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Performing Policy Through Music: Affective Government Communication of the MBG Jingle on TikTok

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Abstract
The Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG) has sparked intense public debate in Indonesia, particularly concerning food safety and public trust. While discussions on text-based platforms are largely dominated by critical and deliberative discourse, less attention has been given to how public responses emerge when the same policy is presented through emotive, music-based content on entertainment-oriented platforms. This study aims to investigate how MBG is received when communicated through a jingle within the TikTok space. Using sentiment analysis as a tool to examine the pattern of audience response. The findings reveal a heterogeneous sentiment expression. Drawing on Arousal Theory and platform affordance perspectives, this study addresses how platform affordance shapes how the community interacts within the space itself. TikTok facilitates policy communication as performative and emotional engagement, where visible positivity reflects platform-shaped affective participation rather than policy approval.

***Keywords**: Sentiment Analysis, TikTok, Makan Bergizi Gratis, Jingle MBG, Social Media.*

1. Introduction

In January 2025, President Prabowo Subianto officially launched the Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG), a large-scale public policy initiative aimed at providing free healthy meals to approximately 82.9 million schoolchildren and students in Islamic boarding schools across Indonesia, supported within an estimated budget of IDR 450 trillion (Sianturi, 2025). Beyond its immediate nutritional objectives, the program is positioned as a long-term investment in human health. It targets a reduction in stunting trends from 21.6% to 14.4% by 2025, while constantly promoting nutritional awareness as part of developing better human resources growth (Merlinda & Yusmar Yusuf, 2025). As a policy of this scale and ambition, MBG is not only valued through indicators of implementation and material outcomes, but also through how its program is communicated, interpreted, and emotionally received by the people of the country, particularly within Indonesia's highly diverse and widespread community.

Free school meal programs themselves were not a new policy instrument. In several countries, such initiatives have been embedded within the social welfare system for decades. Finland introduced free school meals as early as 1945, followed by Sweden in 1948 (Juniusdottir et al., 2018). These prior countries with their successful implementations illustrate that providing nutritious, regulated meals in educational institutions has long been considered an effective intervention for improving child health and educational outcomes. Reports from the Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF) highlight that the potential benefits of such programs have a greater social impact, particularly through their linkage with benefits in the economic sector, including improved food management practices, reduced waste, and stronger relationships between schools and local farmer output. When implemented effectively, free meal programs can therefore generate dual benefits: produce a better student quality and their well-being while supporting local food systems and economic resilience (GCNF, 2024). However, the evidence of policy effectiveness simply does not translate into another country and cannot be implemented effectively. Nor will it be accepted by the public, particularly within socio-political environments shaped by intense media exposure and digital scrutiny, such as Indonesia.

In contrast to these international success reports from GCNF, the implementation of MBG in Indonesia has generated significant controversy regarding cases of mass food poisoning across 16 provinces,

reaching 5,000 cases between September and December 2025. Followed by a public claim of corruption in food procurement processes (Rahmatullah et al., 2025). These issues have been intensified by public allegations of corruption within the food procurement process, further intensifying public skepticism. Such issues quickly became central topics of discussion within digital media spaces, especially on platforms that function as arenas for information exchange and opinion formation as reported in the study by Sianturi (2025), the researcher found that during the first week of MBG implementation, negative sentiment dominated public discourse, accounting for 41.2% of conversations, compared to only 13.1% expressing positive sentiment. These findings suggest that early public response to MBG was shaped not only by operational shortcomings but also by a broader climate of cognitive distrust toward government communication.

Resemblance of public distrust was reported by Arif & Kustiyono (2025) who analyzed 657 tweets posted between January and February 2025 using a TextBlob-based lexicon approach and reported that 71.8% of sentiments expressed toward MBG were negative. Public discussion on the platform was largely driven by concerns over transparency, accountability, and limited public engagement, reinforcing theoretical arguments related to trust deficit and cumulative skepticism toward government policy. Similarly, Krisnawan et al. (2025) employed a BiGRU model with FastText embeddings to examine MBG-related discourse on X and identified 57% negative sentiment. Taken together, these studies portray text-oriented platforms as spaces where MBG is primarily debated through rational evaluation, policy critique, and argumentative discourse rather than affective engagement.

Negative sentiment trends are further established by Nyoman Aprianti et al. (2025) whose Naïve Bayes analysis of MBG-related discussions on X revealed that negative sentiment was closely tied to the intensity of issue-driven debate. Expressions such as "poor nutrition" and related critiques show that sentiment on text-based platforms escalates alongside controversy, affirming dissatisfaction toward government performance. Collectively, these findings situate MBG within a discursive environment characterized by criticism, distrust, and cognitive resistance, particularly on platforms that are heavily based on textual communication and opinion exchange within their community.

Negative response to the free meal program does not appear uniformly across all digital platforms. Especially in platforms such as TikTok, which are entertainment-oriented social media that operate through different communicative affordances, emphasizing fun nuance using music, and

affective resonance rather than deliberative argumentation. Verdu & Abidin (2021) say that TikTok is an environment in which entertainment is heavily used regarding music, visual, and participatory storytelling functions as a central expression of its communication, to achieve emotional engagement and collective identity formation. This study focuses on one of the MBG jingle videos that were published on TikTok. Specifically by the account @arsip.makanbegizigratis on October 27, 2025, titled "MBG Makan Bergizi Gratis, Makanan Sehat Program Pemerintah Hebat." The video combines music-driven lyrics with simple dance choreography aligned with the prevailing TikTok trends and has accumulated approximately 440,000 views alongside more than 300 user comments. Although the *jingle* was clearly intended as a promotional effort to restore positive public sentiment, responses within the comment section frequently contain irony and sarcasm, including remarks such as "MBG = Makan Belatung Gratis" (Julianto & Nurpajar, 2025). This pattern highlights TikTok's position within a user base exceeding 180 million in Indonesia as a highly effective and viral communication space, where emotional expression often diverges from rational policy evaluation (Busa, 2025).

Insight from marketing and advertising research helps explain why such divergence may occur. A growing body of literature demonstrates that music-based jingles function not merely as entertainment, but as affective stimuli capable of shaping positive responses within emotional aspects that emerge engagement patterns. Empirical studies in commercial contexts show that jingles characterized by memorability, perceived meaningfulness, and likeability consistently generate positive affective responses, even when audiences are not deeply involved in evaluating message substance. (Nabawi et al., 2024; Nizar et al., 2025). These findings suggest that jingles primarily work through the affective aspect, influencing emotional resonance and symbolic attachment rather than relying solely on cognitive deliberation. As a result, positive impressions may persist independently of rational judgments toward the object being promoted.

Despite this evidence within advertising and brand communication, relatively little research has examined the affective role of *jingle* in the context of public policy communication, particularly under conditions of controversy and public distrust. Existing studies on MBG overwhelmingly document negative sentiment on text-oriented platforms, where public discourse is shaped by policy critique and implementation-related concerns. What remains underexplored is how public responses may shift when the same policy is communicated through entertainment-driven and affect-oriented formats. This gap raises an important conceptual question

regarding whether music-based stimuli can generate positive affective responses even when the policy itself remains cognitively contested.

Against their findings on text-oriented platforms, TikTok represents a distinct communicative environment in which music, rhythm, repetition, and affective resonance structure participation and visibility (Verdu & Abidin, 2021)Rather than functioning primarily as a space for policy deliberation, the platform privileges emotional expression, performative engagement, and experiential interaction. Addressing this gap, the present study examines a music-driven MBG *jingle* circulated on TikTok not as an indicator of policy success, but as an affective communication strategy that may temporarily reconfigure emotional responses within digital spaces. By analyzing sentiment expressed in user comments, this study seeks to explain how musical stimuli can generate predominantly positive affective reactions even as broader public distrust toward the MBG policy persists.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the distribution of public sentiment (positive, neutral, and negative) in comments responding to the MBG *jingle* video on TikTok and interpret these affective responses within the broader context of government communication strategies. The analysis is conceptually expressed using Arousal Theory, which posits that stimuli such as music, tempo, and repetition can generate emotional arousal that shapes audience attention and elicits affective engagement. (Moreno & Mayer, 2000; Uhm et al., 2022). Within TikTok's music-centered environment, such stimuli may evoke moderate arousal that fosters positive emotional responses without necessarily indicating full acceptance of policy substance. Rather than directly analyzing the substance of the message itself, this study interprets textual user comments as traces of affective reception toward music-centered promotional content.

The contribution of this study lies in bridging dominant text-based sentiment research on MBG with an affect-oriented interpretation of public response within entertainment-driven platforms. By situating sentiment analysis within an affective communication framework and employing AI-assisted sentiment labeling through Grok X, this research extends existing approaches while acknowledging methodological limitations. Although Grok AI demonstrates moderate accuracy (51.71%) compared to human labeling (60.52%) and traditional tools such as VADER (49.49%) (Agustin et al.,2025)Its use is framed as a pragmatic tool for capturing idiomatic and context-sensitive expression in social media discourse rather than as a superior analytical replacement.

This dissonance between affective positivity and cognitive distrust raises a central question for public communication research: How can a policy marked by widespread skepticism and negative evaluation

nevertheless elicit positive affective responses when communicated through music-based and entertainment-oriented formats?

Based on this rationale, the following research questions are formulated: (1) How is public sentiment distributed in comments responding to the MBG jingle on TikTok? (2) How can dominant positive affective sentiment be interpreted in relation to prior findings of public distrust on text-oriented platforms?

2. Method

This study uses a descriptive quantitative design grounded in text mining to examine public sentiment toward the Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG) jingle circulated on TikTok. Sentiment analysis is used as a tool to capture affective responses that are expressed by users through naturally occurring comments, rather than to suggest a predictive sentiment or explanatory models. The analytical focus is placed on identifying dominant sentiment tendencies as indicators of audience reception toward government public communication. Such an approach is commonly applied in digital communication research that prioritizes data-driven interpretation of social media interactions as empirical traces of public interaction (Cao et al., 2022).

The analysis aims to classify Indonesian-language comments into three sentiment categories, which are positive, neutral, and negative, based on a corpus of 300 user comments. To achieve this, the study applies an AI-assisted sentiment labeling approach supported by contextual interpretation. In this framework, Grok, one of the large language models developed by xAI, is positioned as an annotation assistant in which Grok was used as a role to perform explicit analytical and exploratory tasks, assisting in pattern recognition while remaining subject to comparison and validation.

Grok AI was selected due to its demonstrated ability to interpret short-form social media texts that contain slang, informal syntax, typographical variation, and expressive cues commonly found in Indonesian online discourse, especially on informal modern media that doesn't need strict output regulation. Recognizing the methodological risks associated with reliance on a single automated system, this study employs a multi-layered validation strategy. Sentiment labels generated by Grok were systematically compared with outputs from the RoBERTa-based sentiment classifier and with human-labeled data. These labels were subsequently evaluated through supervised learning using a Naïve Bayes classifier with K-Fold Cross-Validation. This comparative design enables assessment of label consistency and learnability while acknowledging the epistemic limits

of automated sentiment analysis. Rather than treating any single labeling source as definitive, the study situates sentiment interpretation within a triangulated analytical framework.

The interaction between the researcher and Grok AI was conducted through prompt-based dialogue, including contextual clarification and sentiment interpretation guidance. Given the proprietary and ethical considerations on using AI as assistance in this paper, information regarding procedural transparency is addressed by providing comprehensive screenshots that document the interaction process. These materials allow readers to evaluate the analytical logic applied during AI-assisted annotation.

2.1. Research Object

The research object consists of TikTok user comments responding to a single MBG jingle video uploaded by the official account @arsip.makanbergizigratis on October 27, 2025. The selected video represents a government promotional effort designed to influence public perception through music-based and trend-aligned communication strategies. Both the video and its associated engagement data constitute the unit of analysis.

Table 1. Information regarding the research object

Variable	**Information**
Content Title	"MBG Makan Bergizi Gratis, Makanan Sehat Program Pemerintah Hebat"
Type of Content	Audio-visual (musik + koreografi TikTok)
Platform	Tiktok
Total views	440k
Total Comment	300
Scraping Period	03 December 2025
Scraping Tools	console.apify.com → TikTok Comment Scraper (Task)
Format Data	.xlsx

The decision to focus on a single video was guided by analytical considerations. That is due to allowing this paper for in-depth examination of affective reception while reducing the variability introduced by multiple heterogeneous media objects. This focus is particularly relevant given the study's emphasis on platform-specific affective dynamics rather than comparative content performance.

2.2 Data Collection

Data were collected through web scraping using the Apify Console, without direct interaction with TikTok users, in accordance with ethical guidelines for digital research and the use of publicly accessible data. At the time of data collection on December 3, 2025, a total of 300 comments were available on the selected video, and all accessible comments within this period were included in the dataset.

The extracted dataset includes the following variables:

- comment text,
- Comment upload time,
- number of likes on comments (diggCount),
- anonymized username, and
- number of replies (replyCommentTotal).

All usernames were anonymized during analysis and reporting to protect user privacy. The use of a time-bounded collection window enables the study to capture immediate audience reactions, which are particularly relevant in affect-oriented analysis of music-driven content on TikTok. At the same time, this approach may privilege early engagement and more active users, potentially excluding later or less visible responses. For this reason, the findings are positioned as context-specific within a period of time that has been determined rather than representative of long-term public opinion.

To illustrate the variety of characteristics of the dataset, including slang, emojis, sarcasm, code switching, and mixed sentiment. Below are the twenty representative comments;

Table 2. Comment sample

No.	Comment
1	nanti jadiin lagu pas kampanyenya pk Prabowo 🙏😁
2	asik lagu nya 🥰
3	aku suka putar lagu ini, klu siswaku lagi makn mbg disekolh 😁
4	buahnya asam, sayurnya berulat
5	Keren lagunya suka deh
6	Karnaa enak didenger di bawa joged jugaa 🤣🤣🤣
7	keren
8	Gara" video ini gue kepilih buat konten ini mana aku geli liat salah satu gerakannya, mana aku kek KANEBO KERING 😭🙏🏻

No.	Comment
9	Sudah gak ada susu sekarang. stok susuh susah kyakny byk yg nimbun
10	ber ular kobra sekalian biar lebih seremm.. sungguh aneh
11	pengganti senam anak indonesia hebat 😁
12	asik lagu nya 😘
13	kerenn 😘😘😘
14	Padahal di video ini ga ada sedih-sedihnya. tapi kenapa air mata ini derass 🥺
14	anak aku :mih di sekolah aku dapat MBG tau 😊 jadi uang jajan aku suka sisah buat dirumh beli seblak 🤭
15	bagus banget lagu dan joget nya
16	Terngiang ngiang jir dari kemarij
17	keren kreatif
18	marketing nya matap bgt pa prabowoooo, lope sekebooooon 😘😘😘😘
19	Karnaa enak didenger di bawa joged jugaa 🤣🤣🤣
20	candu banget jirrrrr lagunya

2.3 Data Processing

Data processing followed a structured pipeline, which included preprocessing, automated sentiment labeling, and supervised evaluation. The objective of this stage was not only to assign sentiment categories, but also to ensure contextual sensitivity in interpreting informal and expressive language commonly used in TikTok comments responding to government promotional content.

Two automated sentiment labeling approaches were applied in parallel. First, Grok AI was used as an AI-assisted annotation tool. Grok draws on large-scale exposure to social media discourse, particularly from platform X/Twitter, enabling it to recognize informal linguistic patterns, expressive cues, and pragmatic sentiment markers. While its training data are not specific to TikTok, the model was applied directly to TikTok comment data to retain contextual relevance.

The second approach was processed using the w11wo/indonesian-roberta-base-sentiment-classifier, a transformer-based sentiment classification model. RoBERTa was selected due to prior empirical evidence demonstrating its effectiveness in Indonesian-language sentiment analysis, particularly for informal and policy-related discourse (Hidayat et al., 2025). Architecturally, RoBERTa improves upon BERT by removing

next-sentence prediction, applying dynamic masking, and leveraging larger training corpora, resulting in deeper contextual representation (Liu et al., 2019).

Previous studies have shown that RoBERTa models, including IndoRoBERTa and fine-tuned IndoBERT variants, perform reliably across Indonesian social media datasets, including Instagram comments and public reviews (Wilie et al., 2020); Pinkan Maretta & Meiriza, 2025). In this study, RoBERTa was integrated as a parallel labeling stream raher than a post hoc validation tool, enabling direct comparison with Grok assisted labeling.

Following automated annotation, sentiment outputs from Grok AI and RoBERTa were gathered separately to compute sentiment distributions and to prepare labeled datasets for model evaluation. Manual labeling was also conducted to assess alignment between automated labels and contextual interpretation, particularly for comments containing irony, sarcasm, and mixed sentiment that probably automated labeling couldn't detect.

2.3.1 Pre Processing Data

Initial preprocessing stage was performed using Python-based tools, including *pandas* and *openpyxl*. The process focused on removing technical noise such as URLs, redundant symbols, and formatting artifacts. Importantly, emojis, slang, abbreviations, typographical errors, and informal spellings were purposely preserved, as these elements function as affective and contextual cues central to sentiment interpretation in Indonesian social media discourse.

2.3.2 Processing Data

After preprocessing, the cleaned dataset was processed in parallel using Grok AI, RoBERTa, and human labeling. Each approach operated on identical textual input and generated independent sentiment labels (positive, neutral, negative), enabling systematic comparison across computational and interpretive paradigms.

2.3.2.1 Data Processing using GrokAI

Sentiment labeling with Grok AI was conducted through structured, prompt-based interaction design to remain a simple method and easily understood by Grok AI, while enhancing contextual interpretation. Given the prevalence of slang, abbreviations, and mixed-language expressions in TikTok comments, an initial prompt was used to translate the Indonesian-language comments into English. This was done to give a substantial handicap for Grok in interpreting colloquial expressions. So that the structure of the comment in terms of expression matters remains the same.

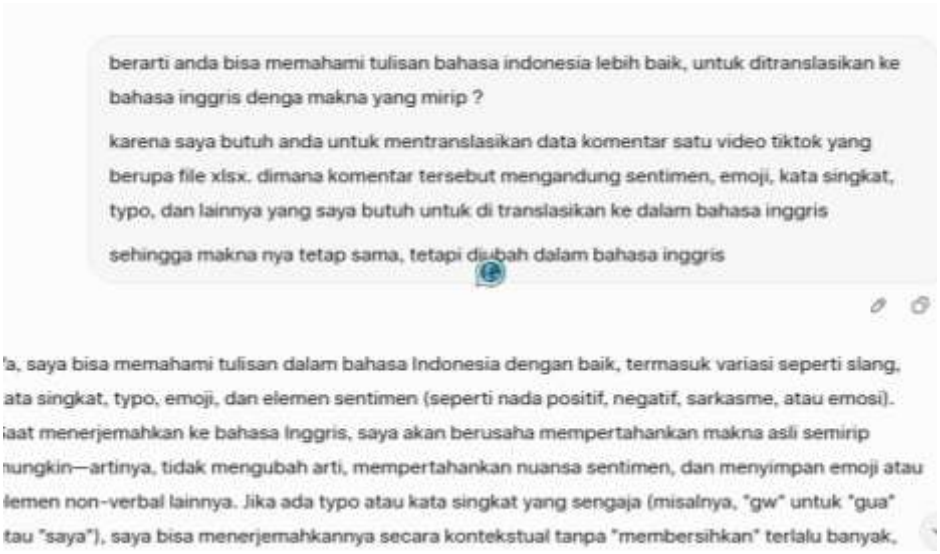

Figure 1. Screenshot Chat with GrokAI

As shown in Figure 1, the initial prompt that was used is to ensure the ability of Grok AI to translate the dataset into the English language while preserving the contextual meaning of all the comments that are expressed by the slang terms, shortened words, and expressive variations commonly found in Indonesian TikTok audiences.

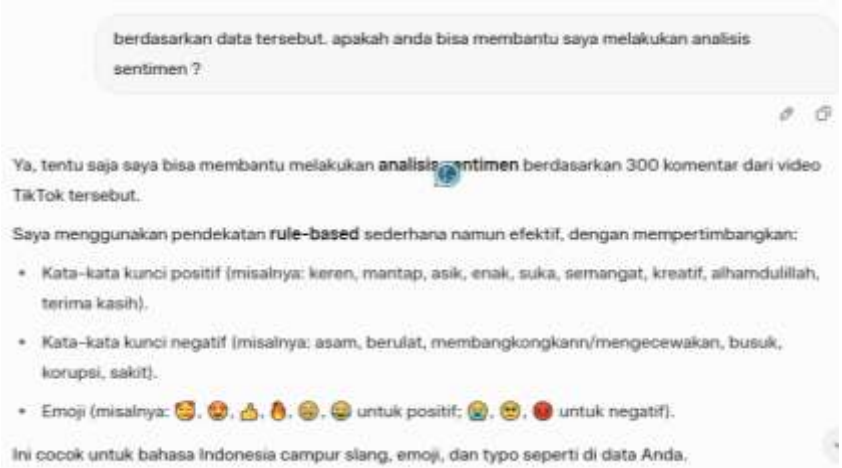

Figure 2. Screenshot Chat with GrokAI

Following this preparatory step, a second prompt explicitly requested sentiment classification based on the translated context. Grok AI then assigned sentiment labels to each comment. The translation output

functioned solely as interpretive support and did not replace analysis of the original Indonesian text.

2.3.2.2 Data Processing using RoBERTa

In parallel, sentiment classification was conducted using the *w11wo/indonesian-roberta-base-sentiment-classifier*. This model processes text through contextual embeddings that capture semantic relationships and implicit meaning, making it particularly sensitive to indirect sentiment expressions. Compared to rule-based approaches, RoBERTa offers greater nuance in handling ambiguity and implicit affect, which are common in Indonesian social media communication.

2.3.2.3 Data Processing using Human Labeling

A manual labeling stage was included to provide a human interpretation reference for sentiment classification. The data used in this process are equal in terms of total comments and independently labeled by the researcher. This process was not intended as formal inter-coder reliability testing, but rather as an interpretive benchmark to assess how automated labels performed consistently and are aligned compared to human judgment when confronted with expressive, sarcastic, or mixed-sentiment content.

2.3.3 Data Training and Label Consistency Evaluation

To evaluate label consistency, a supervised learning evaluation was conducted using a Naïve Bayes classifier with five-fold cross-validation (k=5). Sentiment labels generated by Grok AI, RoBERTa, and human labeling were each used as classification targets, with comment text represented using TF-IDF features. Model performance was assessed using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score metrics.

Table 3. Validity Result

Label Source	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-score
NB+RoBERTa labels	0.5	0.45	0.5	0.45
NB + Grok labels	0.76	0.58	0.76	0.66
NB + Human Labeling	0.63	0.4	0.63	0.49

The results indicate that the Naïve Bayes model trained on Grok-generated labels achieved higher accuracy and F1-score values than models trained on RoBERTa-generated labels and human-labeled data. This outcome reflects differences in labeling characteristics rather than absolute sentiment correctness. Grok-generated labels tend to emphasize dominant polarity patterns, which align more closely with the probabilistic

assumptions of Naïve Bayes, making them easier for simpler classifiers to learn.

Human-labeled data, while contextually grounded, shows greater interpretive variability, particularly when sarcasm and mixed sentiment are present. Compared to results generated using RoBERTa, the results generated using RoBERTa capture greater semantic nuance but introduce higher label complexity, which can reduce performance when paired with simple classifiers. These differences underscore that model performance should be interpreted as an indicator of label granularity and consistency rather than as evidence of methodological superiority. Within this framework, RoBERTa remains an essential component of the analytical pipeline due to its demonstrated capacity for deep contextual sentiment interpretation (Hidayat et al., 2025; Pinkan Maretta & Meiriza, 2025).

2.5 *Research Framework*

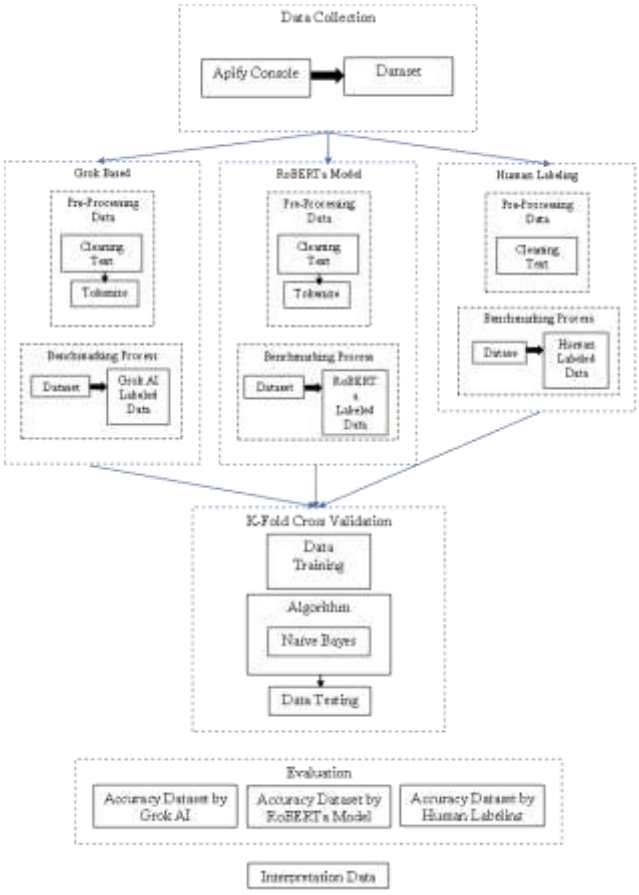

Figure 3. Framework research

3. Results

The sentiment analysis of 300 TikTok comments responding to the Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG) jingle indicates a clear predominance of positive sentiment. A total of 196 comments (62%) were classified as positive, followed by 86 neutral comments (28.67%) and 28 negative comments (9.33%). These figures represent the distribution of affective expressions identified within the available comment dataset during the specified data collection period.

Table 4. Sentiment Calculation Results Based on Grok

Total Comments	**300**	**Percentage**
Positive Sentiment	186	62%
Negative Sentiment	28	9.33%
Neutral Sentiment	86	28.67%

It should be noted that the number of analyzed comments that were available was at a relatively small level of interaction when compared to the total number of video views, which reached approximately 440,000 views. Consequently, the sentiment distribution reported in this study reflects expressions from users who actively chose to engage through commenting, rather than representing generalized public opinion or overall approval of the MBG policy.

Figure 4. Word-cloud on Positive Sentiment

As shown in Figure 4. above, positive sentiment is primarily manifested through short affirmations, expressive emojis such as 😍, 👍, and 🔥, and recurring keywords including "*keren*" (cool), "*mantap*" (cool), "*mantap*" (excellent), and "*semangat*" (enthusiastic). These are the expressions that are predominantly oriented toward the jingle's performative and aesthetic elements, such as its music, rhythm, and

choreography, rather than toward explicit evaluations of policy implementation, program effectiveness, or governance outcomes.

Neutral comments, which account for 28.67% of the dataset, are largely composed of factual statements, brief observations, or inquiries that do not convey a clear emotional stance. Many of these comments reference logistical aspects of the program or describe personal experiences without evaluative language. More than that, their comments don't contain explicit expressions that correlate to the jingle or even the governance policy.

Negative sentiment, while numerically limited, includes comments expressing dissatisfaction or skepticism related to food quality, distribution issues, and governance concerns. References to sour fruit, worm-infested vegetables, and sarcastic remarks employing irony or exaggeration demonstrate the presence of critical discourse within the comment space. Although small in proportion, these comments reflect public concerns that are expressed in the comment as an interaction, alongside the dominant positive affective responses.

Overall, the results reveal a variability of sentiment expression in response to the content-related, which is the MBG jingle. Which positive sentiment turned out to be the dominant, characterized by positive affective responses, a good amount of neutral segments that don't represent any substantial expression regarding the main point of the content, and a fairly good amount of negative commentary presence. These findings provide an empirical foundation for the following discussion on how music-based communication evokes affective engagement in TikTok, which is an entertainment-based platform, and for examining how sentiment patterns on TikTok may differ from those observed in text-based public discourse.

4. Discussion

The TikTok comment section responding to the MBG *jingle* constitutes a limited yet meaningful finding regarding communicative space in which audience responses are predominantly affective rather than oriented toward substantive policy evaluation. Although broader public discourse surrounding the MBG program has been marked by controversy and critical debate, the sentiment distribution observed in this study is dominated by expressions of enjoyment, amusement, and surface-level appreciation of the jingle. This dominance, however, should not be interpreted as an indicator of broad public approval of the MBG policy. Considering the relatively small volume of comments in relation to more than 440,000 video views, the findings reflect localized affective reception

among users who actively commented, rather than widespread resonance or collective endorsement.

"keren lagunya suka deh"
"keren kreatif"
"keren"
"ijin share ya kak"
"asik lagu nya 🥰"
"kayaknya mau ku hafalin geh buat senam bareng sama relawan mbg"
".."

Representative comments such as "*keren lagunya suka deh*", "*keren kreatif*", "*asik lagunya 🥰*", and "*kayaknya mau kuhafalin geh buat senam bareng sama relawan MBG"* illustrate how positive sentiment is largely articulated through brief affirmations, emojis, and playful language. Unique enough, these findings create a pattern where the positive comments were focused on the jingle itself, rather than the policy substance. Furthermore, these expressions function primarily as a marker of affective engagement with the jingle's performative elements. Within TikTok's communicative norms, short affirmations like "*keren*" or "*asik lagunya*" signal participation and enjoyment, not ideological alignment or policy agreement.

This pattern aligns with the platform's expressive logic, where affective participation often takes precedence over rational or evaluative discourse. As such, the positive sentiment observed in this study reflects engagement with media form rather than with policy legitimacy. Government communication on entertainment-oriented platforms like TikTok appears to be processed primarily through experiential and emotional registers, reinforcing the distinction between emotional visibility and substantive public trust.

When compared with sentiment studies that are conducted on text-oriented platforms, we can see how the outcome of the sentiment distribution contrasts. A clear divergence emerges where constant reports of negative sentiment, expressed in terms of policy-oriented critique, distrust, and rational evaluation, are evident. Studies by Sianturi (2025), Arif & Kustiyono (2025), Krisnawan et al. (2025), and Nyoman Aprianti et al. (2025) demonstrate that discussion on X is shaped by deliberative argumentation, transparency concerns, and accumulated skepticism toward government implementation. In these contexts, negative sentiment is primarily cognitive rather than expressive, reflecting evaluative judgments grounded in governance performance, risk perception, and prior experience. From this perspective, the positive sentiment dominance

observed on TikTok does not contradict earlier findings but instead complements and constructs a pattern on how public response in different platforms. More than that, how positive sentiment was predominantly affective-based, and negative sentiment was heavily cognitive-based.

This difference in output can be explained through the concept of platform affordances. TikTok, as described by Verdu & Abidin (2021)It operates as an entertainment-driven environment in which music, visuals, and participatory storytelling function as core mechanisms of emotional engagement and collective expression. Their analysis of music challenge memes highlights how audio on TikTok mostly operates as a narrative unit that enables users to express belonging, humor, and shared affect rather than explicit ideological positioning. Unlike X, which facilitates rapid, text-based deliberation and critique, TikTok encourages interaction through imitation, performance, and affective participation. Consequently, responses to government promotional content on TikTok are more likely to manifest as playful engagement than as argumentative evaluation.

These platform differences regarding social dynamics are further addressed by Avdeeff (2021) In a comparative analysis of TikTok and Twitter responses to Taylor Swift's You Need *to Calm Down*. Avdeeff demonstrates that while Twitter users engaged with the song's political messaging through debate and activist discourse, TikTok users largely depoliticized the same matter by recontextualizing it into humorous narratives. Applied to the MBG *jingle*, this comparison reinforces the argument that positive sentiment on TikTok reflects the platform's cultural aspect, which is represented by the dynamics of the user interactions based on what platform they're using.

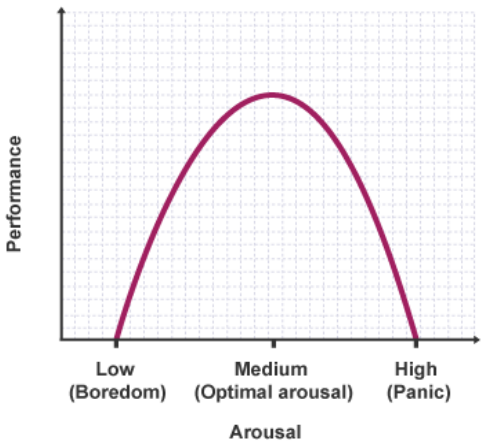

Figure 5. U-Inverted Model

From a theoretical standpoint, Arousal Theory is employed in this study as an interpretive lens rather than a causal explanatory model. The MBG jingle may be understood as an affective stimulus designed to generate moderate emotional activation through upbeat tempo, repetition, and visual dynamics. Previous studies have shown that fast-tempo music and rhythmic consistency can increase arousal and enhance affective engagement in an advertising context (Uhm et al., 2022). However, because this study does not measure arousal physiologically or behaviorally, arousal is treated as a conceptual framework for interpreting audience responses rather than as a measurable variable.

Within this interpretive framework, sentiment categories can be illustratively mapped onto an inverted U-shaped arousal model. Positive comments characterized by emojis, playful language, and expressions of enjoyment correspond to moderate arousal states in which audiences experience pleasure and engagement without deep cognitive elaboration. Neutral comments reflect low arousal responses, where exposure does not translate into affective involvement. In contrast, negative comments often contain emotionally charged language related to anxiety, disappointment, or distrust, particularly concerning food quality, distribution failures, and corruption. These responses suggest higher arousal states triggered not by the jingle itself but by external experiences and prior knowledge of the policy.

Platform dynamics further complicate the interpretation of sentiment distribution. TikTok's algorithmic emphasis on entertaining and engaging content may influence affectively positive expressions, shaping the visible comment environment toward playful or affirmative reactions. As a result, the observed sentiment distribution should be understood as partially mediated by platform affordances and performative norms. Users may engage with content for entertainment value while simultaneously maintaining skepticism toward the underlying policy, which is more explicitly articulated on text-based platforms such as X.

"buahnya asam, sayurnya berulat"
"yg ngomong malah gak makan MBG 😂"
"ladang korupsi"
"yg GK asam dan GK bisa berulat cuma besi 😂😂😂"
"ber ular kobra sekalian biar lebih seremm.. sungguh aneh"
"hati lu busuk"
".."

Despite platform dynamic differences, negative comments within the TikTok comment space still remain and are substantively significant. Comments referring to poor food quality, lack of milk, or corruption articulate concrete concerns related to health risks, logistical capacity, and governance transparency. Consistent with findings by Putriyekti et al. (2025)Such critiques reflect rational evaluations grounded in lived experience and perceived policy performance. These responses demonstrate that entertainment-oriented communication cannot fully neutralize structural anxieties and that affective appeal operates alongside, rather than replacing, critical public judgment.

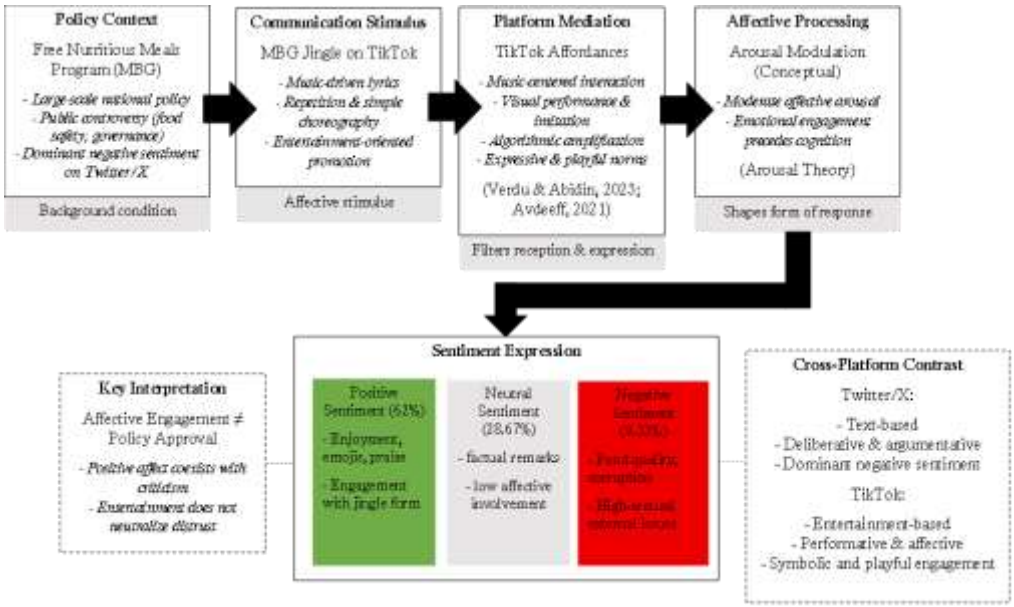

Figure 6. Platform-Mediated Affective Response to the MBG Jingle on TikTok

Taken together, this discussion demonstrates that the predominance of positive sentiment toward the MBG jingle on TikTok should be understood as the outcome of a platform-mediated affective process rather than as evidence of policy approval. As illustrated in Figure 4.3, the jingle functions primarily as an affective stimulus whose musical and performative qualities are amplified by TikTok's entertainment-oriented affordances and expressive participation norms. Within this environment, audience responses prioritize enjoyment, playfulness, and symbolic engagement with the media form, while critical evaluation regarding MBG implementation remains consistent in the comment space. This distinction

highlights the importance of separating emotional engagement from substantive public trust when assessing government communication strategies on social media platforms.

5. Conclusion

This study reveals the distribution of public sentiment toward a government-issued jingle for the Free Nutritious Meals Program (MBG) as expressed through TikTok user comments, with the aim of understanding how effective responses emerge within a platform-specific communication environment. While the findings indicate a predominance of positive sentiment within the analyzed comment set, this pattern should not be interpreted as evidence of broad public approval of the MBG policy. Instead, the results demonstrate that TikTok's music-centered, performative, and entertainment-oriented affordances actively shape how audiences articulate engagement, privileging affective, playful, and symbolic responses over deliberative evaluation of policy substance.

The central contribution of this study lies in showing how different digital platforms generate qualitatively distinct forms of public response to the same policy. When contrasted with prior studies reporting dominant negative sentiment toward MBG on text-oriented platforms such as Twitter/X, the positive affective responses observed on TikTok do not signal a reversal of public distrust. Rather, they reveal the existence of segmented digital publics governed by divergent communicative logics. Whereas X facilitates argumentative discourse, policy critique, and rational evaluation, TikTok operates as an affect-driven environment in which music, repetition, imitation, and humor heavily function as primary modes of participation. Within this context, expressions of positivity are more accurately understood as platform differences dynamics rather than as indicators of policy endorsement.

These findings reinforce arguments advanced by Verdu & Abidin (2021) and Abidin et al. (2023), who emphasize that TikTok engagement is culturally performative and shaped by algorithmic incentives, visibility economies, and collective identity formation. In this study, positive sentiment toward the MBG jingle reflects participation in a shared affective performance enabled by musical stimuli and platform norms, rather than an assessment of program effectiveness or governance quality. Consequently, sentiment expression cannot be separated from the technological and cultural conditions under which it is produced.

Furthermore, arousal theory illustrated and mapped how the availability of sentiment categories varies across the comments that are expressed by the audience. Music based stimuli may generate moderate

emotional engagement, ignoring cognitive aspect in which the purpose of the MBG itself. In line with Indriyarti & Murtiningsih (2025)Music and movement-based digital content can enhance enjoyment, memorability, and short-term engagement. However, the separation between jingle arousal and the cognitive standpoint remains unexplored.

The coexistence of positive affective responses with critical and skeptical commentary further underscores the limits of entertainment-based government communication. While the *jingle* functions as an effective entry point that enhances visibility and momentary engagement, it does not neutralize substantive concerns related to food safety, distribution capacity, or governance transparency. This simultaneity demonstrates that affective engagement and critical judgment operate in parallel, reinforcing the analytical need to distinguish emotional resonance from policy approval in the interpretation of social media sentiment.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. This study focuses on a single TikTok video and is limited to a time period during which the data was scraped. Constrains the generalizability of the findings across platforms, content formats, and temporal context. In addition, despite the integration of automated sentiment classification and selective human validation, interpretive ambiguity remains particularly in cases involving sarcasm, irony, or mixed sentiment characteristic of platform-specific unique language characteristics.

Future research would benefit from a comparative, cross-platform, and longitudinal design to further examine how government communication strategies are received across different digital environments. Greater attention to platform affordances, performative participation, and algorithmic visibility will be essential for understanding how sentiment is produced, circulated, and interpreted. Ultimately, situating sentiment analysis within a platform-sensitive and affect-oriented communication framework is crucial to assessing the role and the limits of creative media strategies in contemporary government communication, without conflating visibility or engagement with democratic legitimacy or policy effectiveness.

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