conditions.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Informants perceive themselves as actively managing and mitigating personal occupational risks.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI notes that creative laborers generally do not self-identify as formal workers.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	A creative labor subject is shaped, independently managing and disciplining themselves consistently.
Dominant Discursive Patterns	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Discourses of passion, creativity, and learning opportunities dominate participants' shared narratives consistently.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	Considered capable of stabilizing group dynamics among creative laborers effectively.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	Personal language and individual narratives are more dominant than structural discourse.
	SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI data indicates weak usage of language regarding rights and protection.
	Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Subjective discourses obscure and blur structural issues within creative labor employment.
Findings Status	FGD Notes (Play-based LSP)	Consistent patterns appear across symbolic models and verbal narratives among participants.
	Assessment Letter (Evaluative)	No substantive contradictions were identified among participants' responses or evaluations.
	Informant Interaction (Confirmation)	No new categories emerged during informants' confirmations or follow-up clarifications.

SINDIKASI 2022 Data (Data Comparison)	SINDIKASI data reinforces the same pattern at the institutional and organizational level.
Final Synthesized Meaning (Final Saturation)	Data saturation is achieved, indicating systemic, integrated, and cross-level findings.

Source: Fieldwork Data Collected by the Author (2026)

Based on Table 3, the analysis depicts how creative labor navigates precarious work conditions, including rights violations, challenges, and adaptive strategies. While fragile contracts, ambiguous flexibility, low wages, and absent protections normalize uncertainty, laborers develop resilience by individually adjusting, multitasking efficiently, and leveraging affective team relations as symbolic support. At the same time, subtle forms of resistance emerge as labors negotiate boundaries, reinterpret flexibility, and assert agency in decision-making, despite structural constraints. Discourses of passion and creativity, often internalized, simultaneously obscure inequalities and become tools for strategic self-regulation, enabling labors to maintain engagement and autonomy. These communicative and symbolic practices highlight how creative laborers resist, adapt, and survive within neoliberal frameworks, balancing compliance with subtle negotiation, collective understanding, and personal coping mechanisms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The integration of LEGO® Serious Play® based FGD, confirmation interviews, and comparison with the SINDIKASI (2022) report revealed that contractual uncertainty, flexibility without clear work boundaries, multitasking without proportional compensation, low wages, and the absence of social protection are not sporadic phenomena but constitute systemic features of Indonesia's creative industry (Wood et al., 2019). These patterns emerged consistently across subsectors and participants' experiences, confirming that precarity operates not as an exception but as the structural condition within which creative labor is organized and reproduced. The data further indicate that these conditions are not merely the result of managerial weaknesses but are embedded within a broader structural rationality in which flexibility is not only practiced but also legitimized as an industry norm. Short-term contracts are accepted as standard practice, as reflected in the account of RFQ (M), a radio broadcaster participant, who stated that his employment had always been conducted "under freelance contracts without formal protection or benefits," a condition he had come to regard as intrinsic rather than exceptional to working in the creative sector.

Multitasking workloads are similarly reframed as opportunities for self-development rather than recognized as disproportionate demands, a tendency articulated by RZK (F), a marketing communications worker, who noted that "the workload often goes beyond the job description, but you just adjust because that's how it works here," revealing how the normalization of excess labor is embedded in everyday communicative expectations within creative organizations. When work-related risks are systematically shifted onto individual responsibility, the organization is no longer positioned as the primary guarantor of job security and work sustainability (Ball, 2016). At this juncture, Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality becomes analytically central: individuals are encouraged to govern themselves according to market logic, rendering the acceptance of uncertainty appear as a rational personal choice rather than the outcome of structural pressure (Barszczewski, 2021). This process of internalization is vividly illustrated in the words of TRA (F), a KOL specialist and content creator, who stated, "I know the pay is below minimum, but I treat it as an investment in my portfolio and skills," a statement that encapsulates how neoliberal rationality is absorbed into the self-understanding of creative workers, transforming structural disadvantage into a narrative of personal growth and strategic self-positioning that ultimately reproduces the very conditions sustaining precarity.

The subsequent stage of analysis examines how discourse constructs, legitimizes, and sustains this normalization across organizational and industrial levels. The findings indicate the clear dominance of the language of passion, creativity, and learning as instruments of ideological legitimation within Indonesia's creative sector. Passion functions as a moral argument that justifies working beyond formal boundaries and absorbing conditions that would otherwise be recognized as violations of labor rights. Creativity is positioned

as a symbol of professional autonomy, although workers in practice remain embedded within subordinative relations that constrain their agency while maintaining the appearance of freedom. Flexibility is represented as liberation, yet it simultaneously obscures the boundaries of working time and implicitly extends organizational control over workers' lives and schedules. As DAN (M), a content creator and social media specialist, remarked, "People keep saying this is a passion job, so you are not supposed to complain, but at the end of the day you are still doing unpaid overtime," a statement that reveals the ideological function of passion discourse in suppressing legitimate grievances and normalizing exploitation under the guise of vocational commitment. Thus, the language of self-development operates as an ideological mechanism that conceals power relations and structural inequalities from both workers and broader public discourse (Formby et al., 2024).

Critically, however, the reflective process within LEGO® Serious Play® sessions reveals significant moments of shifting awareness that move beyond the surface dominance of such discourse. When experiences are externalized and visualized through material metaphors, participants begin to establish connections between their personal struggles and broader structural conditions that are ordinarily rendered invisible by individualized language. Symbols such as roofless buildings or fragile foundations, constructed by KML (F), a freelance content writer, to represent her experience of working without institutional support, facilitated collective recognition that the absence of protection is not an individual failure but a direct consequence of policy configurations and industry governance arrangements that systematically transfer risk onto workers.

This structural awareness was echoed by HLG (M), an intern cameraman who participated as a confirmation informant, who reflected: "I used to think it was just me who did not know how to negotiate, but building the model made me see it is the whole system that is set up this way," demonstrating how the participatory and material dimensions of LSP create epistemic conditions for critical articulation that conventional interview methods rarely afford. In synthesis, the findings indicate a dialectic between structure and agency: precarity is institutionalized through policies, organizational practices, and market rationalities that encourage adaptive self-governance, yet creative workers simultaneously demonstrate reflective capacities to understand, articulate, and negotiate these conditions when provided with the appropriate communicative space. Precarity in Indonesia's creative industry can therefore be understood as the outcome of structural configurations that are reproduced through everyday discourses and practices, while simultaneously constituting a contested space where neoliberal subjectivities are formed, negotiated, and, to some extent, critically questioned by the actors themselves.

Voicing Precarity through Lego® Serious Play®

This discussion starts from the empirical finding that the main problems faced by creative workers do not lie solely in low wages or the absence of formal contracts, but in organizational communication patterns that are ambiguous and minimally standardized. Based on FGDs and the participant table in the manuscript, recurring issues include "below minimum wages," "no job security," "unclear workload and job roles," and the requirement to "rely on personal equipment." These expressions are not merely administrative descriptions but reflect experiences of workplace communication that are neither transparent nor structured. In the LEGO® Serious Play® sessions, these issues were visualized through symbolic models depicting contracts as fragile structures, overlapping workloads, and buildings without protection representing the absence of social security. When a participant from the media sector stated that their employment status was "under freelance contracts without formal protection," this was linked to a modular building model that could be easily dismantled. The visualization demonstrates that work relationships are not perceived as stable institutional ties but as temporary connections that can be terminated at any time.

In the context of organizational communication, this situation indicates that work structures are produced through informal practices and implicit expectations. A participant from the marketing communication field noted "discrepancies between offered and actual positions," meaning that the job descriptions communicated initially differ from daily practices. This signals a misalignment between formal communication and operational realities. When task expansion occurs without renegotiation or compensation, organizational communication functions as a mechanism of normalization rather than clarification. Flexibility also emerges as a central problem. Informants from the social media and event organizing sectors highlighted extensive workloads, emotional pressure, and unclear regulations. In the FGDs, flexibility was visualized as an open, boundless

space. Discursively, flexibility is understood as an opportunity, but in practice, it extends working hours and increases individual responsibilities (Sanson & Courpasson, 2022). When an informant emphasized that workers “develop skills independently” and rely on “self-discipline” to meet industry demands, it becomes evident that institutional responsibilities have shifted into personal obligations.

This phenomenon aligns with Michel Foucault’s concept of governmentality, which explains that power operates through the formation of self-regulating rationalities. Adaptive self-governance emerges when creative workers accept uncertainty as an industry norm and respond by enhancing their capacities, expanding skills, and adjusting expectations. Data in the manuscript indicate that unprotected internships and short-term contracts have been normalized as learning stages. This means that workers not only experience precarity but also reproduce the rationalities that justify it. However, the LSP process reveals reflective moments distinct from regular interviews. When symbolic models are compared with one another, participants recognize recurring patterns such as “no opportunities for career advancement,” “lack of formal job security agreements,” and “absence of standardized jobdesk.” This collective awareness shifts understanding from the personal to the structural level. In discussions, relational comfort depicted through bright colors and team connectivity is acknowledged as important but insufficient to replace lost normative rights (Purcell & Brook, 2022).

Here, a form of counter-conduct emerges that is not confrontational but reflective. Some informants reported becoming more selective with projects, considering contract clarity, or recognizing the importance of labor rights literacy, despite previously having “limited knowledge of labor rights” as a constraint. This practice demonstrates that adaptive governance is not entirely synonymous with passive compliance. It can develop into negotiating boundaries, even within the framework of neoliberal rationalities. Critically, Voicing Precarity through LEGO® Serious Play® shows that the problems of creative workers lie in the production of organizational communication that is ambiguous and minimally accountable, which is then legitimized through discourses of flexibility and self-development. Neoliberal rationalities shape disciplined and adaptive subjects, yet the collective reflective process opens space for structural awareness (Hickson, 2024). Thus, precarity is not only normalized through everyday communication but can also be questioned and renegotiated when these experiences are materialized and discussed collectively.

The Communicative Constitution of Precarious Subjectivities

The findings of this study demonstrate that precarious subjectivities among creative workers in Indonesia are not simply the product of adverse economic conditions but are actively constituted through everyday communicative practices that operate within and across organizational life. Drawing on Critical Organizational Communication, subjectivity is understood not as a fixed property of individuals but as an ongoing discursive accomplishment produced through interaction, meaning-making, and the circulation of dominant organizational narratives (Mumby, 2016). The data reveal that organizational communication in Indonesia’s creative sector operates through a set of recurring discursive formations, most prominently the language of passion, flexibility, and self-development, which function collectively to interpellate workers as entrepreneurial subjects who willingly assume risks that were historically institutional obligations. Within this communicative regime, contractual insecurity is reframed as independence, multitasking without adequate compensation is narrated as skill diversification, and the absence of social protection is absorbed into a personal ethic of resilience and professional commitment.

These discursive reframings are not incidental but are structurally reproduced through organizational practices, industry norms, and the broader neoliberal rationality that positions instability as opportunity and self-sacrifice as professional virtue (Ball, 2016; Barszczewski, 2021). Crucially, the constitution of precarious subjectivities does not operate through explicit coercion but through the normalization of a communicative order in which challenging structural conditions becomes increasingly difficult to articulate, as the very language available to workers has been shaped by the same ideological framework that produces their vulnerability. Affective dimensions of workplace communication, including narratives of team solidarity, relational comfort, and shared passion, further consolidate this process by providing symbolic compensation for the absence of normative rights, thereby sustaining worker engagement and organizational loyalty under conditions that would otherwise be recognized as structurally unjust (Formby et al., 2024; Mumby, 2016).

The communicative constitution of precarious subjectivities, however, is neither total nor without internal contradiction. The analytical process within this study, particularly through the reflective dimensions of the LEGO® Serious Play® methodology, reveals that the discursive formations normalizing precarity contain

within themselves the conditions for their own critical interrogation. When participants externalized their work experiences through symbolic model construction and engaged in collective narrative interpretation, the individualized frameworks through which precarity had been rendered personally meaningful began to give way to structurally informed accounts of shared vulnerability. This shift is analytically significant because it demonstrates that the communicative constitution of subjectivity is not a unidirectional process of ideological imposition but a dynamic field in which dominant meanings are simultaneously reproduced and destabilized through social interaction (Cornelissen, 2018).

The collective dimension of meaning-making within LSP sessions created a communicative counter-space in which the taken-for-granted quality of neoliberal discourse became visible and therefore contestable, producing moments of reflexive re-subjectivation that conventional research methods rarely afford. Organizationally, the silence surrounding labor rights within creative workplaces must itself be understood as a communicative accomplishment, sustained through implicit norms, affective pressures, and the discursive marginalization of rights-based language rather than through genuine consensus or satisfaction (Mumby, 2016; Yasih, 2023). Taken together, these findings indicate that the communicative constitution of precarious subjectivities operates through a dual mechanism: on one hand, organizational discourses of passion, flexibility, and affective solidarity produce self-governing subjects who absorb structural risks as personal responsibilities; on the other hand, participatory communicative spaces reveal the constructed and therefore contestable nature of these subjectivities, opening possibilities for reflexive agency within and critically against the neoliberal rationalities that continuously frame and reproduce precarious creative work in Indonesia (Formby et al., 2024; Yasih, 2023).

Typology of Creative Labor Responses within the Neoliberal Framework

The typology analysis in this study stems from a conceptual question regarding how creative workers position themselves within precarious and flexible work structures. The data indicate that the responses observed are not random but patterned. To understand these patterns, a framework is needed that can explain the relationship between neoliberal structures and the formation of worker subjectivities. In this context, neoliberalism is understood not merely as an economic system but as a rationality that shapes how individuals perceive risk, responsibility, and success. Through Michel Foucault's perspective of governmentality, power operates by encouraging individuals to regulate themselves according to market logic. In the creative industry, this rationality is evident in the normalization of flexibility, short-term projects, multitasking, and continuous self-development. Workers are prompted to become entrepreneurs of the self, that is, subjects who actively manage their skills, networks, and reputations without relying on institutional guarantees (Beirne et al., 2017).

The research findings show that adaptive self-governance forms the primary foundation of creative workers' responses. They accept contractual uncertainty as an industry norm, enhance their skills independently, and adjust their expectations regarding normative rights. (Bay, 2019). When participants mentioned conditions such as "no job security," "limited career advancement," or "rely on personal equipment," the responses that emerged were not structural demands but adaptive strategies, such as expanding portfolios or seeking additional projects. Adaptive self-governance is therefore not merely a survival strategy but a form of internalizing neoliberal rationalities that shifts the burden of risk onto individuals. However, the analysis does not stop at identifying adaptation. The reflective process in LEGO® Serious Play® reveals a more complex differentiation of orientations. From the foundation of adaptive self-governance, two tendencies of response emerge that can be mapped typologically, namely resilience and resistance. The typological approach in this study is not intended to rigidly categorize individuals but to map the dominant orientations formed through communication practices and work experiences.



Figure 2. Configuration of Resistance and Resilience within Adaptive Self-Governance

Resilience refers to an orientation that emphasizes the capacity to rebound in maintaining work continuity within existing structures. Workers with this orientation continue to accept flexibility and uncertainty but manage them by strengthening their personal capacities, exercising self-discipline, and optimizing social networks. They view multitasking as a learning opportunity and interpret team relationships as a source of emotional support. Within the neoliberal framework, resilience functions to reinforce the reproduction of the system because it maintains subjective stability without challenging the structures that produce precarity. Critically, resilience contains ambivalence, as it demonstrates agency on one hand but on the other has the potential to prolong the legitimacy of unjust conditions (Bracke, 2016).

Resistance in these findings does not emerge as open collective opposition but as subtle boundary negotiation. Some participants become more selective with projects, question contract clarity, or recognize the importance of labor rights literacy. This orientation remains within the neoliberal field but seeks to reinterpret the norms of flexibility. In terms of governmentality, resistance can be understood as counter conduct, that is, practices that do not fully reject dominant rationalities but shift the way individuals position themselves within them. Resistance here is reflective and situational rather than revolutionary (Cornelissen, 2018).

Thus, the typology of creative workers' responses can be understood as a spectrum rooted in adaptive self-governance. Adaptive self-governance forms the basis for the formation of disciplined and productive neoliberal subjects. From this foundation, resilience represents the strengthening of personal capacities in accommodating structures, whereas resistance represents efforts to negotiate and set limits against excessive demands (Yasih, 2023). These two orientations are not entirely separate but can coexist within the same individual experience. Conceptually, this typology demonstrates that creative workers are neither passive victims nor entirely autonomous heroic actors. They are subjects shaped by neoliberal rationalities yet retain reflective space to negotiate their positions. In the context of organizational communication, this typology shows that everyday practices, such as framing flexibility, expanding job responsibilities, and promoting narratives of passion, play a central role in shaping these response orientations. In conclusion, mapping this typology provides a theoretical contribution by positioning adaptive self-governance as the starting point of analysis, rather than treating resilience or resistance as the final categories. This approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of how precarity is negotiated in Indonesia's creative industry. Precarity is reproduced not only through policies and market structures but also through communication practices that shape subjectivities. However within these same practices, reflective gaps always exist, allowing for the emergence of resistive orientations, even while remaining within the limits of neoliberal rationalities themselves.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that precarity in Indonesia's creative industry is not merely a labor market phenomenon but, more fundamentally, a communicative one. The central argument advanced here is that organizational communication functions as the primary mechanism through which neoliberal power reproduces itself and shapes the subjectivities of creative workers. Organizational discourses of flexibility, passion, creativity, and self-development do not simply describe working conditions; they actively constitute them by normalizing precarious arrangements as professional virtues and individual choices. In this sense, the study positions itself firmly within Organizational Communication, rather than labor studies alone, by demonstrating how communicative practices operating within and across organizational life translate structural insecurity into internalized rationalities that workers carry as personal orientations.

The findings reveal that discursive formations such as passion, flexibility, and self-development operate as communicative technologies of neoliberal governance. By framing contractual insecurity as independence, multitasking without adequate compensation as skill diversification, and the absence of labor protection as the natural price of creative freedom, these organizational discourses function to normalize precarity and interpellate workers as entrepreneurial subjects who willingly absorb institutional risks. This process of subject formation is not achieved through coercion but through the repeated, taken-for-granted circulation of communicative norms within organizational and industry settings. The silence surrounding labor rights within creative workplaces is itself a communicative accomplishment, sustained through affective pressures and the discursive marginalization of rights-based language rather than genuine consensus.

Crucially, however, organizational communication does not operate as a one-directional mechanism of control. The LEGO® Serious Play®-based discussions revealed that when workers are provided with a participatory communicative space, the same discursive formations that normalize precarity become visible and therefore contestable. Workers engaged in processes of adaptation, negotiation, and subtle resistance, not as isolated behavioral responses but as communicative orientations through which they actively interpreted and repositioned themselves in relation to dominant organizational discourses. This finding allows the study to map a typology of responses rooted in adaptive self-governance, from which two patterned orientations emerge: resilience, which sustains system continuity through the strengthening of personal capacities within existing communicative norms, and resistance, which operates as reflective counter-conduct that selectively reinterprets the meaning of flexibility and renegotiates work boundaries from within the neoliberal field. These orientations are not discrete categories but coexisting dimensions of the same communicative process through which workers navigate precarity in their daily working lives.

Theoretically, this study contributes to Organizational Communication by demonstrating that the discursive reproduction of neoliberal precarity is inseparable from communicative practice. The typology proposed here is not merely a classification of worker behavior but a mapping of how communication shapes the conditions under which adaptation, negotiation, and resistance become possible or constrained. The study's limitations lie in the small number of participants and the specificity of the Indonesian creative industry context. Future research could productively expand cross-country comparisons, adopt longitudinal designs, and examine more deeply the collective and advocacy dimensions of communicative resistance among creative workers in similarly precarious labor markets.

DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Full transcripts are not publicly archived due to participant confidentiality commitments; anonymized excerpts are available upon request.

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