

YouTube, Public Discourse, and the ‘Makan Siang Gratis’ Program: An Analysis of Toxicity Comments on the Liputan6 Channel

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Toxicity Comment Analysis; Makan Siang Gratis; Youtube; Public Discourse

This study investigates the toxicity of comments on the ‘Makan Siang Gratis’ Program features on the Liputan6 YouTube Channel. Using the Toxicity Comment Analysis Method, the study aim to identify, measure, and understand the level of toxicity in user comments. Data were collected through the Communalytic platform, which facilitates automated data retrieval from the official YouTube API. This tool was used for comment scraping, which was then analyzed using the toxicity analysis feature to obtain toxicity scores based on indicators such as the severity of comments, hate speech, target identity, and threats contained within the comments. The findings show that while most comments had low toxicity scores, some comments exhibited higher levels of toxicity, particularly in the categories of severe toxicity and profanity. Comments with higher toxicity scores have the potential to disrupt constructive conversations and create polarization among user, diminishing the quality of interactions. Several toxicity, although rare, tends to trigger strong emotional responses, escalate conflicts, and lower the overall quality of discourse. Similarly, profanity and insults reduce the inclusivity of discussions, causing some users to refrain from participating. Identity attacks, though infrequent, can target individuals based on their characteristics and threaten the diversity of opinions in discussions. This study underscores the importance of moderation to manage toxic comments and maintain an online space that is respectful and inclusive.

1. Introduction

After the inauguration, President Prabowo Subianto officially launched the ‘Makan Siang Gratis’ Program (Free Lunch Program) which was later changed to the name of the ‘Makan Bergizi Gratis’ Program (*Free Nutritious Meal*) (setneg.go.id, 2025; Indonesia.go.id, 2024). The ‘Makan Siang Gratis’ program, which is one of the flagship programs in the Presidential Election for the pair of Presidential Candidates Prabowo Subianto and Gibran Rakabuming Raka, is something that is differentiated (tempo.co, 2024). After the couple was declared the winner and inaugurated, the program was immediately initiated as part of the government's policy to improve the nutrition of school children and reduce stunting has been widely highlighted in online media, including the YouTube platform (tempo.co, 2025c). This policy is expected to reach millions of students in various regions in Indonesia, especially in areas with high levels of malnutrition (schoolmealscoalition.org, 2025; Rimbawan et al., 2023; Basrowi, 2025). In addition to the support that emerged, discourse related to this policy also caused polemics on social media, with various public responses showing a diversity of opinions—ranging from appreciation to sharp criticism (Wardhana, 2025; tempo.co, 2025a; Wilantika & Wibisono, 2021; jawapes.or.id, 2025).

The 'Makan Siang Gratis' Program policy raises hopes for many who believe that this policy can help reduce inequality in access to decent nutrition, especially among low-income people (Bethmann & Cho, 2022). If we look at good practices in different countries, there is a lot of evidence to suggest that the free school lunch program universally improves students' academic outcomes significantly (Gordanier et al., 2020; Ruffini, 2022; Schwartz & Rothbart, 2020; Bethmann & Cho, 2022; Belot & James, 2011; Frisvold, 2015). The program is also expected to improve students' concentration and learning outcomes by providing the nutrients needed to support their physical and mental development (Promise, 2025). However, the implementation of this program faces challenges in funding, management, and equitable distribution of resources throughout Indonesia (Wardhana, 2025; jawapes.or.id, 2025; tempo.co, 2025a; tempo.co, 2025c; CELIOS, 2025; Associated Press, 2025)

In the digital age, social media such as YouTube is not only a place to share information, but also a forum for the public to express their views on policy issues, including government policies (Abdullah, 2020; Dong & Lian, 2021; Jiang et al., 2025; Popescu et al., 2024). Discourse on this policy on YouTube and its platform is often peppered with comments with a tone of criticism, sarcasm, and even hate speech or toxic comments that can direct public opinion in a negative direction (Sumaiyah et al., 2024; PIDS et al., 2023) Karlodi, 2025; tempo.co, 2025a; Agnesia, 2025; CNBC Indonesia, 2025). The presence of these toxic comments not only creates polarization in society but also spreads misinformation that has the potential to affect public perception of the effectiveness of the policy (Murphy-Hill et al., 2024; Naseeba et al., 2023)

The 'Makan Siang Gratis' program which was discussed in the dialogue with President Prabowo Subianto on the Liputan6 YouTube channel received high attention from netizens in Indonesia. This dialogue was held at the same time as the Red and White Cabinet Retreat in Magelang which was broadcast exclusively. It can be seen from the more than 5000 comments that keep changing from time to time (Liputan6, 2024). In the context of YouTube Liputan6, the use of Toxicity Comment Analysis will help evaluate the public's response to the 'Makan Siang Gratis' Program, especially comments that tend to muddy public perception.

This research has urgency in showing how the media can influence, or even muddy public opinion related to government policies. Through the analysis of comments on social media, governments and policymakers can gain insights into people's responses in real and real-time, allowing for evaluation or adjustment to existing programs (Izza, 2023; Suhendra & Selly Pratiwi, 2024; Abdullah et al., 2024; Jayus et al., 2024). Understanding the level of toxicity in public comment also provides a broader picture of how people interact digitally, especially when dealing with policies that pose pros and cons (Dunan, 2020).

Recent studies highlight the ever-evolving landscape of digital public participation and its impact on policymaking. Social media platforms have become the primary channel for citizen engagement, enabling two-way interaction between government and the public on policy issues (Fan et al., 2021; Salsabila, 2024; Jumalia Mannayong et al., 2024). However, this digital space also presents challenges, including cyberbullying and toxic comments (Krisnandi et al., 2023).

In addition, this research is expected to contribute to the academic understanding of public opinion and communication auditing in the digital age and its impact on policy effectiveness. The results of this Toxicity Comment Analysis are expected to be a reference for media managers in presenting information objectively and for policymakers to be more responsive in understanding public perception and communication audits, which ultimately increases public participation in government programs and can open up new understandings of how Indonesian people respond to government policies through digital media (Mannayong et al., 2024; Madani, 2020). More importantly, this research is a reflection for policymakers to be wiser in handling public responses as well as input for media platform managers in moderating public discussions in a more balanced and constructive manner (Rifqi & Gusti, 2023)

2. Method

Toxicity Comment Analysis is the method used in this research, which allows an in-depth analysis of the level of toxicity in discourse that emerges in digital public spaces (Beniwal & Maurya, 2021; Gupta et al., 2021; (stanford.edu, 2020) Li et al., 2022). This approach focuses on assessing public criticism as well as identifying destructive patterns of interaction among netizens, such as insults or threats, that can increase polarization of public opinion (Obadimu et al., 2019). Toxicity Comment Analysis aims to identify the patterns, intensity, and categories of toxic comments that appear in public discussion (van Aken et al., 2018) in this case it is the Free Lunch Program proposed by Prabowo.

Table 1 Source of Datasets

Content Title	Platform	Subscriber	Comment	Viewer
Eksklusif! Prabowo Bicara Soal Makan Gratis, Menteri Kabinet, Hingga Hasrat Jadi Presiden	Youtube.com/Liputan6	2.26 M	5,274	1.9 m

The data used in this study was collected through the Communalytic platform, which offers a variety of tools to access and analyze data from social media platforms. Communalytic is a no-code, computational social science research tool for studying online communities and public discourse on social media. It is designed to provide essential resources and infrastructure for researchers, journalists, and students to conduct independent research aimed at the public interest. The tool has a full suite of easy-to-use social media data collectors - no coding required. Communalytic can collect data from platforms such as Bluesky, Mastodon, Reddit, Telegram, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. (Gruzd & Mai, 2025).

Communalytic is used to do comment scraping or collect comments automatically through YouTube's official API. Then, Communalytic's Civility Analyzer facility allows researchers to identify toxic and prosocial interactions in a dataset using one of two learning machine models, namely Perspective API and Detoxify (API Perspective, 2025; GitHub, 2025).

The Communalytic platform provides a variety of features to measure the toxicity level of comments, including indicators such as Toxicity, Severe Toxicity, Identity Attack, Insult, Profanity, and Threat. These features allow researchers to identify and segment comments based on toxicity scores, so researchers can more accurately map the type and level of toxicity in public responses (Communalytic.org, 2025; Perspective API, 2025a; Communalytic.org, 2021).

Table 2 Elements of Toxicity Comment Analysis

nb	Elements	Information
1	Toxicity	This score indicates the extent to which a comment is rude, disrespectful, or unreasonable.
2	Severe Toxicity	This score illustrates how much hate, aggressiveness, and disrespect there is in a comment.
3	Identity Attack	This score indicates if a comment contains hate language that targets someone based on their identity
4	Insult	This score helps identify comments that are insulting or provocative.
5	Profanity	This score indicates whether the comment contains profanity or other foul language.
6	Threat	This score describes the extent to which a comment is intended to cause pain or violence against an individual or group.

3. Result and Discussion

On social media platforms such as YouTube, toxic comments often attract the attention of more users and have the potential to trigger a domino effect (Asiska & Mustafa, 2022; Romadina et

al., 2024). When a comment with a high toxicity score appears, other users may be affected and reply in a similar tone, which causes the comment section to become increasingly toxic and polarized (Obadimu et al., 2019). Therefore, identifying the distribution of toxicity scores in this dataset is important to understand how these toxic behavior patterns arise and how they affect the overall discussion (Singgalen, 2024).

The following data visualization will illustrate the distribution of various toxicity scores, including Severe Toxicity (higher levels of aggression and hatred), Profanity (use of abusive language), Identity Attack (an attack on an individual's or group's identity), Insult (insult), and Threat (threat). Each of these scores provides a specific perspective on the quality of the comments and the extent to which toxic tones appear in the comment column. This visualization will provide a thorough understanding of the intensity and frequency of toxic behavior in the analyzed video, as well as help identify which comments may need further moderation to maintain the quality of interaction on the platform.

a. Toxicity

The Toxicity Score is a measure of the extent to which a comment is considered rude, disrespectful, or unreasonable in a public discussion. In the context of social media, this score is used to identify the level of toxicity that can affect the quality of interactions between users. Comments with high toxicity scores indicate the presence of negative tones or behaviors that have the potential to undermine constructive conversations. In contrast, lower scores generally reflect a more polite tone and favor positive interactions.

The distribution of the Toxicity Score shows that most comments are concentrated at low levels, with scores close to zero, which suggests that the majority of users maintain a polite tone. However, the presence of some comments with a score above 0.5 indicates an occasional spike in toxicity, where users may express strong negative opinions. These kinds of comments, even if they are small in number, can influence the general sentiment surrounding the video and may change the tone of the discussion towards hostility or confrontation.

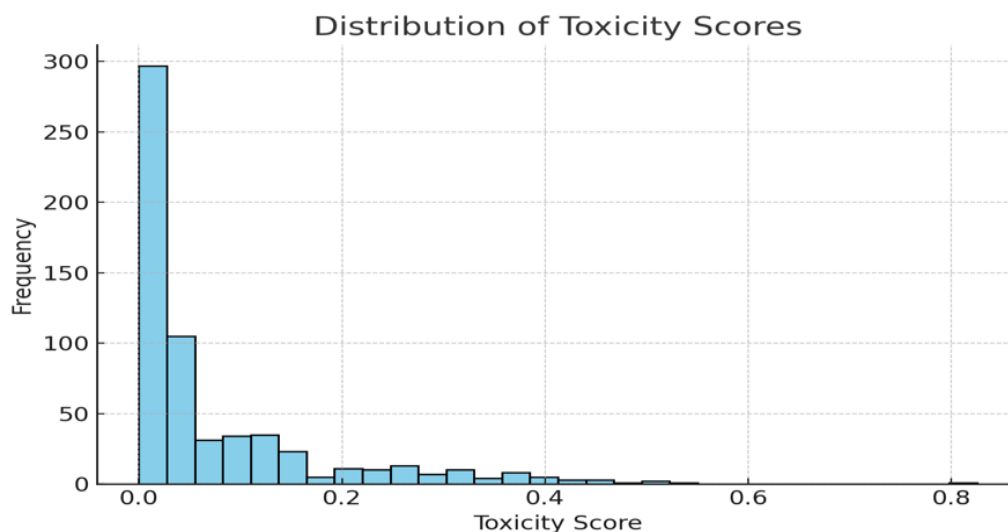


Figure 1. Disitribution of Toxicity Scores

Toxicity scores reflect the extent to which a comment is rude or nonsensical, potentially stifling constructive conversations. In this dataset, the presence of a high toxicity score on some comments indicates that users respond to the video topic with strong feelings and may express frustration or anger in their responses. This shift toward rudeness, even if it only happens to a few comments, can set a precedent that encourages other commenters to imitate similar tones.

Furthermore, toxic comments often attract more attention and reactions due to their confrontational nature. As a result, conversation threads may experience a domino effect, where more and more users are taking part in discussions with increasingly toxic comments. This behavior can cause the comment section to become polarized, where the focus shifts from constructive discussion to personal attacks and defensive attitudes.

The existence of these toxic comments also highlights the importance of moderation of toxic comments to maintain positive discussions. While removing all toxic comments may not be practical, minimizing these spikes through moderation tools or guidelines can help maintain a more respectful environment.

The pattern of increased toxicity can discourage some viewers from participating in discussions, thus reducing the diversity of opinion. High toxicity scores tend to alienate those who prefer polite conversation, which ultimately leads to an unbalanced representation of opinions in which more aggressive voices dominate.

The importance of the analysis of toxic comments is also in line with the main purpose of this research, which is to explore how the toxic comments contained in the comment facility on the video *"Exclusive! Prabowo Talks About Free Food, Cabinet Ministers, and Desire to Become President"* can influence public discourse regarding the 'Makan Siang Gratis' program which is Prabowo Subianto's political promise. With toxic comments that lead to polarization and division in the digital public space, the quality of discussion around this can be disrupted in the digital realm, so that netizens create an emotional and unobjective narrative. This certainly has the potential to lead to the formation of biased public opinion and negatively affect the perception of the policy.

b. Severe Toxicity

The distribution of the Severe Toxicity Score shows a strong concentration on low scores, with only a few outliers reaching higher severity. This suggests that most commentators avoid very aggressive or hateful language, although there are a small number who use language with extreme levels of negativity. The severe toxicity score measures not only rudeness but also aggressive or hateful intentions, which highlights different aspects of negativity in comments.

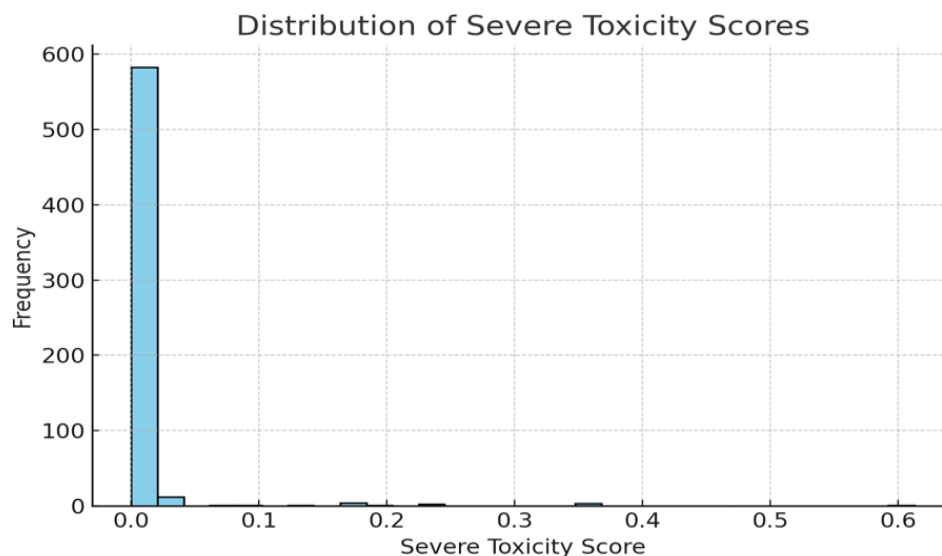


Figure 2. Disitribution of Severe Toxicity Scores

When severe toxicity comes up in discussions, conflicts in the community often escalate. Comments with a high severe toxicity score tend to provoke strong emotional responses from other users, sparking intense debate and reducing the likelihood of polite conversations. Comments like

these create an environment where hostility becomes the primary form of interaction, masking any form of constructive exchange.

The impact of severe toxicity is particularly relevant in discussions on public platforms, where users from diverse backgrounds interact with each other. Severe toxicity hinders inclusive conversations, as individuals who are targeted or affected by comments like this may choose to withdraw, reducing diversity in the discussion. This can create an echo chamber effect, where only the most vocal and confrontational voices dominate.

Although comments with severe high toxicity rarely appear, their presence can affect the audience's perception of the entire comment column. When even some comments show extreme negativity, this can create a negative shadow over lainnya's discussion, thus deterring new commenters from participating.

Severe toxicity management is critical for platforms that seek to maintain a positive community environment. Effective moderation can involve automated screening, user reporting systems, and implementing guidelines that prevent hate speech and personal attacks.

Finally, the severe toxicity analyst in this comment also highlights the significant impact on the public discourse regarding the 'Makan Siang Gratis' program proposed by Prabowo. Although comments with a relatively high level of popularity are relatively few, their existence can also create a negative image that dominates public conversations through the Youtube Liputan6 comment facility. This can affect public opinion in a destructive way, as most more confrontational interactions can detract from the quality of a healthy and objective discussion.

c. Profanity

The distribution of Profanity Scores shows that most comments have low scores, although there are some that contain higher profanity levels. Profanity reflects the use of offensive language, and even the appearance of profanity at a low level can exacerbate discussions by introducing emotional language. In this dataset, profanity appears occasionally, which suggests that some users choose to express their opinions with stronger language to add intensity.

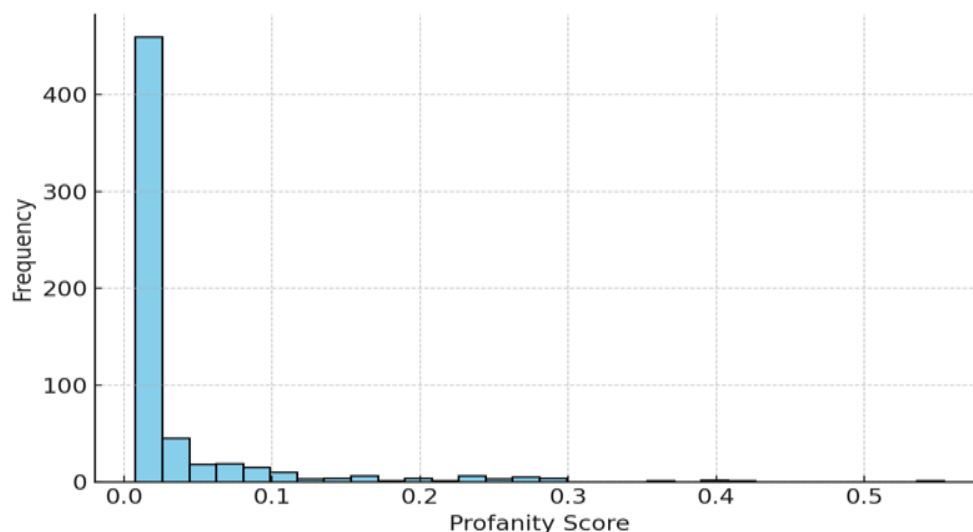


Figure 3. Distribution of Profanity Scores

Profanity can polarize discussions, as users may react more emotionally to comments that contain offensive language. Generally, comments full of profanity tend to receive strong reactions, both positive and negative, as they often trigger an emotional response from the reader. This behavior can disrupt the natural flow of the discussion and shift the focus to more confrontational interactions.

The presence of profanity can also decrease the perceived quality of the comment column, which ultimately reduces participation. Some users may be reluctant to engage in discussions with a high level of profanity, either because they feel uncomfortable or prefer polite dialogue. As a result, profanity may inadvertently filter out more moderate voices, so that discussions become more inclined towards extreme opinions.

The impact of profanity is particularly significant on public platforms such as YouTube, where diverse audiences with different levels of tolerance for offensive language are on board. Maintaining a polite tone becomes important to ensure that all perspectives feel comfortable participating in the discussion.

To address this, platforms can implement moderation strategies that mark or limit the use of profanity to encourage more constructive interactions. Encouraging users to rephrase comments with more polite language can also improve the quality of the discussion without limiting expression.

The urgency of the analysis of profanity in this commentary is closely related to the public discourse on the 'Makan Siang Gratis' program. Although the Profanity score is not as strong as other forms of toxicity, the use of profanity can affect the audience's perception of the issue. Offensive language tends to worsen the dynamics of the discussion and create a negative impression that may filter out more moderate views, which can ultimately damage the quality of public debate about Prabowo's proposed policies even if it is only limited to the Youtube comment column.

d. Insult

The Insult Score distribution shows that while most comments have low scores in terms of insults, there are some comments with higher scores, which indicates occasional use of provocative language. Insults are often the trigger for an escalating response, turning the discussion into a heated debate. In this dataset, although the presence of insults is rare, it shows the presence of moments of high tension among the commentators.

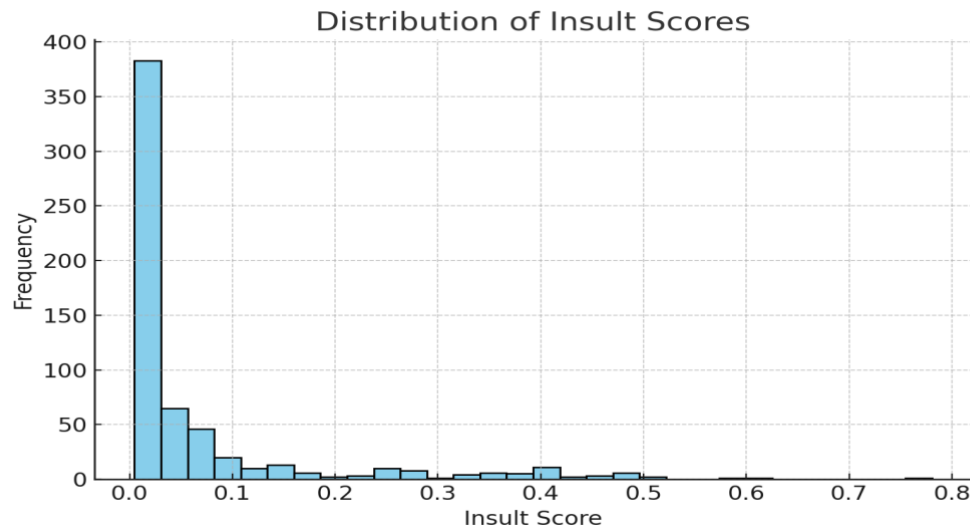


Figure 4. Distribution Insult Scores

Insults can divert productive conversations, as discussion participants move from discussing ideas to defending themselves from personal attacks. This shift in focus often causes the discussion to become less substantial, where emotional reactions dominate over arguments based on logic. The presence of insults can degrade the quality of the discussion, as users focus more on self-defense than on discussing the topic at hand.

Furthermore, insults can discourage some users from participating, especially those who prefer polite and intellectual dialogue. When insults dominate, constructive voices tend to retreat, so

that conversations are only followed by those who are more willing to engage in confrontational exchanges. This effect can lead to the formation of an echo chamber, where only an aggressive perspective is represented.

Platforms that want to encourage constructive discussion can apply insult detection algorithms to flag or limit provocative language. By encouraging polite exchanges, the platform can maintain a balanced and open discussion environment, where diverse perspectives are valued.

The comments containing the words Insult are in line with the polarization that emerged in the discussion around the 'Makan Siang Gratis' Program proposed by Prabowo. Although the infatuation is not too dominant, its existence is enough to distract the attention of netizens who watch while reading the comments so that there is a shift from substantial comments to personal attacks. In this context, derogatory comments can exacerbate existing discourse and worsen public perception of the policy, creating a polarized and more emotional digital public space.

e. Identity Attacks

The distribution of the Identity Attack Score shows that the use of language that attacks identity is quite rare, with most scores close to zero. However, there were a small number of comments with higher scores, indicating the presence of targeted attacks based on specific identities. Comments that have a high identity attack score can have a big impact, as they go beyond personal differences of opinion and specifically target individuals or groups based on fundamental characteristics.

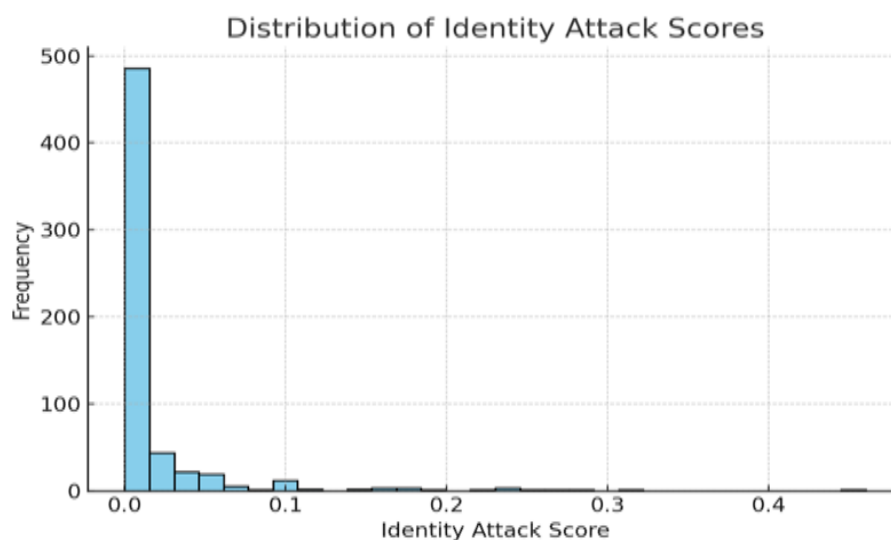


Figure 5. Distribution of Identity Attack

Attacks on identities are particularly dangerous because they not only impact direct targets, but also create a hostile environment for people who share the same identity. This can discourage participation from different demographics, thus narrowing the diversity of perspectives represented in discussions. These kinds of comments create an environment where individuals feel unsafe or marginalized, which ultimately reduces the inclusivity of the platform.

In online discussions, attacks on identity often lead to polarization, where users tend to support or oppose the target. This dynamic can shift the focus of the conversation away from the initial topic, and focus more on disputes around identity issues. As a result, the discussion becomes fragmented, where constructive debate becomes less mainstream.

The existence of identity attacks, even if in small numbers, requires proactive moderation. Language filtering that targets identities can protect vulnerable groups and encourage safer online

communities. Many platforms implement identity attack filters to ensure polite discussions and not alienate certain demographics.

Furthermore, addressing identity attacks can enhance the platform's reputation as an inclusive space. Users are more likely to participate in discussions where they feel their identity will not be the subject of derogatory comments. This positive perception can encourage wider participation, enriching the quality of discussions.

Despite the incident, identity attacks can have a damaging impact on the quality of public discourse related to the 'Makan Siang Gratis' Program initiated by Prabowo Subianto. When such attacks occur, a conversation that should be objective and fact-based risks breaking up into an unproductive debate, which can reduce inclusivity in discussions and exacerbate polarization among the public which ultimately undermines efforts to build a constructive understanding of policy.

f. Threat

The Threat Score distribution shows that most comments have threat scores that are close to zero, which signifies a very low frequency of threatening language in this dataset. This shows that the majority of users do not use language with the intention of hurting or scare. The almost absence of threats in these comments is in line with the general community standards on the platform, where direct threats are rarely found. However, some comments with high threat scores indicate isolated cases of threatening language, which can have a serious impact on the atmosphere and user perception of the platform.

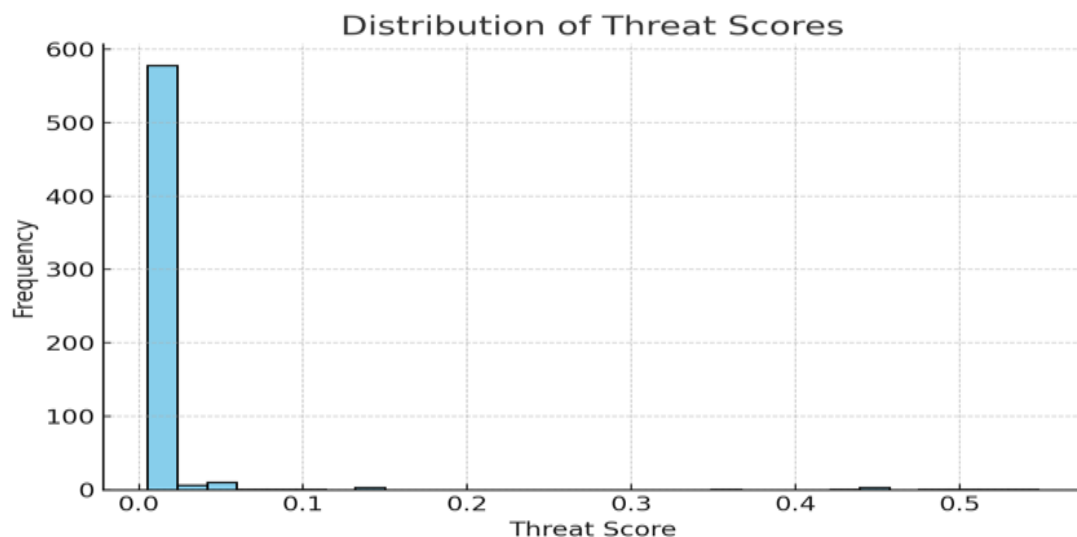


Figure 6. Distribution of Threat Scores

Comments that contain threats can disrupt a sense of security in the online community. For users who encounter this kind of language, even if only occasionally, threats can create a hostile environment, making some individuals hesitant to participate. This kind of language is particularly damaging because it creates an element of fear or intimidation, which prevents the Iain people from participating in open dialogue.

Threats, while rare, often attract significant attention and can increase tension in the comment column. When an Iain user reacts to threatening language, the discussion can shift from a primary topic to a debate focused on defending or condemning the behavior. This diversion contributes to a divided discussion, where the main focus shifts away from the content and instead dwells on managing or responding to conflict.

Generally, platforms take a zero-tolerance approach to threats, by implementing detection algorithms to quickly identify and address threat-containing language. Effective threat management

involves removing or tagging comments that are risky to community safety, as well as establishing clear community guidelines against threatening behavior. This practice is important to ensure that all users feel safe to participate in discussions.

The existence of threats, no matter how rare, also raises questions about the platform's role in promoting secure communication. Users are more likely to engage in discussions on platforms that they consider safe and well-supervised. Handling threats well can increase user trust, as it demonstrates the platform's commitment to protecting its community.

Although threats are rarely found in netizens' comments on the Liputan6 Youtube Channel regarding the 'Makan Siang Gratis' Program, the presence of threats can affect the atmosphere of discussion by creating fear or intimidation among users. While only a few comments contain threats, they can change the nature of interactions within the community, steer conversations away from productive discussions, and encourage further divisions in the digital public discourse in the comments section.

4. Conclusion

Toxicity Comment analysis in the comment column of the video discussing the Free Lunch Program on the Liputan6 YouTube channel showed that although most of the comments had a low level of toxicity, there were a number of comments that reached high levels in the categories of Toxicity, Severe Toxicity, Profanity, Identity Attack, Insult, and Threat. Comments that score high in this category indicate an aggressive, provocative, or even offensive response to a particular identity. The presence of these toxic comments, even in smaller quantities, can affect the overall mood of the discussion, trigger polarization, and create an environment that is less conducive to constructive dialogue.

Overall, the results of this analysis confirm the importance of content moderation on social media platforms to maintain the quality and peace of discussion. The presence of toxic comments that have the potential to disrupt the discussion environment shows that the role of moderation and technology such as those provided by Communalytic has become very relevant in helping platforms understand and manage public responses. With a better understanding of the distribution of toxicity in online discussions, policymakers, media managers, and platforms can take steps to create safer, more inclusive, and supportive discussion spaces for healthy engagement.

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