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Meaning-making of Nutri-Level among freshly prepared beverage content creators

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ABSTRACT

Background: Indonesia's Ministry of Health launched Nutri-Level on 14 April 2026, a grading system for freshly prepared beverages that targets sugar intake as a driver of the country's diabetes burden. Blood glucose testing indicates that 11.7 per cent of residents aged 15 and above are diabetic. Because the scheme is voluntary and starts with large producers, the state relies on advocacy, making content creators its de facto intermediaries. Although research focuses on audience surveys or content audits, it has paid limited attention to the producers who determine the inclusion of nutritional information in posts. **Purpose:** Examine how content creators interpret Nutri-Level labels when promoting products and how those interpretations shape the communication of a voluntary health policy. **Methods:** This research used a qualitative single-case design with embedded units and interviewed eight informants: three independent content creators and five beverage business owners who promote their own products. The informants were recruited from four structural positions, defined by how the creator and business identities relate. Semi-structured online interviews followed six thematic blocks. The authors checked each informant's statements against that informant's published content and against NoLimit Indonesia media monitoring data from 14 April to 31 August 2026. **Results:** Three findings held across all eight cases. Content plans left out nutrient profiles. Informants defined healthiness by personal criteria and did not refer to official standards. None had encountered the label in their product category. Four of the eight named diabetes unprompted as a risk of sugary drinks. That knowledge never reached the informants' content. The informants split into four positions on who bears responsibility for nutritional education. **Conclusion:** Creators form their own understanding of the policy on their channels before the policy reaches them. Producers may adopt only part of the policy's meaning. **Implications:** Managers of voluntary labelling communication must assign specific educational responsibilities and build a channel strategy that reaches creators where they work.

Keywords: communication management; meaning-making; Nutri-Level policy; content creators; health communication

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INTRODUCTION

According to the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey, 47.5 per cent of residents aged over three consumed high-sugar beverages at least once daily. Blood glucose testing put diabetes prevalence at 11.7 per cent among residents aged 15 and older. Hypertension reached 30.8 per cent among those aged 18 and older (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2024).

The Ministry of Health responded to these figures with Ministerial Decree Number HK.01.07/MENKES/301/2026. The decree targets sweetened beverages and assigns freshly prepared beverages a score from A to D (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2026). The decree calculates the score based on sugar, salt, and saturated fat per 100 millilitres. Producers apply the labels on a voluntary basis, and large enterprises go first. Future regulations will enforce mandatory compliance after establishing maximum limits. Local and central authorities must encourage adoption. The state intervenes through open-ended advocacy. A similar hesitation affects the proposed excise tax on sweetened drinks. Industry coalitions have delayed that tax measure since 2020 (Putri et al., 2023).

Singapore chose a mandatory Nutri-Grade scheme. In an online grocery trial before launch, the label cut sugar in purchased beverages by about 1.5 grams per serving (Shin et al., 2023). Jones et al. (2019) reviewed 31 government-endorsed regulations and recorded a shift towards mandatory legislation while Kelly et al. (2024) reported uneven coverage between producers under voluntary schemes. Even under a binding rule, Brazilian compliance differed between product categories (Senda et al., 2024), Guo et al. (2024) found graded-indicator labels most effective on young adults' purchase intention and behaviour, with warning labels showing mixed results, and Contreras-Manzano et al. (2026) documented measurable shifts in beverage intake following Mexico's warning label rollout.

This article uses the same definition of *minuman kekinian* adopted in the preceding study by Ahmad et al. (2026), namely non-alcoholic sweetened beverages mixed to order at the point of sale, based on coffee, tea, milk, or fruit, with added toppings or caloric sweeteners. International scholarship names this category freshly prepared beverages (Liu et al., 2023). The boundary separates the category from mass-produced bottled sweetened drinks, and Nutri-Level covers only freshly prepared beverages.

Safitri et al. (2021) found that a single sixteen-ounce boba milk tea contained over 300 kilocalories, most of it from sucrose. This amount passes the 200-kilocalorie daily ceiling for sugar in Indonesian dietary guidance,

and the count leaves out pearls and toppings. Veronica and Ilmi (2020) documented frequent weekly consumption among students in Depok and Jakarta, yet calculated no nutrient intake. Fewer than one in five of 488 public senior high school students in Jakarta demonstrated sufficient knowledge regarding sugar-sweetened beverages (Faraji et al., 2025). Liu et al. (2023) observed that sugar content information is seldom presented in the online marketing of hand-shaken tea in northern Taiwan. Thai reformulation is advancing faster than the regulatory labelling criteria designed to oversee it (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2025). Studies of labelling on products marketed to children concentrate on consumer perception and intention, not nutritional quality (Soares & Cruz, 2026).

National survey data on 699,959 Indonesians link higher caloric intake from sugar-sweetened beverages with a greater likelihood of a type 2 diabetes diagnosis (Ahsan et al., 2025). Ahsan et al. (2025) place these beverages among the commercial determinants of health, where product design, pricing, and marketing shape consumption. Their call for marketing restrictions and education brings the people who market these drinks into the work of diabetes prevention.

Content creators occupy the position where that information either travels or stops. Dupuis et al. (2025) found that most TikTok partnerships with food and beverage brands carried no clear marker, and Alhothali and Aljefree (2023) found young adults read creator food advertising as personal recommendation, a pattern Kothari et al. (2025) trace to perceived credibility and authenticity. Khamis et al. (2017) explain it through self-branding, which blurs a creator's private and branded selves from the outset, and Arsel et al. (2025) show that sponsored content is an epistemic market object both parties handle through improvised knowledge work. Platforms connect these actors and monetise their output (Bleier et al., 2024), and posting frequency has an inverted U-shaped effect on engagement (Tafesse & Dayan, 2023).

The first study in this research programme found urban public awareness of nutrition labels stopping at visual recognition without reaching the market mechanisms behind it (Ahmad et al., 2026). The literature has not asked the producers. Existing work surveys audiences or audits posted content, and a scoping review of 51 studies on influencers and adolescent health found only one that interviewed influencers, with most of the field quantitative and based in the Global North (Engel et al., 2024). The gap sharpens for creators who own the business, since the interest in distributing meaning and the interest in selling product then rest in one person. A voluntary policy that relies on

advocacy must know how such intermediaries process its message. Zumofen et al. (2026) found authenticity decisive in public-sector influencer work across five countries, and Wolf et al. (2026) demonstrate across Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates, and Australia that strategic influence in health communication depends on trust and cultural resonance. Neither study examines a voluntary labelling scheme or creators who sell the labelled product.

Indonesian communication management scholars have started to examine the small-enterprise dimension of this field. Nur et al. (2025) demonstrate how small and medium enterprises develop a value proposition via digital business communication. Widiyanti and Pamungkas (2025) examine how late-adopting micro-entrepreneurs reconstruct their communication identities while adjusting to new promotional innovations. Both accounts explain how small-scale operators manage their own messaging. Neither addresses the implications of incorporating a public health obligation into that messaging.

This study therefore asks how freshly prepared beverage content creators make sense of Nutri-Level within their promotional practice, and what that sense-making means for the communication management of the policy. Three objectives address the first part, namely (1) to map how these creators construct healthiness and nutritional risk before meaningful exposure to the policy, (2) to trace the decision logic that governs whether nutritional information enters their content, and (3) to identify how they locate responsibility for nutritional education among the state, commercial partners, and themselves. The authors answer the second part by reading these findings against media monitoring data from 14 April to 31 August 2026.

The authors draw on four theoretical strands: mediatized social construction, platformization, communicative figurations, and meaning integration. The first strand is mediatized social construction. Berger and Luckmann (2018) treat social reality as the product of three moments: externalisation, objectivation, and internalisation. Couldry and Hepp (2027) hold that digital media take part in making that reality. Hjarvard (2008) defines mediatization as the condition in which media operate as an autonomous institution on the logic of visibility and speed. Hepp (2020) extends the idea as deep mediatization. Digital infrastructure and datafication enter the core work of institutions. Sendra et al. (2024) add the mediatization of ignorance. When health institutions leave a narrative gap, actors with competing interests fill it.

The second strand supplies the mechanism. Nieborg and Poell (2018) introduce the contingent cultural commodity. Poell et al. (2019)

break platformization into data infrastructure, market mechanisms, and governance. Duffy et al. (2019) show that platformed cultural work produces meaning and requires creators to be both creative labourers and brand managers.

The third strand, communicative figurations, supplies the actor layer. Hepp et al. (2018) describe figurations composed of actor constellations, frames of relevance, and media repertoires. The concept separates the participants in a policy discussion by role. That separation matters when a product seller also joins the debate. The authors place the Ministry of Health, the creators, and creator audiences within one figuration.

The authors build the analytical framework on the fourth strand, meaning integration, as Wolfers (2024) presents it. Media influence succeeds when audiences assimilate novel details into established knowledge. The authors redirect that perspective toward the producer and ask whether a health label aligns with a promoter's commercial identity. A Finnish public health initiative inspired this approach. Influencers in that campaign recast official government directives in their own communication styles (Pöyry et al., 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

The authors take a qualitative approach within the constructivist paradigm and use a single case study design with embedded units (Yin, 2018). The authors bound the case to the first five months of the voluntary Nutri-Level phase, from the decree signed on 14 April 2026 to the end of fieldwork in September 2026. The case centres on how creators produce content about freshly prepared beverages. Eight informants took part, recruited from four structural positions defined by how creator identity relates to business identity. This relationship serves as the sampling axis because it determines whether the interest in spreading meaning and the interest in selling a product sit in one person. The authors did not use prior exposure to Nutri-Level as an inclusion criterion. Five months after the decree, exposure was uncertain, and selecting on it would have biased the sample toward the outcome. The authors asked about exposure in each interview and report the answers as findings. The four positions are: (1) creators without a business (three informants); (2) a creator whose personal and business identities have merged (one informant); (3) creators who keep the two apart through separate accounts (three informants); and (4) a business owner who has never built a personal creator identity (one informant). As

Table 1 Informant Profiles and Structural Positions

No.	Profile	Structural Position
1	Owner and marketer of a family restaurant, Greater Jakarta	Creator and business identity fused; no firm account separation
2	Independent coffee content creator, hospitality background	Creator without a business
3	Certified barista, coffee content creator, and coffee outlet owner, Java	Identity separated into two deliberate accounts
4	Owner of a mobile coffee business, East Java	No personal creator identity; business account only
5	Owner of an online-only coffee business since 2018	Identity separated; personal account reposts by tagging
6	Food and beverage content creator, university student, Central Java	Creator without a business
7	Owner of a single-outlet slow bar, Greater Jakarta	Identity separated; personal account reposts opening hours
8	Food, beverage, and tourism content creator	Creator without a business

Source: Research Result, 2026

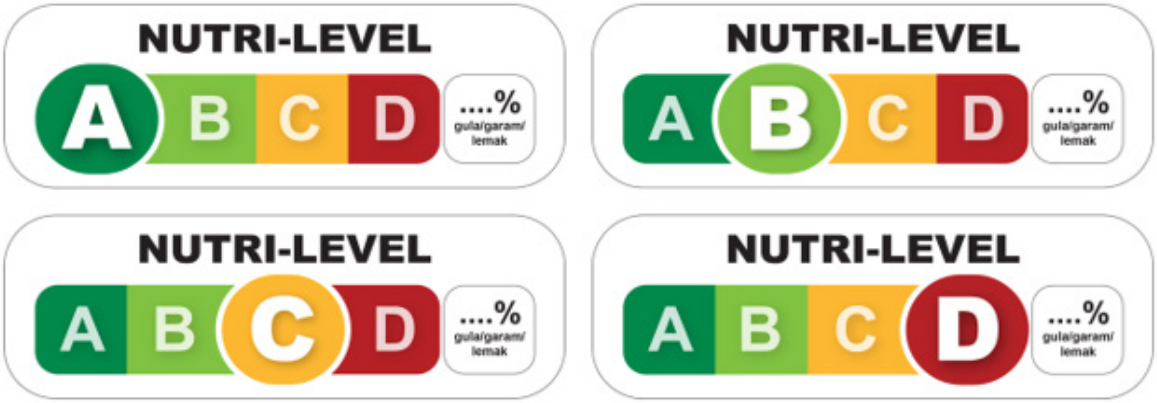
the consent form requires, the authors masked identities with codes. Table 1 summarises the eight informants. In the quotations, square brackets mark withheld identifying details such as business names, and ellipses mark omitted speech.

The authors based the sample size on the information power principle of Malterud et al. (2016): a sharper aim and tighter selection criteria lower the number of informants a study needs. Vasileiou et al. (2018) found that studies often claim saturation without justifying it for their own design, and Hennink and Kaiser (2022) reported that empirical tests reached saturation at 9 to 17 interviews in mostly homogeneous samples. With eight interviews, this study falls below that range. The authors claim no saturation and require only that each structural position carry at least one informant. Two of the four positions carry three informants each; two carry one. This imbalance is stated openly because it limits how strongly any associational claim can be drawn. Recruitment constraints caused this imbalance. Within an eleven-day fieldwork window, chain referral yielded only one informant for each of the two rarer configurations. No informant was excluded after the interviews, so the analysis rests on all eight cases rather than on a selection made by the authors. Selection was purposive with chain referral following (Palinkas et al., 2015), organised around theoretically meaningful contrasts as described by (Campbell et al., 2020).

Data came from semi-structured in-depth interviews built on two guides. The main guide covered six blocks, namely production practice, meaning of freshly prepared beverages, platform logic and paid partnership disclosure, audience relations, recognition of Nutri-Level, and

position among the state, commercial partners, and platforms. Seven informants completed all six blocks, while the session with Informant 8 was shorter and focused on confirming earlier patterns, so his account carries less weight. A supplementary module for the five business owners was completed with Informants 4, 5, and 7, halted at its third block with Informant 1, and not administered to Informant 3. In the fifth block, the interviewer shared the visual reference from the decree annex on screen (see Figure 1) and then asked whether informants had seen the label. Informants answered the recognition question with the visual in view. Only Informant 6 had mentioned Nutri-Level before this prompt. The authors held all interviews online by video call between 7 and 17 September 2026 and audio-recorded each one with the informant's consent.

Reflexivity requires a note. The first author works at the Ministry of Health, which issued the policy, and chairs a national association of government public relations practitioners, through whose network or through referrals several informants were reached, one of whom knew the first author beforehand. Informants were told of the Ministry affiliation before consenting, which risks steering answers towards defending the policy. To reduce this risk, the authors placed the Nutri-Level block fifth in the guide. Informants first described everyday working practice before the discussion turned to the policy. Criticism of the state is quoted in full. These steps still left gaps. In three interviews, the interviewer supplied information or an analogy: the policy's scope, a tobacco labelling comparison, and a list of diseases. The authors marked every statement made after such a prompt in the codebook and do not report it as a spontaneous view. Four informants named



Source: Kementerian Kesehatan, 2026

Figure 1 Nutri-Level Grades A to D Shown to Informants in the Fifth Interview Block

the diabetes link in spontaneous answers. Six of the eight informants expressed scepticism of varying intensity. From this pattern, the authors judge the risk of policy-leaning answers to be limited. Even so, the authors cannot rule out a residual effect on the tone of answers.

Analysis followed the data analysis spiral of Creswell (2015), which moves from data management to representation in a spiral, not a line. Coding followed Saldaña (2021), with initial codes drawn deductively from the six interview blocks rather than from theory, so that categories would rest on the informants' own language. Open codes from the first cycle were aggregated into seven cross-case themes in the second cycle. The degree of fusion between creator and business identity was treated separately as a structural explanatory variable.

Trustworthiness follows the four criteria of Korstjens and Moser (2018). The authors pursued credibility through two-stage source triangulation. The first stage compared the eight informants' statements to separate cross-case claims from single-source claims. The second stage compared interview statements against six beverage-related posts from five informants and against media monitoring data for the keyword Nutri-Level from 14 April to 31 August 2026 supplied by NoLimit Indonesia. The dashboard counts talks, meaning posts and comments, on X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Threads, assigns sentiment automatically, and tracks online news separately. Because the keyword also captured some unrelated posts, the authors use these figures for the volume and location of the conversation and not its quality.

The first author generated the transcripts automatically and then verified them against the audio recordings. To ensure confirmability, the authors checked each quotation word for word against the corrected transcripts and recorded the corresponding transcript line in the research codebook. The review covered 138 quotations and corrected 19 discrepancies, most of them filler words that had been removed without an ellipsis.

Dependability rests on the codebook, which documents the interview guides, both coding cycles, and the movement from open codes to cross-case themes. The authors support transferability by describing each informant's structural position, business scale, and account arrangement. The authors make no claim to statistical generalisation.

The authors conducted the interviews in Indonesian, and the quotations are the authors' translations aiming at semantic equivalence. The authors kept the conversational register of the original. The codebook retains the Indonesian source wording for every quotation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Across eight transcripts, the authors identified seven cross-case themes at varying levels of confirmation. All eight informants independently confirmed three themes. Two themes received qualified confirmation. The remaining two split the informants into distinct positions, and this split carries the most explanatory weight. The fieldwork timing partly explains the three uniform findings, so the authors treat them as a baseline and give the divergent themes priority in the analysis. Table 2 summarises the position of each theme. The discussion below addresses the three objectives in order.

On the first objective, all eight informants defined a healthy beverage on their own terms, without citing any official nutritional standard. Informant 1 named plain water. Informant 3 defined healthiness through product purity, and Informant 5 screened for additives through composition labels. Informant 4 named an ideal he admits not applying to his own coffee. When the authors asked which health problems follow habitual consumption of sweetened drinks, four informants named diabetes unprompted and a fifth named kidney disease. None of the informants carried that knowledge into content planning, a gap that bears on the diabetes burden described earlier (Ahsan et al., 2025).

> A healthy drink is a drink without sugar, so, plain water, that is what is healthy (Informant 1, personal communication, September 8, 2026).

> For more than a year now, more than a year, I have not bought a bottled drink from the supermarket... But for coffee itself, I still cannot avoid the sugar one hundred per cent, which means I only cut it down (Informant 4, personal communication, September 13, 2026).

In the terms of Berger and Luckmann (2018) Nutri-Level is an objectivation of policy that must pass through creator internalisation before reaching audiences, yet the data show a standard born of personal experience being

Table 1 Cross-Case Themes and Credibility Status

Theme	n/8	Status
Production logic sets nutritional information aside	8/8	Strong, reinforced by published content
Risk knowledge and private standards of healthiness	8/8	Strong, four distinct formation pathways
Minimal exposure to Nutri-Level	8/8	Strong, reinforced by aggregate data
Scepticism about policy effectiveness	6/8	A spectrum rather than a consensus
Higher trust in creators than in official channels	7/8	Qualified, seven of eight
Distribution of educational responsibility	7/8	Four divergent positions
Willingness to join a campaign	8/8	Six graded positions

Source: Research result, 2026. The n/8 column counts informants whose accounts address the theme.

internalised before the objectivation arrived. Each informant's own channel, not the policy channel, is where the reality of a healthy beverage gets produced for their audience (Couldry & Hepp, 2027). Informant 4's admission shows that the gap between a believed standard and actual practice can be conscious and openly acknowledged.

All informants understood the A to D scale. None had seen the label on a freshly prepared beverage in Indonesia. Informants 2 and 5 had noticed colour labels on bottled drinks in modern retail, a category outside the decree. Only Informant 5 named this distinction without prompting. Informant 6 reported A-to-D grades on the menu of a coffee chain that had not adopted the label. Informant 6 gave this account after the visual presentation, so the authors read it as recall shaped by the image. Informant 4 gave the most precise detail in the corpus, identifying the on-screen label as a Singaporean regulation.

> But this label looks like it is in Singapore, abroad, in Singapore, not in Indonesia... Here in Indonesia, I have never seen it (Informant 4, personal communication, September 13, 2026).

> Oh, yes, at [outlet name], that is the one... It was a label on the menu. A label on the menu... Yes, the A, B, C, D content is there on the menu (Informant 6, personal communication, September 16, 2026).

Aggregated data reinforce this pattern. Between 14 April and 31 August 2026, media monitoring identified 776 talks about Nutri-Level from 553 accounts, consisting of 745 posts and 31 comments (NoLimit Indonesia, 2026). The two weeks after the decree signing produced 378 talks, nearly half of the total. After a quiet stretch, a second rise peaked at 117 talks in the week of 4 August. The dashboard recorded no social media activity between 5 May and 29 June, yet online news continued through those weeks. The authors therefore treat this silence as a possible data collection gap, not a verified absence of discourse. Across the monitoring period, 378 online news outlets published 809 articles, 174 of them in the first week. Public interest tracked each regulatory announcement and never grew into sustained discourse.

The resulting narrative vacuum is what Sendra et al. (2024) call mediatization of ignorance. The authors read the knowledge gap as a finding: a voluntary scheme that targets large producers first leaves advocacy as the state's sole instrument. Deep mediatization explains the creators' advantage: datafication and speed already shape their daily practice, so creators are better placed than bureaucratic institutions to fill that vacuum (Hepp, 2020). State institutions move more slowly.

The list of most active accounts shows the same pattern. From 14 April to 31 August 2026,

the fifty most active accounts posted 116 talks. News outlets posted 39, and regional food and drug authority units together with a local health office posted 14. The two groups account for 45.7 per cent. Dietitians and nutrition services added seven (NoLimit Indonesia, 2026). Freshly prepared beverage creators like the informants in this study barely appear on the list. The group whose products the policy regulates was largely missing from the public conversation about it.

On the second objective, nutrient content did not enter the content planning stage for any of the eight. Informant 1 named fit with prevailing trend so that reach would rise, Informant 3 named sensory quality as his single criterion, Informant 4 named packaging first and taste second and never mentioned nutrition across the whole discussion of content production, and Informant 8 stated the exclusion outright. Informant 2 offers a partial exception, discussed below.

> We try to adjust, you know, content that could plausibly land and be attractive, so that it can get likes, and in the end the reach goes up (Informant 1, personal communication, September 8, 2026).

> If it is good in sensory terms, I will definitely post it. But if it is not good in sensory terms, I do not post it (Informant 3, personal communication, September 7, 2026).

> Something like that does not become a consideration. What matters is that the content has good visuals (Informant 8, personal communication, September 17, 2026).

The contingent cultural commodity of Nieborg and Poell (2018) fits this pattern, since platform rules set the form and reach of a post before any nutritional consideration arises. Informant 2 still posts high-sugar products and closes with an appeal to drink water afterwards, which places nutritional information at the end of a post as compensation and not at the front as a selection criterion. Creators make content decisions by platform legibility.

The double role that Duffy et al. (2019) describe, creative labourer and brand manager at once, is sharpest among the five owners. The owners make meaning and sell product in the same act. One post on Informant 1's outlet account promotes two chocolate drink variants with a sweet-craving hashtag and no nutritional information. Informant 4's business built two posts, on Instagram and TikTok, around workplace hospitality and a religious holiday, leaving nutrition outside the storytelling frame.

Arsel et al. (2025) provide insight into why this omission persists, attributing it to the unsettled informational obligations of sponsored content and the subsequent improvisation of each actor. Izzah et al. (2024) observed that the brand image of an Indonesian café is constructed through emotional association, which is reflected in the register used by informants in

their posts. None of the six documented posts contains nutritional information.

Khamis et al. (2017) observe that self-branding blurs private and professional identities; business ownership introduces an additional complexity characterised by three distinct forms observed among the five owners. Informant 3 distinguishes between creator and business accounts, and his preference for unsweetened coffee is reflected in the content of the outlet he manages. Informant 1 merges both identities, where her commercial interests appear to supersede her personal nutritional considerations; conversely, Informant 4 lacks a personal creator identity because he operates solely through a business account.

> As it happens, I do not run a personal account. So I only promote [business name] through the [business name] account itself... So I have no personal branding within [business name] (Informant 4, personal communication, September 13, 2026).

Read through the figurations of Hepp et al. (2018), the trust gap runs across actor constellation, frame of relevance, and media repertoire. Seven of the eight informants said audiences trust creators more than government channels. The monitoring data for 14 April to 31 August 2026 point the same way, since the conversation carried a cumulative potential reach of about 100 million yet generated only about 78,800 engagements, under 0.1 per cent of that reach, and comments made up just 31 of 776 talks (NoLimit Indonesia, 2026). Messages about the policy travelled widely but were rarely answered. The Ministry of Health holds a high position in the actor constellation and a near-empty position in the frame of relevance of everyday audiences. Communication managers weigh the quality of exchanges with citizens alongside platform metrics (Mabillard & Zumofen, 2025), and by that measure wide reach without interaction marks a relational gap, consistent with the weight Wolf et al. (2026) give to trust and cultural resonance.

> In my view, public trust is higher towards fellow members of the public. Nano-KOL influencers, micro-influencers, the trust in them is higher than the trust in government (Informant 1, personal communication, September 8, 2026).

> They have been reviewing food for a long time... So it feels closer to the audience (Informant 6, personal communication, September 16, 2026).

On the third objective, responsibility for nutritional education split into four divergent positions. Informants 1 and 2 framed it across a wide actor constellation using the *pentahelix* vocabulary. Informant 3 drew the narrowest constellation and refused to place himself inside it. Informants 4 and 6 took the opposite view and placed creators at the centre of responsibility. Informants 5 and 8 offered a fourth position, in which the state initiates through regulation

and creators translate regulatory language into everyday language. Informant 7 stated no explicit position.

This explicit contradiction between Informant 3 and Informant 4 holds significant value for communication management. The regulation fails to establish a common understanding of educational duties. Zumofen et al. (2026) report comparable erratic patterns regarding public sector influencer management across five nations. Informant 3 eventually assigned the responsibility to the government following an interviewer prompt. Only his initial remark is therefore classified as a spontaneous reaction.

> If the government cannot influence its own people, then what is the point of having a government (Informant 3, personal communication, September 7, 2026).

> Content creators, because these days content creators are more believed by parts of the public, so whatever product they offer, whatever is inside it, people do not care, because these content creators are genuinely followed by most of their followers (Informant 4, personal communication, September 13, 2026).

The identity arrangement offers one reading of these positions, put forward only as a proposition. The sharpest contrast lies between Informant 3, who keeps separate accounts and disclaims public health responsibility, and Informant 4, who has no personal creator identity and assigns responsibility to creators as an outside party. Informants 5 and 7 also keep separate accounts yet hold differing positions. Informants 1 and 2, who draw the widest actor constellations, both use the terminology of communication planning, so professional background may account in part for these patterns. The figurations framework still applies when one actor holds both commercial and meaning-distribution roles. Future studies should test this configuration. Informant 2 made the most concrete proposal and pointed to an existing programme.

> Let us take the lesson from stunting. There, there are companions, I mean the village midwives, and they each have their own account for stunting monitoring (Informant 2, personal communication, September 7, 2026).

Readiness to join the campaign is the ultimate indicator of how far producers have integrated the meaning. The informants' attitudes form six graded positions. Informant 1 showed absolute readiness, grounded in a personal habit of reducing sugar. Informant 1 holds one viewpoint for private life and business. Informant 5 accepts the possibility of a poor product score to maintain market transparency. Informant 2 and Informant 4 demand tangible impacts before joining any initiative. Informant 6 and Informant 8 insist on a multidisciplinary approach or direct Ministry leadership. Informant 3 promises operational compliance

without engaging in nutritional advocacy. His position therefore matches his retail function and stays within the limits of his coffee expertise. Informant 7 expressed willingness to discuss the initiative. He simultaneously rejected physical implementation due to his limited business scale.

> My capacity is more in coffee. So when it comes to nutrition, I would most likely decline, because the ones who can speak about that are nutrition experts... As for me, I am only on the seller side, so it would end up biased. (Informant 3, personal communication, September 7, 2026).

> It seems we are not yet quite worthy of having Nutri-Level attached to us (Informant 7, personal communication, September 17, 2026).

> At the very least they already know what they are putting into their mouth (Informant 5, personal communication, September 17, 2026).

Informant 3 shows that producer-side meaning integration can be partial. Integration held in one domain and failed in another. Testing on the receiving side cannot detect a gap of this kind. In the Finnish campaign analysed by Pöyry et al. (2022) influencers recast official guidance in their own style. In this study, adaptation stopped where the informant's sense of expertise ended. Informant 7 gives a managerial view. A scheme with no workable route for micro-enterprises looks built around large businesses. Grading through self-declaration and laboratory testing falls harder on single outlets (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2026). Soares and Cruz (2026) found that labelling effects cluster around perception and intention in a different population. Indonesian creators are not alone in the gap between stated willingness and practice.

Aggregate data for 14 April to 31 August 2026 show public sentiment about Nutri-Level as positive or neutral: 432 positive talks, 344 neutral, none negative (NoLimit Indonesia, 2026). The informants, by contrast, voiced a range of scepticism. Software assigns the labels, so the split is a broad signal at most. Mainstream media, health institutions, and health education accounts dominate the public voices, and all support the policy. Small operators who doubt the policy in private do not say so in public.

Over the same period, conversation concentrated on Instagram with 496 talks, followed by X with 166 and Threads with 95, while TikTok carried 10 and YouTube 9. Yet several informants named TikTok as their main channel. Informant 4 was the clearest case. Policy talk ran on channels other than those where part of this creator group works. Informants saw little of those hundreds of posts. For communication management, the problem is where the message is amplified.

Other studies find nutrition labels in a similar position within creator content. Kulandaivelu et al. (2025) analysed 100,000

Instagram posts on healthy eating and found food labels in 83 of them (0.1 per cent). Posts that mentioned labels advised readers to check them but gave no guidance on how. Evans et al. (2025) examined 1,420 Instagram posts from 71 health and nutrition creators. Product endorsements and advertisements were the most common post type at 56.3 per cent, and most came from laypersons. Informal language dominated. Creators who sell and creators who inform share the same feed. Label content has little room in it. The Indonesian informants fit this picture.

Evidence on the label itself comes mostly from the receiving side. In an experiment with 4,039 Indonesians, Colozza et al. (2026) found that every front-of-pack format improved objective understanding of product healthiness, with warning labels and multiple traffic lights performing best. The experiment tested reception, not distribution. (I. J. Guo et al., 2025) show that brands in Indonesia use a range of social media techniques to market products unsuitable for children under the WHO nutrient profile model, while health and nutrition claims made up only 2.1 per cent of the marketing techniques coded. Taken together, these studies describe a label that works once seen and a platform environment that rarely shows it. The present findings add the producer side. Creators decide what appears, and Nutri-Level has not yet entered that decision.

Several limitations exist. Because the eight informants were unevenly distributed across the four positions, the associations between identity fusion and responsibility boundaries are considered exploratory; furthermore, the business-owner module included only three informants. The authors documented published content from five informants and did not perform member checking. The findings describe creators before meaningful policy engagement and do not extend to creators who have worked with the label.

CONCLUSION

For the first objective, freshly prepared beverage content creators make sense of Nutri-Level through standards of healthiness born of personal experience, since the policy had not reached any of the eight. These creators know the diabetes risk of sweet drinks and do not act on it in their content. For the second, creators plan content around platform legibility, sensory fit, and packaging appeal and leave nutrient content out. For the third, creators take four divergent positions on responsibility for nutritional education, with no shared reference. Public conversation shows the same narrative vacuum. The study makes two contributions to communication management scholarship. First,

the figurations framework applies where the commercial role and the meaning-distribution role belong to one actor. That configuration deserves testing at scale. Second, meaning integration on the producer side can be partial. One informant would comply with the policy in his outlet and refuse to speak for it in public.

The authors offer three recommendations. (1) To increase engagement, the Ministry of Health should supplement its official channels (which carried a large volume of policy information but drew minimal interaction between 14 April and 31 August 2026) by working with small-scale creators who maintain everyday relevance. The Ministry should begin by defining clear roles for educational delivery. (2) To improve policy engagement, communication planners in central and regional government should move discussions to the platforms creators use. Changing the delivery method is more effective than raising message volume. (3) The regulator should give micro-enterprises a distinct implementation framework, including support for laboratory testing, so that micro-enterprises do not read labelling as a requirement for large businesses only. Future studies may expand the informant base, complete the business-owner module, and examine digital menu displays on delivery applications. Future studies may use member checking to validate or refine these findings.

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AI declaration: The authors would like to clarify the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in preparing this manuscript. The authors used TurboScribe to produce initial automated transcripts of the interview recordings. These transcripts then went through a rigorous verification process by the authors, in which the first author checked and corrected every transcript against the audio recordings and verified each quotation word by word against the corrected transcripts. Claude (Anthropic) was used solely to assist with language editing and grammar correction. Neither tool was involved in the study design, fieldwork, coding, analysis, interpretation of results, or the development of the conclusions, which are entirely the work of the authors. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed. All AI use complies with the journal's policies and may be verified through Turnitin. The authors take full responsibility for the content of this manuscript and for the appropriate and ethical use of any AI tools during its preparation and submission.

Ethical clearance: This study did not undergo review by a formal institutional ethics committee, as the research involved adult participants in non-clinical interviews about their professional practice and no sensitive personal data were collected. The authors followed applicable ethical guidelines. The authors obtained informed consent from every participant. The oral and written explanation covered the purpose of the study, the right to decline any question, the right to end the interview at any point, and the masking of identities in reporting. The findings identify participants as Informant 1 to Informant 8 and withhold business names. The authors keep recordings and transcripts in restricted storage. Only the research team has access.

Data availability statement: The authors withhold the interview transcripts because these contain information that could identify participants. The corresponding author provides the research codebook and the triangulation matrix on request.

Conflicts of interest: The first author is a doctoral student and an employee of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, the institution that issued the policy under

examination. The authors declare this dual position as a potential conflict of interest. To limit the influence of this position, the authors started coding from the interview blocks and stayed close to the informants' language. The authors reported statements that ran counter to the policy as given. The second and third authors reviewed the first author's interpretations.

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