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October 2025

**PROTECTION OR
RESTRICTION: PUBLIC
DISCOURSE ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF
SOCIAL MEDIA AGE LIMITS
UNDER THE PP TUNAS
REGULATION**

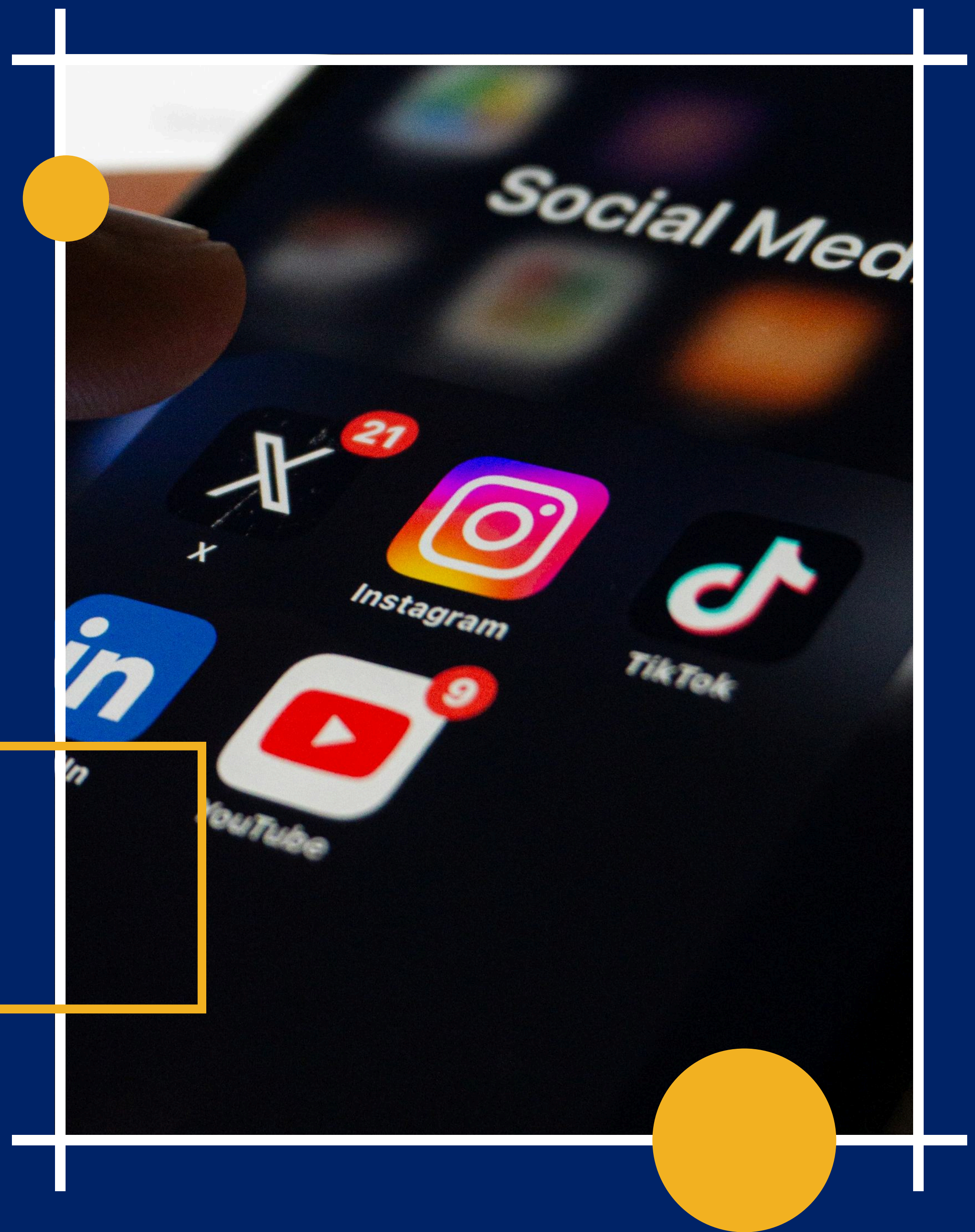


**Center for
Digital Society**
A NEW ERA TO RETHINK DIGITAL

Room BC 201-203
Faculty of Social and Political Sciences
Universitas Gadjah Mada
Jalan Socio Yustisia 1, Bulaksumur, Yogyakarta
(0274) 563362, Ext. 116 | cfds.fisipol@ugm.ac.id



→ RESEARCHERS AND CONTRIBUTORS



Author

Hilman Nurjaman

Editor

Ayom Mratita Purbandani

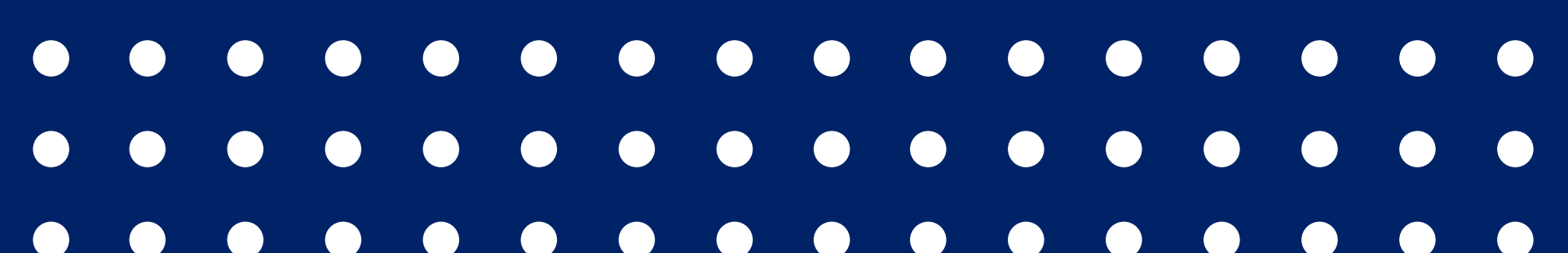
Data Scientist

Axel Xaverius Tamtama

Designer & Layouter

Laila Putri Arsanda

October 2025



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→ INTRODUCTION

Children today are growing up in a world where digital life is part of everything they do. From studying and playing to making friends, online spaces have become deeply woven into their daily routines. But alongside the opportunities that come with being connected, there are also serious risks from exposure to inappropriate content and misuse of personal data to the growing problem of screen addiction. This raises a crucial question: how can we make sure children stay safe as the digital world becomes increasingly vast and hard to control?

In response to these challenges, on March 28, 2025, the Indonesian government enacted Government Regulation (PP) No. 17 of 2025 on the Governance of Electronic Systems for Child Protection (known as PP TUNAS). Officially in effect since April 1, 2025, this regulation marks a major milestone in the country's efforts to safeguard children in digital environments.¹ It requires electronic system providers (PSEs) to verify users' ages, provide parental control features, filter harmful content, and prohibit the commercial use of children's personal data.²³

This policy responds to growing public concern. A recent YouGov survey revealed that 84% of Indonesian parents support setting a minimum age for social media use, with most suggesting that the ideal range is 15–17 years old.⁴ The data clearly shows that the regulation was born from real community needs and parental worries.

Even so, good regulations alone are not enough, they need strong social support to work in practice. While PP TUNAS is widely seen as a progressive step in protecting children online, it has also sparked debate. Questions remain about how age verification will be enforced, how well parents understand digital literacy, and whether online platforms are ready to comply. Others worry that, if not implemented carefully, the regulation could unintentionally limit freedom of expression in digital spaces.⁵⁶

This study is guided by two central research questions. First, how has public sentiment evolved toward PP TUNAS? Second, what themes dominate online discussions surrounding this regulation? These questions matter because public opinion on social media does more than reflect people's views, it actively shapes the legitimacy of policy.⁷ Experiences from other countries show that moments of digital policy adoption often become turning points, either strengthening public support or fueling resistance.⁸



This paper argues that the effectiveness of PP TUNAS largely depends on how the public interprets and responds to it. Three main dimensions can be identified. First, support. Many parents and educators view PP TUNAS as a crucial and much-needed step, even stronger than previous regulations, aligning with global trends that show digital child protection works best when it resonates with public aspirations.⁹ Second, skepticism. Some segments of society question the government's technical capacity and worry about potential overreach, reflecting a broader issue of trust that often surrounds digital governance.¹⁰ Third, temporal dynamics. Early findings show a spike in online discussion following the regulation's enactment and President Prabowo Subianto's related social media post, followed by a gradual decline in engagement in the weeks after. This pattern underscores how media framing and political timing strongly shape public perception.

In this sense, PP TUNAS should not be seen merely as a legal product, but as a social process, one whose success depends heavily on public legitimacy. This is evident from the high level of engagement and debate surrounding the proposed age restrictions on social media, even before the regulation was officially enacted. Online discussions on platforms like X (formerly Twitter) show that the topic became a national trending issue, sparking debate among parents, educators, activists, and youth communities. These dynamics reveal that the public is not just a passive subject of regulation, but an active participant in testing its legitimacy and rationale. Through sentiment analysis and topic modeling, this paper seeks to map how society perceives the regulation in real time and to offer strategic recommendations for the government and digital platforms to ensure that PP TUNAS moves beyond policy documents and becomes a living, practical framework for protecting children in the digital world





This study employs a digital discourse analysis approach, using data from social media to map real-time public perceptions of PP TUNAS and to understand the dynamics of sentiment and recurring themes within the online debate.

Data Source

Primary data were collected from two social media platforms with high levels of public interaction, TikTok and X (formerly Twitter). These platforms were selected for two key reasons: (1) TikTok is highly popular among young people, the primary group affected by PP TUNAS. (2) X (Twitter) better reflects the flow of open and responsive public opinion on broader socio-political issues in the digital sphere.

Data collection focused on public comments related to PP TUNAS using keywords such as *"PP Tunas"*, *"perlindungan anak"* (child protection), *"usia minimum"* (minimum age), and *"data anak"* (child data). On X, variations like *"pp tunas"*, *"peraturan pemerintah"*, and filtered queries (*"pp tunas" -tunar -indonesia -raya*) were used to reduce irrelevant results. The data were gathered between April and June 2025, corresponding to the initial phase of the regulation's implementation following its enactment on March 28, 2025.

Data Collection Technique

Data was collected using web scraping methods. For TikTok, a Python script based on the nodriver library was used to extract comments from highly engaged videos discussing PP TUNAS, particularly three viral posts. For X, data were retrieved using the Instant Data Scraper Chrome extension, focusing on comments and quote-retweets of President Prabowo Subianto's post about PP TUNAS. In total, 859 comments were collected across both platforms. However, the dataset remains limited since private accounts, spam-flagged comments, and those violating community guidelines were inaccessible.

Praproses Data

The raw data underwent several preprocessing steps before analysis: First, text cleaning, removing links, emojis, excessive punctuation, and double spaces. Second, language normalization, converting slang and informal language into standard forms. Third, tokenization and stemming, breaking text into tokens and reducing words to their root form. The last one, temporal formatting, using the Python Pandas library to reformat comment timestamps, allowing for time-based analysis.



Data Analysis

Sentiment analysis was performed using the Indonesian-language transformer model `roberta-base-indonesian-1.5G-sentiment-analysis-smsa` available on HuggingFace. The model classifies each comment into three sentiment categories: positive, negative, or neutral. A machine learning approach was chosen because it better captures informal linguistic patterns common in Indonesian social media discourse compared to traditional lexicon-based methods. In addition to sentiment classification, discourse analysis was conducted to identify dominant narratives and themes. This included word cloud visualizations to highlight frequently used terms such as *"anak"* (child), *"orang tua"* (parents), *"umur"* (age), and *"KTP"* (ID Card). The study also mapped relationships between topics, for example, debates on parental versus government responsibility and discussions on access restrictions to digital platforms.

Research Limitation

This study has several methodological limitations: First, the dataset is limited to TikTok and X, excluding other platforms such as Facebook or Instagram, where organic discussion on PP TUNAS was less visible. Second, technical limitations of scraping tools prevented access to all comments, especially from private or restricted accounts. Third, the sentiment analysis model, while effective, remains somewhat reductive, it cannot fully capture nuanced expressions such as sarcasm, irony, or metaphor.



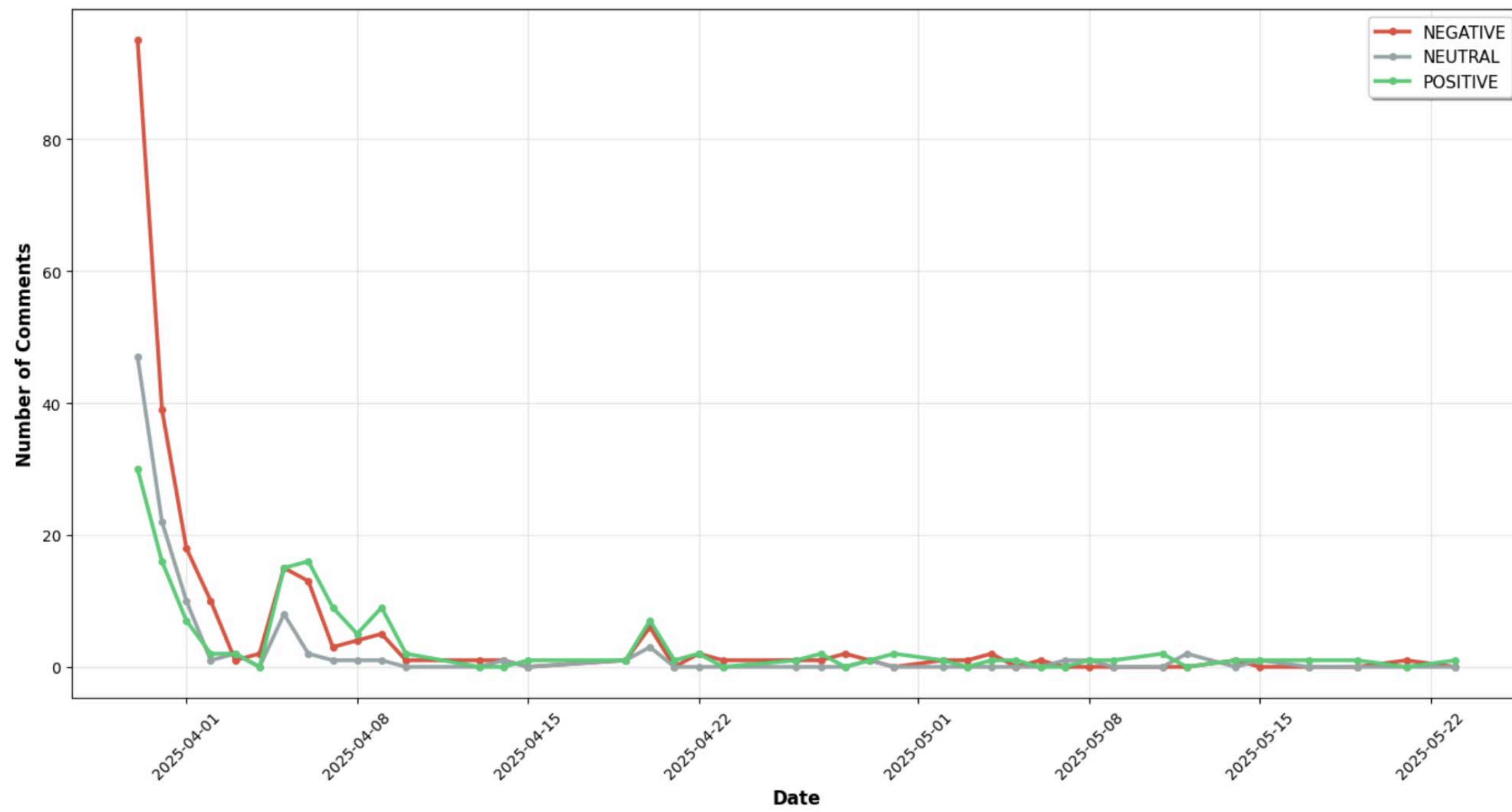
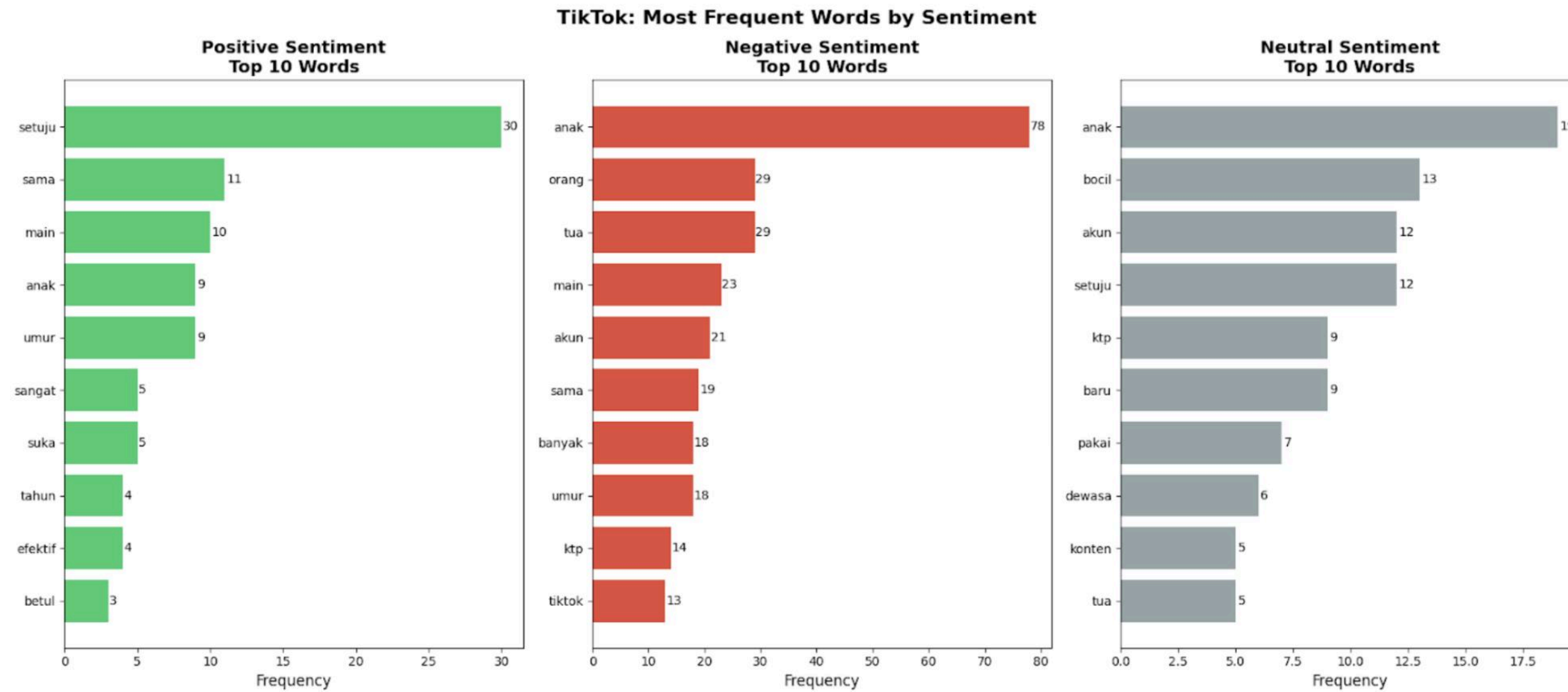


→ FINDINGS

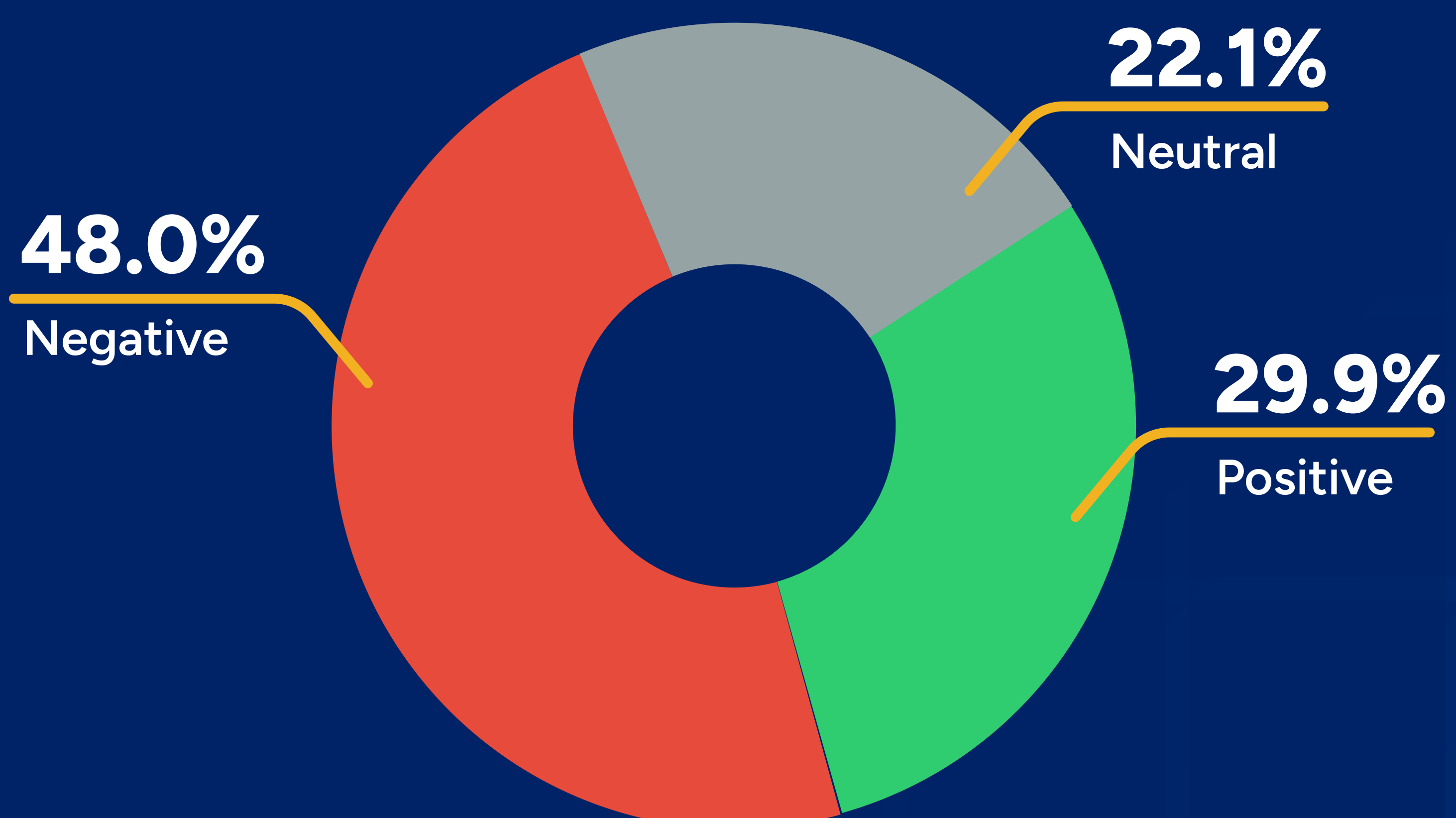
A. Public Sentiment on TikTok

TikTok emerged as the most active space for discussions surrounding PP TUNAS, largely because it is a platform dominated by children and teenagers, the very group most affected by the regulation. From three popular posts analyzed, hundreds of comments directly mentioned PP TUNAS, reflecting strong public engagement during the regulation's early rollout. The data show that interaction peaked on March 30, 2025, two days after the regulation was officially enacted, with 172 comments recorded on that day. Afterward, engagement gradually declined, indicating that public debate on TikTok was highly dependent on news momentum and the platform's content cycle.

TikTok Sentiment Trends Over Time



• Sentiment Distribution on TikTok •



4-1 Reply

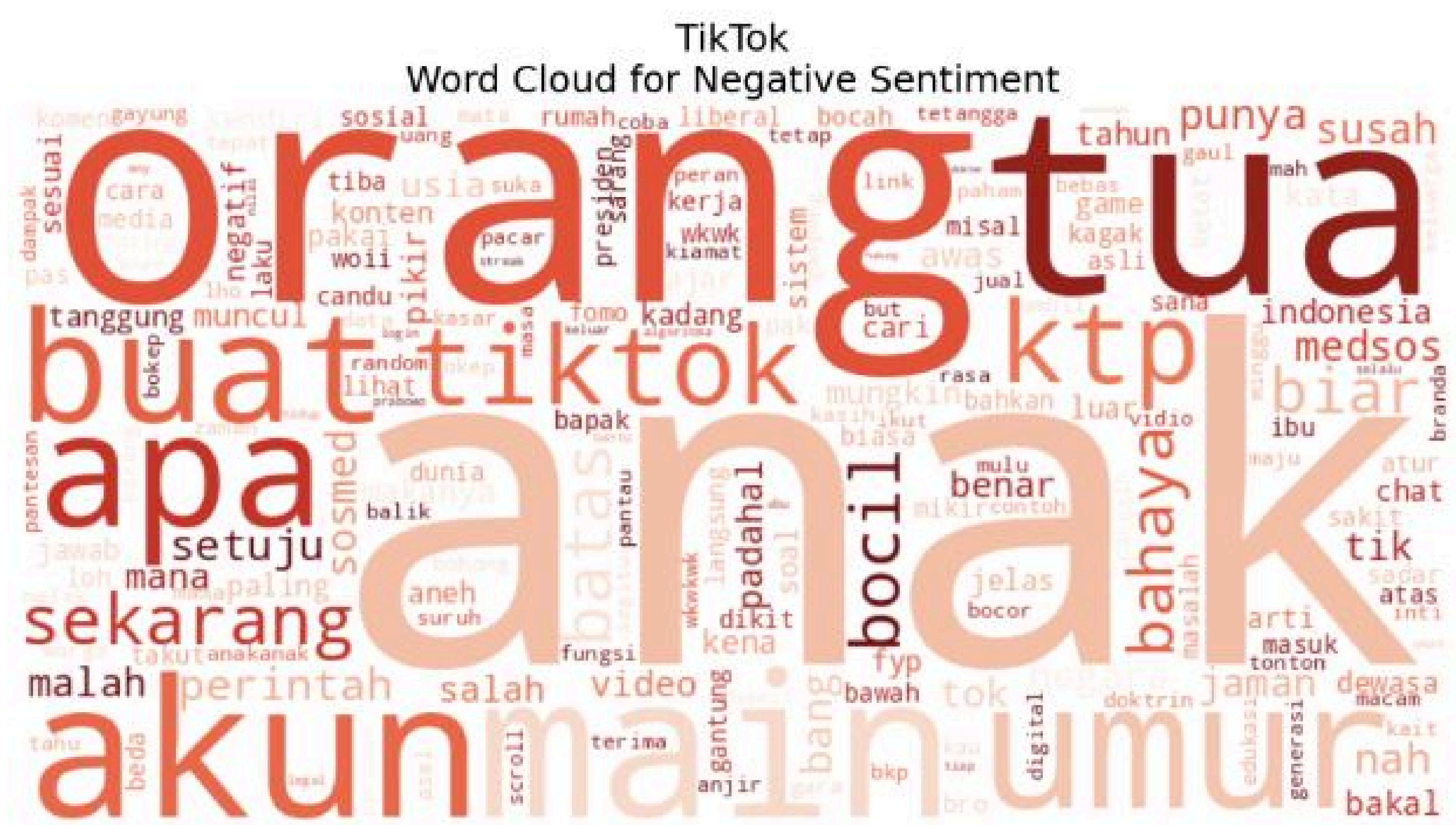


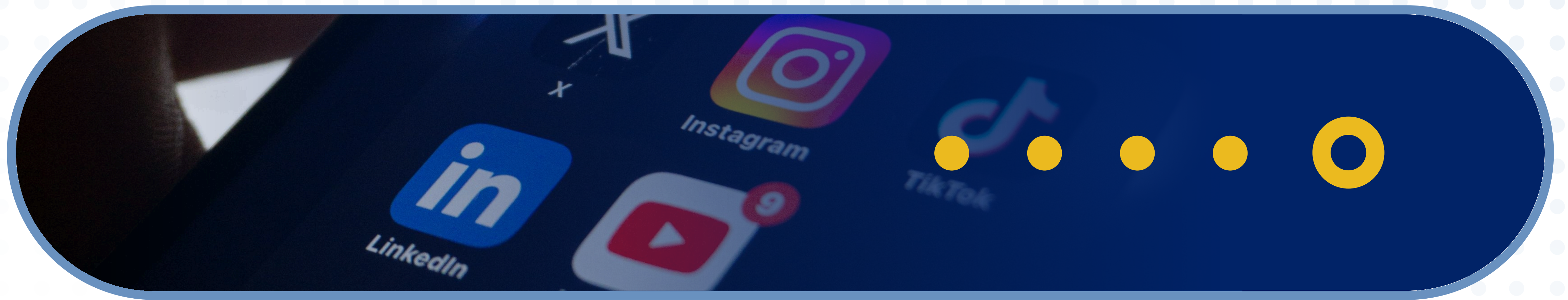
Clipper Academy ✓

palingan yg gak setuju itu buzzer perusak negara 🗣️

3-31 Reply

Negative sentiments (48.0%) formed the largest portion of responses. Public concerns were not limited to age restrictions for young users; many feared the regulation could limit access for all users if platforms failed to meet verification requirements. Some interpreted the administrative sanctions clause as a threat of potential platform bans or restrictions, which they viewed as an encroachment on digital freedom for adults. This highlights a tension between the regulation's child protection goals and public fears of broader digital control.





A recurring theme in the negative comments was the belief that child supervision should be the responsibility of parents, not the state. Keywords like “orang tua” (parents), “KTP” (ID card), and “umur” (age) appeared repeatedly, signaling a preference for identity-based verification systems rather than blanket restrictions. Some users also voiced purely pragmatic resistance, such as fears of losing followers or having existing content affected, showing that opposition to PP TUNAS was not always ideological but often emotional and self-interested.

ENGINE 🌸🌸
tim yang ga setuju 🙄
4-6 Reply

qil4aaa
aku 🙄
4-6 Reply

Ben²⁺
aku
4-6 Reply

HAMDAN PROJECT 🔥
gak setuju
4-9 Reply

View 301 more ▾ Hide ▲

9Cnanaa•cutiee 🌸
GAK SETUJUUUUU!! API STREAK GW GIMANAA!!!??? 🙄🙄
4-5 Reply

Ijah Khadijah
iya 🙄
4-6 Reply

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★ YTTA ★
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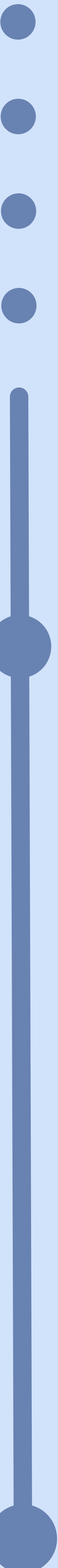
View 56 more ▾ Hide ▲

Cordelia 🌸🌸
gk setuju 🙄 pengikut ku dah 91 dah capek lo
4-9 Reply

View 10 replies ▾

Titania .Diva
nggak setuju sama sekali!! , api streak ku terus gimana mana udah 300 lagi 🙄
5-19 Reply

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

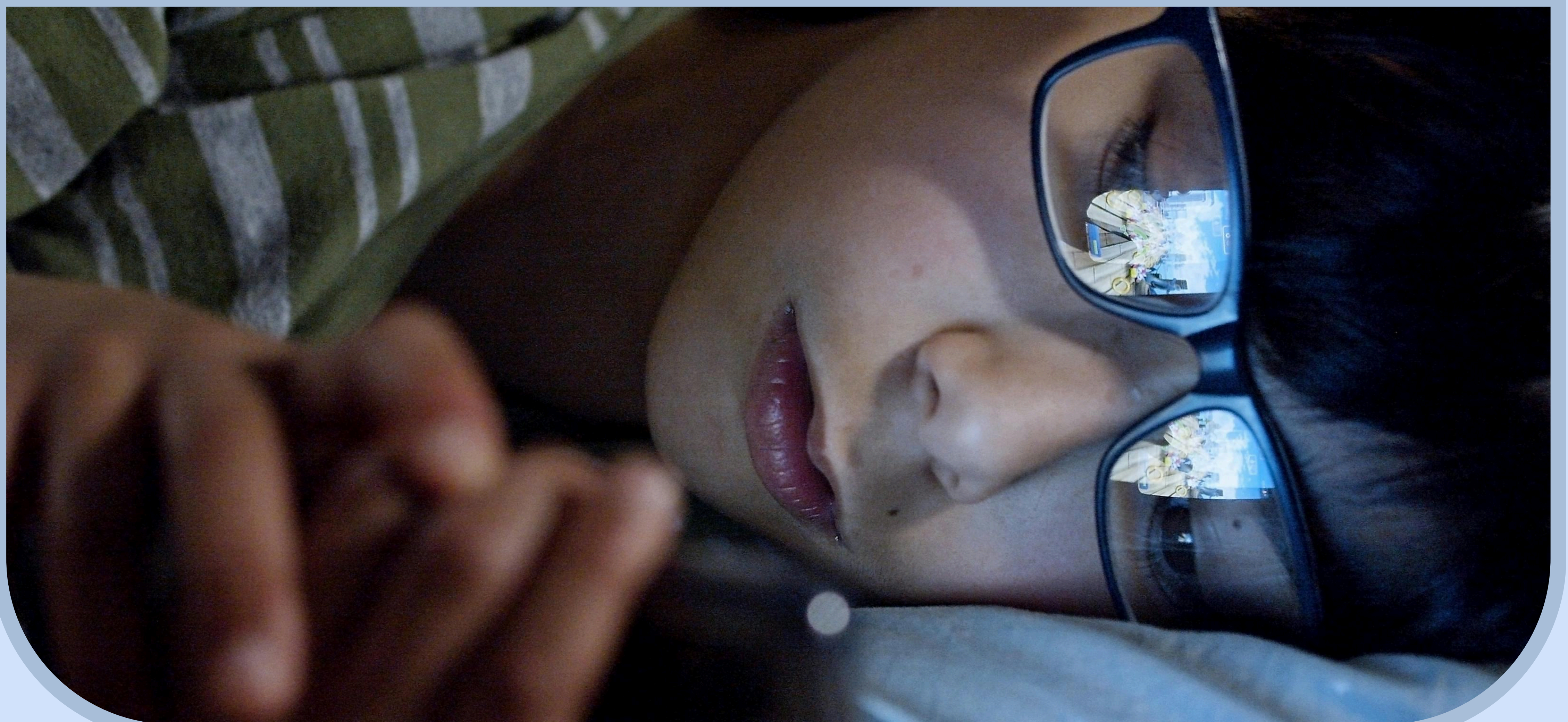


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Overall, the interaction pattern on TikTok showed a rapid rise and equally steep decline in engagement. The surge in comments immediately followed the enactment of PP TUNAS, then dropped sharply within days. This indicates that public discourse on TikTok was highly influenced by news cycles and platform algorithms. Moreover, the nature of discussion tended to be reactive, a single critical comment could trigger hundreds of polarized responses, with users quickly taking sides. Rather than a substantive policy debate, the discourse on TikTok often resembled a battle of identities, between those positioning themselves as protectors of children and those who felt their digital freedoms were under threat. This dynamic illustrates how digital conversations can rapidly amplify emotional responses, shaping the early public perception of government policies

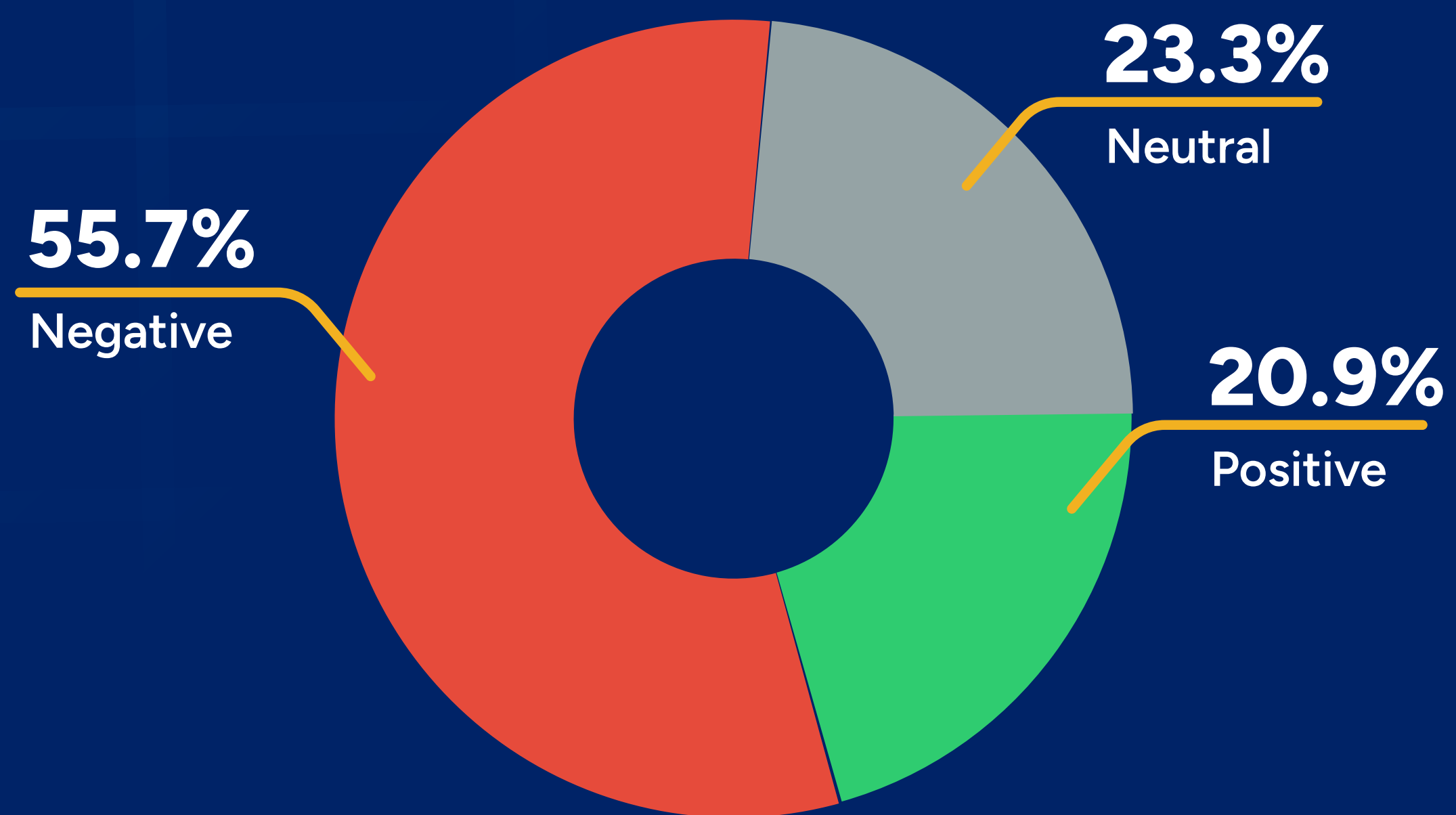


B. Public Sentiment on Platform X

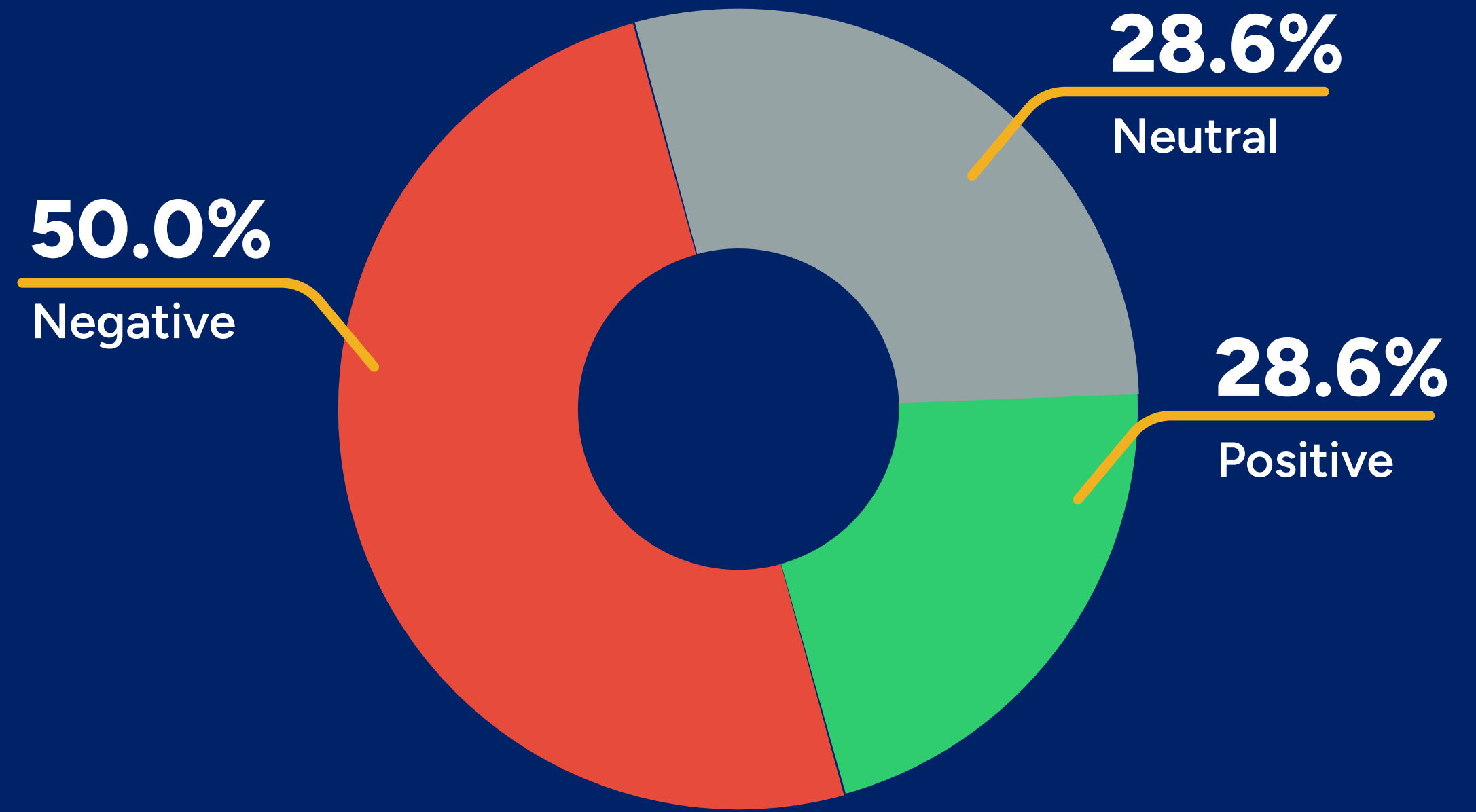
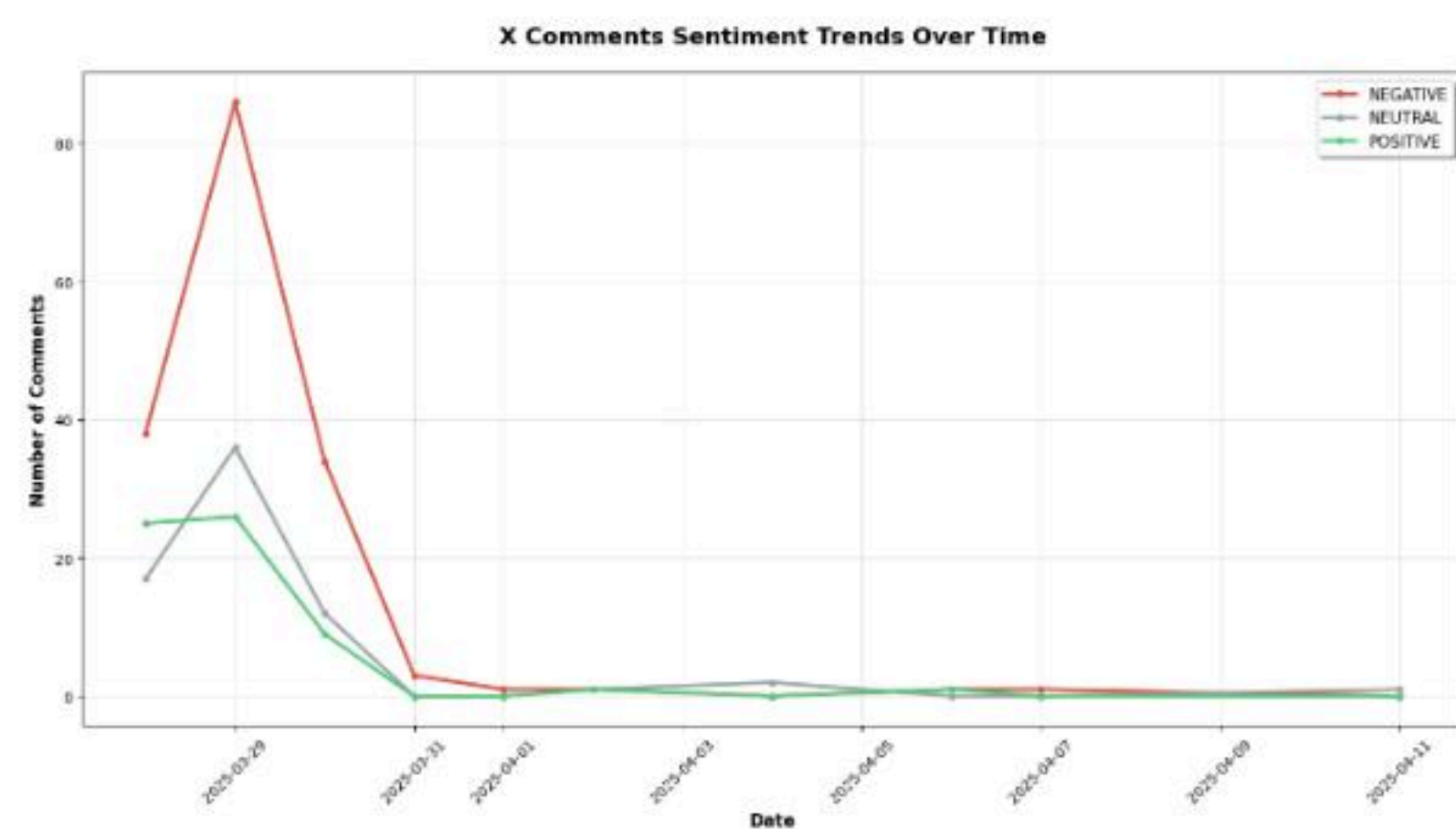
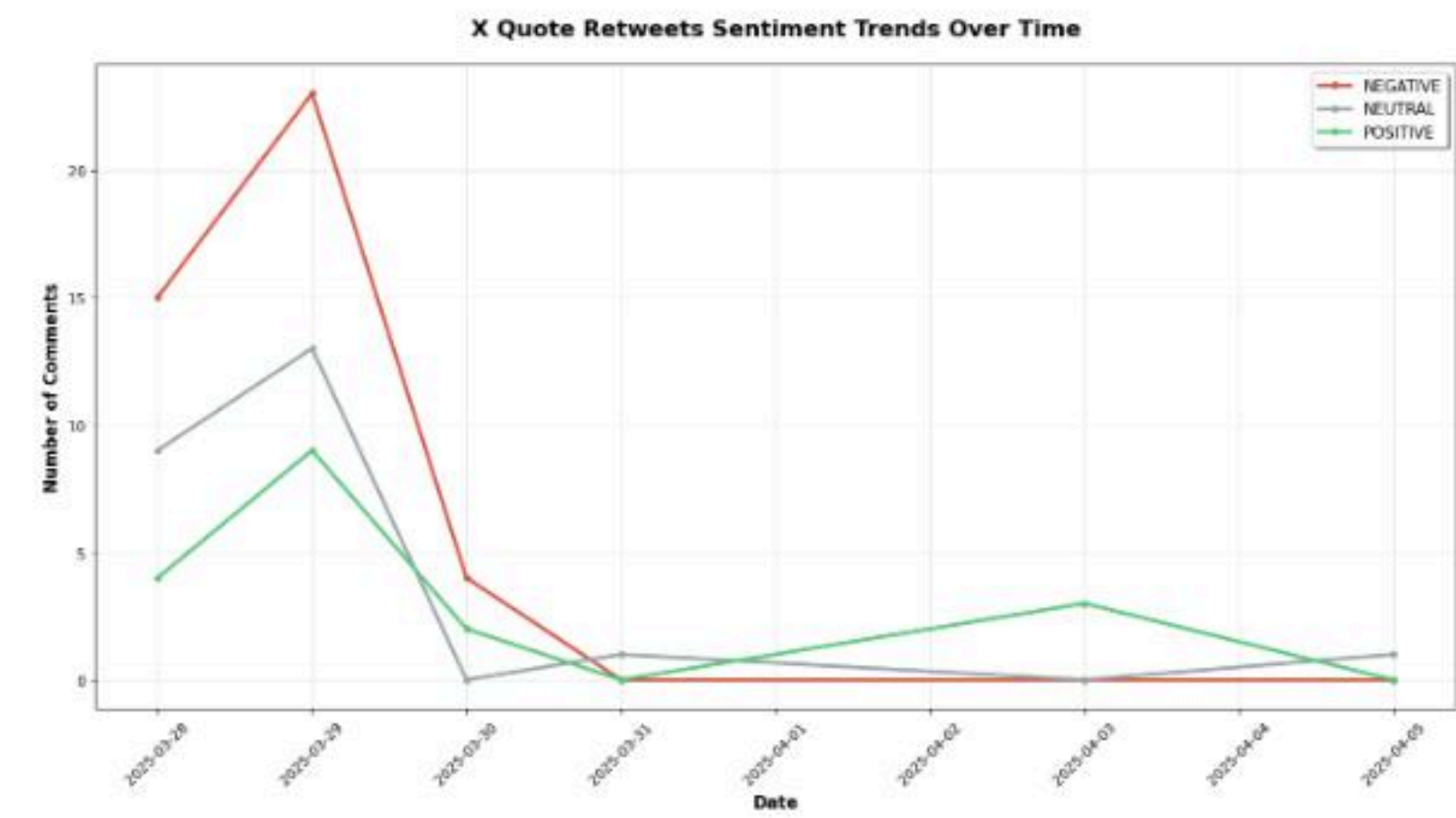
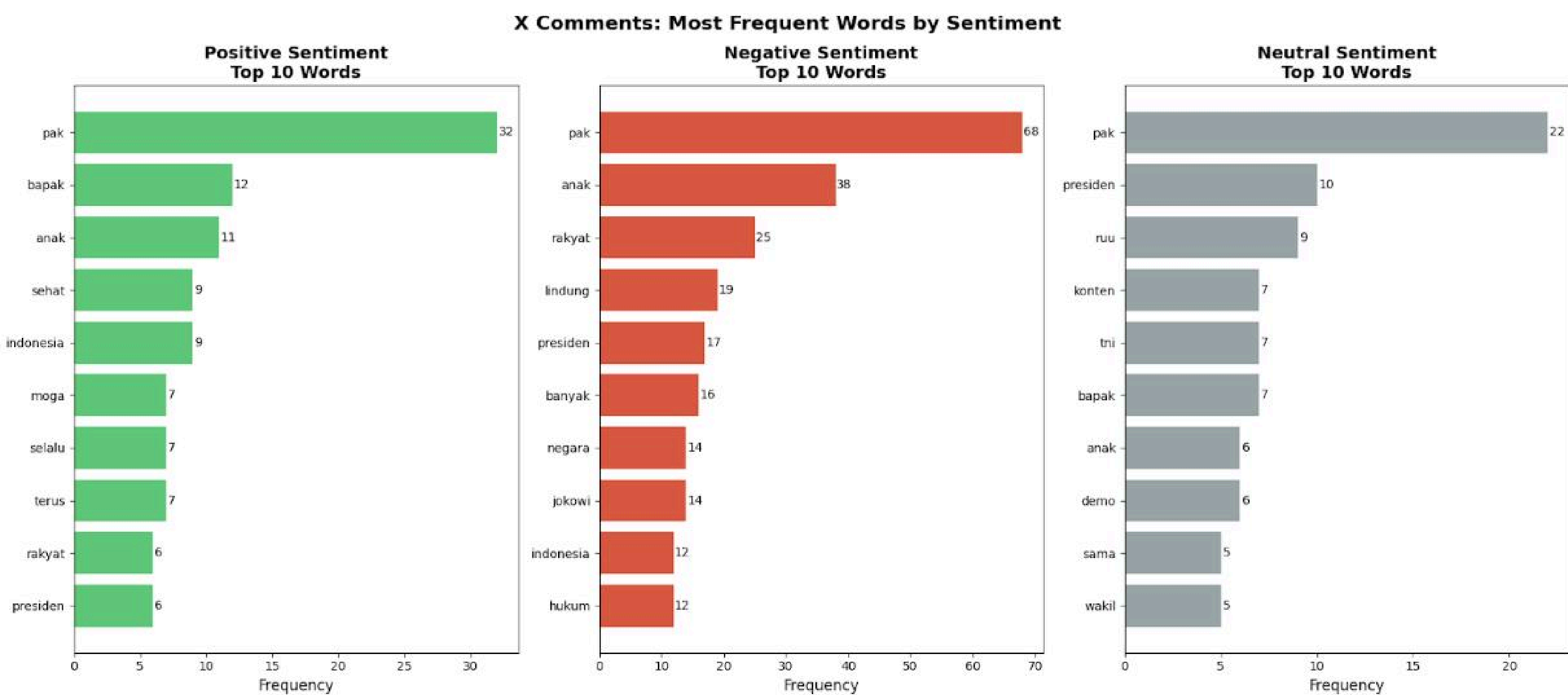
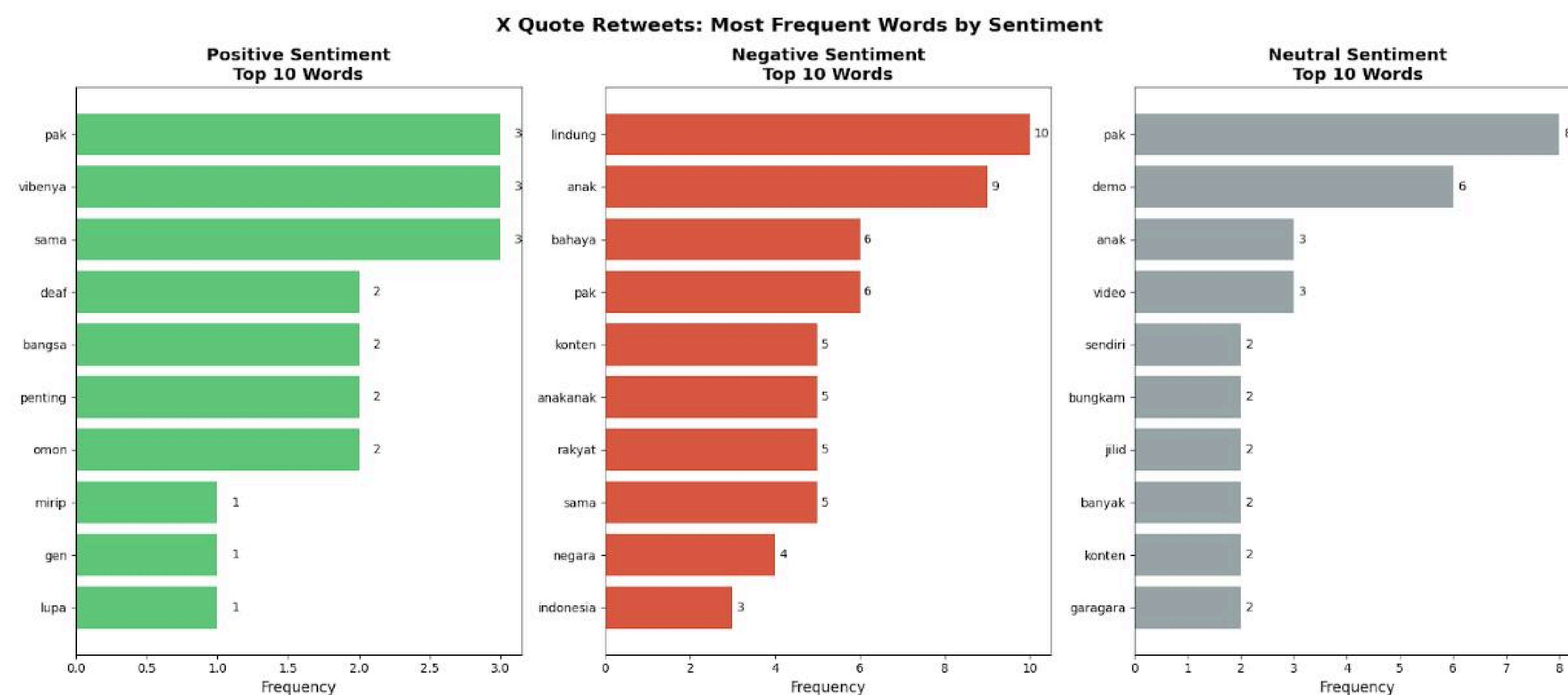
Unlike TikTok, which served as the main arena for public discourse, X (formerly Twitter) showed a more limited and fragmented conversational dynamic. Most posts about PP TUNAS came from news outlets, government institutions, and official political party accounts, while organic discussions from individual users were relatively rare. Public engagement began to increase following President Prabowo Subianto's post on March 29, 2025, one day after the enactment of PP TUNAS, which became the focal point of interaction. That single post generated hundreds of comments and quote retweets, although the intensity dropped sharply within a few days.

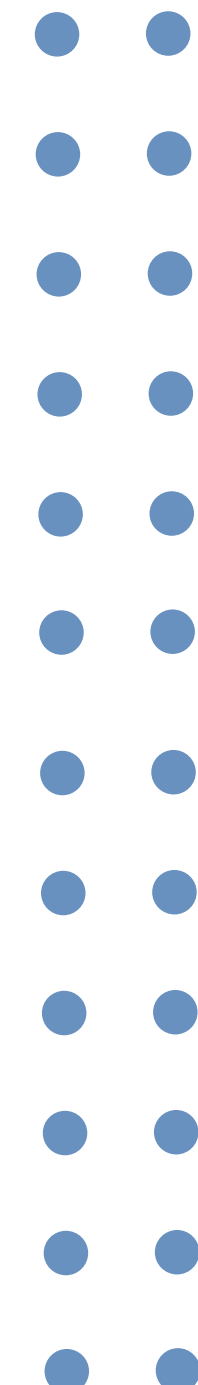
● Sentiment Distribution on Platform X ●

X Comments Sentiment Distribution



X Quote Retweet Sentiment Distribution







Kiko El Doger
 @ianeldoger


[Translate post](#)

Lihat kelakuan pemerintah saja buat anak2 sudah berbahaya kok. Contoh ngomong A ternyata aslinya B, itu sudah berbahaya bagi anak2. Yg perlu diubah itu tingkah laku pejabat supaya bisa jadi contoh. Misal jubir ngomong kepala babi dimasak saja, itu jg contoh yg buruk Mr presiden

9:18 PM · Mar 28, 2025 · 5 Views



Unta Jawa
 @unta_jawa


[Translate post](#)

PP TUNAS yg bukan aspirasi rakyat malah disahkan & dirayakan

 UU TNI & RUU Polri yg ditolak jutaan warga malah ga digubris

 Kocak lu



11:43 PM · Mar 28, 2025 · 765 Views



Ndaaaaaaa
 @Atiiiiiiiiihhh


[Translate post](#)

Setuju, anak-anak Indonesia memang harus terlindungi dari bahaya kata-kata seperti 'ndasmu', 'ndableg', 'pea', dan kata-kata kotor lainnya yang keluar dari mulut para pejabat yang tidak berakhlak dan tidak berempati.


Prabowo Subianto

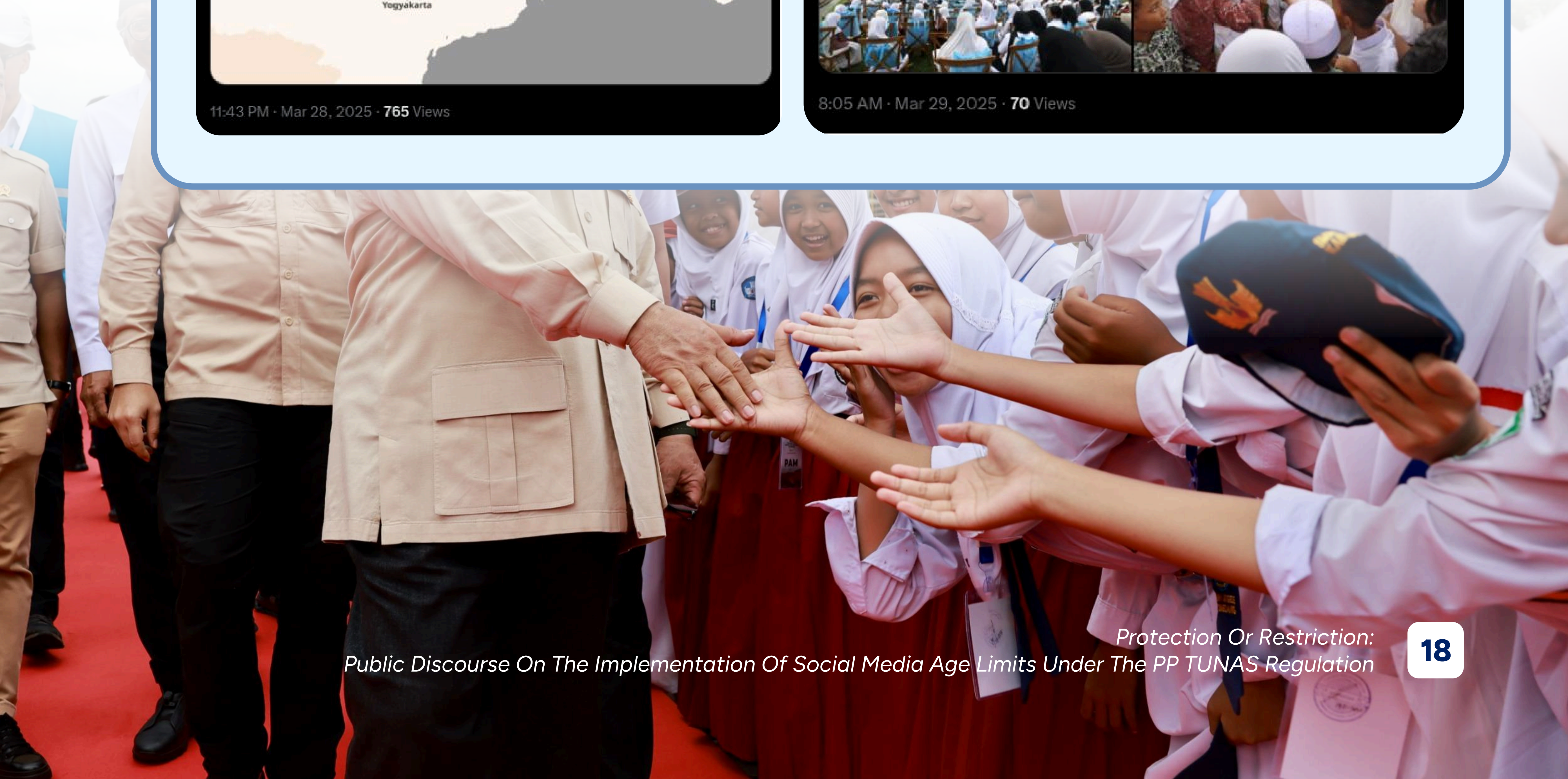
@prabowo · Mar 28

Alhamdulillah, hari ini saya bersama Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital telah mengesahkan Peraturan Pemerintah tentang Tata Kelola Penyelenggaraan Sistem Elektronik dalam Pelindungan Anak (PP TUNAS).

Peraturan ini bertujuan untuk melindungi anak-anak dari paparan konten
 [Show more](#)



8:05 AM · Mar 29, 2025 · 70 Views



Overall, discourse on X was fragmented and politically charged. Instead of debating the substance of PP TUNAS, many discussions revolved around expressions of support or criticism toward the President and his administration. Engagement peaked immediately after the President's post but declined rapidly afterward. These findings indicate that public opinion on X was shaped more by political momentum than by policy substance, a pattern similar to that found on TikTok, where discussions were also driven more by personal experiences of children and parents in using social media rather than by critical evaluations of the regulation itself.



→ DISCUSSION

The findings from this study reveal that public perceptions of PP TUNAS are deeply influenced by the nature of the digital platforms where discussions take place. While there is a shared pattern of opinion, balancing between support for child protection and concern over potential access restrictions, the intensity and form of discourse vary significantly across platforms. On TikTok, one of the most popular social media platforms among younger users, discussions were more focused on the issue of child protection. Many positive comments framed PP TUNAS as a vital step to safeguard the younger generation from exposure to harmful online content and smartphone addiction. This narrative of support was reinforced by broader social and political contexts, such as ongoing national digital literacy campaigns and increasing awareness around child online safety. These align with parents' aspirations for clearer age restrictions on social media use, as well as with global guidelines that emphasize digital protection for minors.¹²¹³

However, negative comments dominated the overall discourse on TikTok. A large portion of users expressed concerns that PP TUNAS could restrict their freedom to use digital platforms. The main fear centered around the possibility of access shutdowns for non-compliant platforms. Many users also argued that the responsibility for regulating children's access should rest with parents, not the state. This pattern reflects a recurring tension over the locus of responsibility, whether child protection should be managed as a public policy issue or left to family-based parenting. Such resistance mirrors findings from existing literature, which note that public pushback often emerges when digital policies are perceived to intrude upon parental roles.¹⁴

Meanwhile, discourse on X followed a very different trajectory. Public discussions there were far more fragmented and less tied to the substance of PP TUNAS itself. Positive comments were largely personalistic, directed toward President Prabowo Subianto as a political figure rather than focusing on the regulation's content. Negative comments, on the other hand, often drifted toward broader political and social grievances, ranging from economic dissatisfaction to protests and perceptions of government insensitivity. In this sense, PP TUNAS became a political symbol rather than a policy subject, reflecting the broader dynamics of online political discourse. These findings reinforce the idea that the legitimacy of digital policy is closely linked to public trust in government.¹⁵ When trust is low, citizens are more likely to view such policies as mechanisms of control, fueling resistance to implementation, such as opposition to age verification systems or skepticism about data management. Conversely, when public trust is high, policies are more readily accepted and can foster stronger collaboration between users, platforms, and the government.

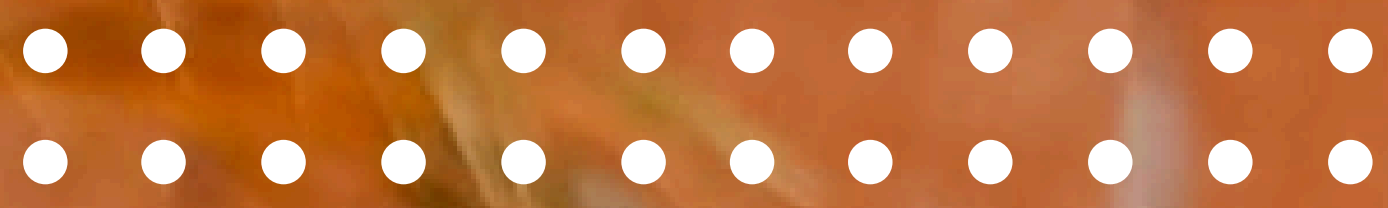


Across both TikTok and X, the temporal pattern of discourse followed a similar trend: a sharp surge in public conversation immediately after PP TUNAS was enacted and President Prabowo's post, followed by a rapid decline within days. This pattern underscores that public opinion was largely driven by political momentum and news cycles, rather than by a substantive understanding of the policy.¹⁶ In other words, acceptance or rejection of PP TUNAS was shaped more by how the issue was framed on social media at specific moments than by a deep grasp of the regulation itself.

These dynamics carry several implications for digital governance and policy communication. First, government communication strategies must adapt to the unique characteristics of each platform. On TikTok, messages about child protection may be more effective when framed through personal and emotional storytelling, using relatable visuals and real-life experiences from parents and children. This aligns with TikTok's interest-based algorithm, which amplifies emotionally engaging and narrative-driven content.¹⁷ On X, however, communication should emphasize transparency and practical relevance to counter perceptions of politicization. As a discussion-oriented and opinion-driven platform, X's algorithm prioritizes real-time public debates, making credibility and clarity key to maintaining legitimacy.¹⁸ Second, collaboration with parents, schools, and digital communities is crucial to reinforcing the message that PP TUNAS is an instrument of protection, not a tool of social control. Joint initiatives in education and awareness can help reposition the regulation as a shared responsibility rather than a top-down imposition. Third, transparency and accountability in the implementation of PP TUNAS must be strengthened to ensure that the regulation is not perceived as a gateway to censorship or government overreach.¹⁹ Public reporting, consultation mechanisms, and open evaluation of enforcement processes would help sustain public confidence.

This discussion highlights the importance of a cross-platform analytical approach in understanding public perception of digital policy. Although TikTok and X are both social media platforms, their discursive logics differ substantially. TikTok operates through an interest-based recommendation system that favors emotional engagement and visual storytelling rooted in personal experience, while X revolves around real-time discourse, connecting policy topics to political identity and ongoing social debates. Both platforms respond to social and political moments, but through distinct algorithmic and communicative logics. This aligns with the concept of networked publics, which suggests that each digital platform has its own structure, demographic, and social norms, producing unique patterns of discourse.²⁰ Therefore, adopting a cross-platform perspective is essential to understanding how social context and algorithmic systems jointly mediate public perceptions of digital regulations like PP TUNAS.





Source : Komdigi.co.id

→ CONCLUSION

This study finds that public perceptions of PP TUNAS vary significantly depending on the digital platform context. On TikTok, discourse tended to focus more directly on the substance of the policy, revealing a clear polarization between those supporting child protection and those opposing the regulation due to perceived restrictions on personal freedom. In contrast, discussions on X were more fragmented and politically charged: supportive comments were directed primarily toward the figure of the President, while criticisms expanded into broader expressions of dissatisfaction with the government. Despite these differences, both platforms displayed a similar temporal pattern, a sharp spike in engagement immediately following the enactment of PP TUNAS and the President's official post, followed by a steep decline as the news cycle faded.

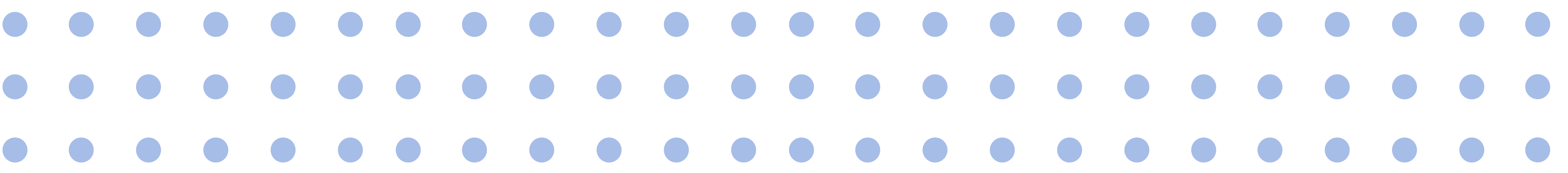
A regulation may be legally strong, but it risks losing effectiveness if it lacks public acceptance. Conversely, when communicated effectively, such policies can foster collaboration among the government, digital platforms, families, and schools. PP TUNAS, therefore, should not be viewed merely as a top-down legal product, but as an ongoing social process that requires transparency, effective communication, and the active involvement of multiple stakeholders.

Based on these insights, the government should adopt a multi-platform communication strategy tailored to the characteristics of each audience. Public engagement must be strengthened through digital literacy programs, and partnerships with global platforms should focus on robust age verification and parental control mechanisms. In addition, regular evaluations involving independent institutions are crucial to ensure accountability and responsiveness. Through these steps, PP TUNAS has the potential to become not only an effective instrument for child protection but also a means to build greater public trust in Indonesia's broader digital policy framework.



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ABOUT CFDS

Center for Digital Society (CfDS) is the research center established by the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada. The institution is created under the concern over the contemporary dynamics of socio-political condition of the world that is accentuated by the impeccable influence of information technology. The phenomenon triggers the new patterns and complexities in the society, and thus requires new approaches in managing such complexities.

CfDS pledged to delve more on the study of contemporary digital society, including related issues surrounding the topic; such as the issues of smart city and urban development. The emphasis is then put on the utilization of technology to shape the society in becoming digitalized, as well as to bring solvency to social issues.

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Solving Social Problem and Accelerating Prosperity through Indonesia Digital Society

ACTIVITIES

- Research and development
- Dissemination and Publication
- Educational and Policy Advocacy



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