



The Influence of Buzzers on Attitude Polarization among TikTok Social Media Users

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History: Submitted/Received March 03, 2024 First Revised April 12, 2024 Accepted May 20, 2024 First Available online June 01, 2024 Publication Date June 05, 2024</p> <p>Keyword: Attitude, Buzzer, Confirmation bias, Media sosial, Polarization TikTok,</p>	<p>This study aims to determine the effect of exposure to buzzer content on attitude polarization among TikTok social media users, specifically students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UI) class of 2025. Using a quantitative approach and survey method, data were collected through an online questionnaire completed by 117 respondents. The research instrument covered three main aspects: intensity of TikTok use, exposure to buzzer content, and changes in opinions and attitudes leading to polarization. The results show that the majority of respondents use TikTok daily and actively consume content on opinion, social issues, and politics. Exposure to buzzer content is evident through the emergence of uniform messages, the use of emotional language, and content encouraging support for certain viewpoints. The findings also indicate that some users experience attitude strengthening, a tendency to reject dissenting views, and the potential for confirmation bias, although the level of polarization does not occur evenly across all respondents.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, Indonesian society has become closely intertwined with information technology. Social media, one form of this technology, has become a trend among various segments of the Indonesian population. Social media is a group of internet-based applications built on Web 2.0 ideology and technology, enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Arianto, 2020). The social media platforms we frequently use, such as Instagram, Twitter, Line, TikTok, and others, play a vital role in our lives. Social media is an online platform where users can easily participate, share, and create content, including blogs, social networks, wikis, forums, and virtual worlds (Rafiq

A., 2020). Social media, whose primary role is long-distance communication, has expanded to include various advanced functions.

A survey by the Association of Internet Service Providers (APJII) estimates that internet users in Indonesia will reach 80.66% by 2025. These results show an increase in internet users among the Indonesian population in 2024-2025 of 1.16% or equivalent to 8 million people, which was previously 79.50%. Reportal data noted that data regarding social media users increased by 37 million throughout the end of 2024 to the end of 2025, or grew 26 percent in a year, from this data the number of Indonesian social media users reached 180 million users, and 56.3 percent of them are women, while the remaining 43.7 percent are men (Kompastekno, 2025). Based on this survey, it can be concluded that the majority of teenagers and young adults, especially Indonesian women, have a large role in the use and development of social media today.

Social media users are likely familiar with the terms "Buzzer" or "Social Media Buzzer." The high number of social media users has given rise to influential communicators who can build a positive image, such as buzzers and influencers (Arianto, 2020). On social media platforms frequently visited by teenagers, comments often promote, introduce, and boast about trending products or topics. A buzzer is a person or group of people tasked with disseminating specific messages or information through social media, online forums, or other digital platforms (Trianto, 2023).

Initially, buzzers were only intended to promote a product, but as time has progressed, they have become a significant influence on individuals' perspectives. Political buzzers are no longer merely campaign supporters or propagandists, but have become strategic actors in shaping public opinion on a massive scale (Siregar et al., 2025). According to the Ministry of Finance, there are two types of buzzers: organic and paid. Organic Buzzers are individuals who voluntarily voice their opinions or defend an issue or figure due to their shared values or ideology. Paid Buzzers are actors who receive financial compensation to spread a particular narrative. For example, during the 2024 election, many buzzers made themselves visible by posting or commenting on social media posts like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, aiming to support their chosen candidate. They tend to be proud of and promote their chosen candidate to encourage social media users to also support their chosen candidate.

As the era develops, social media is no longer just for long-distance communication, but also as a place to discuss and express one's views. With the presence of buzzers on social media, public views can change to adapt to trending issues. Logical fallacies that occur in society are not solely due to a lack of formal education, but are influenced by the intensity of exposure to biased political narratives (Siregar et al., 2025). This condition has a significant impact on group views and opinions, not about the truth or falsity of facts, but on the conscious/unconscious influence of opinion by group members. People are influenced by the influence of public opinion, because if it worsens, it can trigger attitude polarization. Public polarization refers to the division of society into groups with very different and conflicting political views (Srikandi M., 2024).

2. METHODS

This study used a quantitative survey approach, focusing on describing the level of exposure of new students in the Faculty of Education (FIP) to buzzer content on TikTok and how it influences attitude polarization. This approach was chosen so that the data could be explained objectively through numbers, scores, and percentages. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms. The survey was divided into two main sections. The first page contained general statements regarding the relationship between buzzer activity and TikTok social media usage. This section aimed

to examine the daily usage patterns of new students in the Faculty of Education, particularly during academic activities. On the first page, respondents filled out general statements regarding the intensity of TikTok use according to their personal activities. On the second page, respondents filled out statements explaining their opinions regarding the relationship between buzzer activity and TikTok social media usage, which were then linked to their level of attitude polarization on the third page.

Each statement in both sections of the questionnaire used a Likert scale of 1-5, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The population in this study were new students at the Faculty of Education (FIP) at the Indonesian University of Education. The sample size was 117 respondents, a number deemed appropriate for a preliminary study and adapted to time constraints and respondents' access. The collected data was then processed using Microsoft Excel to calculate percentages, averages, and frequency distributions for each variable indicator. The analysis results were presented in tables and diagrams to simplify and clarify data interpretation and conclusion drawing.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1.1. Research Results

The following are the results of the study "The Influence of Buzzers on Attitude Polarization Among TikTok Social Media Users." The respondents were 1,150 students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UII), graduating class of 2025. Over 10% of the students participated, or 117. The study took place from November 22, 2025, to December 7, 2025. The questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms.

1.1.1. Respondent Characteristics

Based on the results of a descriptive demographic analysis of 117 students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, the intake of 2025 is presented in the following table and diagram.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution Analysis of Demographic Variables: Gender of Students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UI), Intake of 2025 (N=117)

Characteristics		f	%
Gender			
	Male	33	28,2%
	Female	84	71,8%
Total		117	100%

Based on the data analysis, the study respondents were predominantly female (84 students) (71.8%), compared to 33 male (28.2%).

Table 2: Frequency Distribution Analysis of Demographic Variables: Age of Students at the Faculty of Education, Indonesia University of Education, Class of 2025 (N=117)

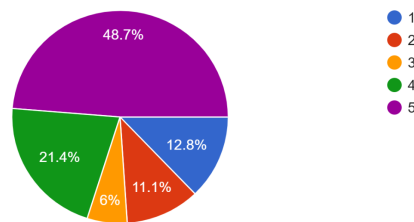
Usia	<18 Tahun	18	15,4%
	18-24 Tahun	99	84,6%

	25-34 Tahun	0	0%
	35-44 Tahun	0	0%
	>45 Tahun	0	0%
Total		117	100%

Based on the results of the data analysis, it shows that the majority of research respondents were aged 18-24 years, namely 99 students (84.6%), there were also respondents aged under 18 years, namely 18 students (15.4%), while there were no respondents aged 25 years and above (0%).

1.1.2. Distribution of Responses

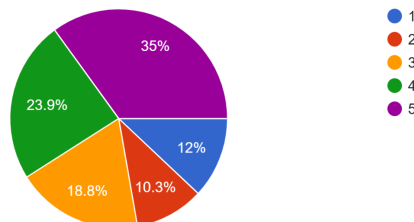
1) Intensity of TikTok Usage



a. I Use TikTok Every Day

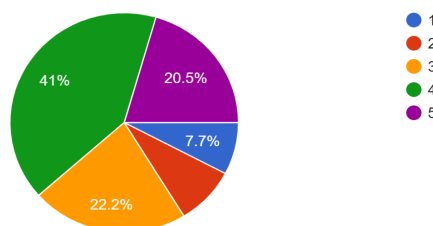
15 respondents (12.8%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I use TikTok every day," while 13 respondents (11.1%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 25 respondents (21.4%) stated that they agreed, and 57 respondents (48.7%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 7 respondents (6%) who answered neutral.

b. I spend a lot of time watching content on TikTok



14 respondents (12%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I spend a lot of time watching TikTok content," while 12 respondents (10.3%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 28 respondents (23.9%) stated that they agreed, and 41 respondents (35%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 22 respondents (18.8%) who answered neutral..

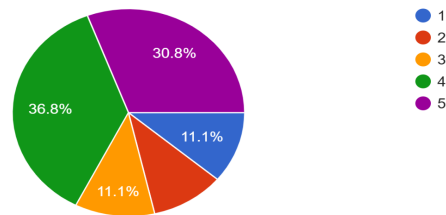
a. I often see opinion-based, social-issue, or political content on TikTok



9 respondents (7.7%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I often see opinionated, social, or political content on TikTok," while 10 respondents (8.5%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 48 respondents (41%) stated that they

agreed, and 24 respondents (20.5%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 26 respondents (22.2%) who answered neutral.

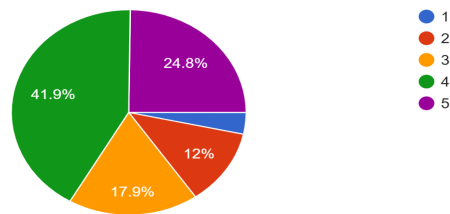
b. Tiktok is one of my sources of information about current issues



13 respondents (11.1%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "TikTok is one of my sources of information on current issues," while 12 respondents (10.3%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 43 respondents (36.8%) stated that they agreed, and 36 respondents (30.8%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 13 respondents (11.1%) who answered neutral.

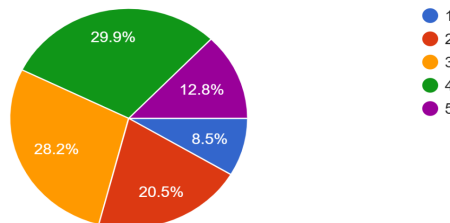
2) Exposure to Buzzer Content

a. I often see content on FYP (For Your Page) that has a uniform/same message even though it is uploaded by different accounts



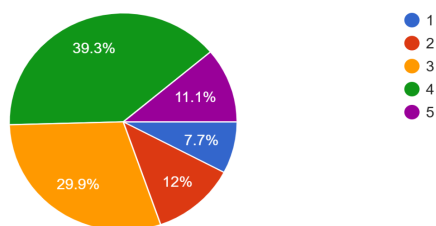
4 respondents (3.4%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "I often see content on FYP (For Your Page) that has a uniform/same message even though it is uploaded by different accounts," while 14 respondents (12%) stated that they disagreed. The data also shows that 49 respondents (41.9%) stated that they agreed, and 29 respondents (24.8%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 21 respondents (17.9%) who answered neutral.

b. Content containing calls to defend/attack one party/group appears repeatedly on my FYP (for your page)



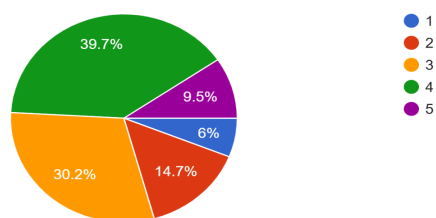
10 respondents (8.5%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "Content containing calls to defend or attack a party/group appears repeatedly on my FYP (For Your Page)," while 24 respondents (20.5%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 35 respondents (29.9%) stated that they agreed, and 15 respondents (12.8%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 33 respondents (28.2%) who answered neutral.

c. I feel that the content I see on TikTok often directs my opinion towards a certain point of view



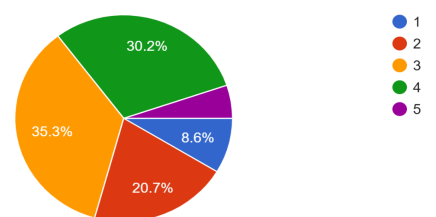
9 respondents (7.7%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "I feel that the content I see on TikTok often directs my opinion toward a particular point of view," while 14 respondents (12%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 46 respondents (39.3%) stated that they agreed, and 13 respondents (11.1%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 35 respondents (29.9%) who answered neutral.

d. I often see content that uses emotional and provocative words related to sensitive issues



7 respondents (6%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "I often see content that uses emotional and provocative words related to sensitive issues," while 17 respondents (14.7%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 46 respondents (39.7%) stated that they agreed, and 11 respondents (9.5%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 35 respondents (30.2%) who answered neutral.

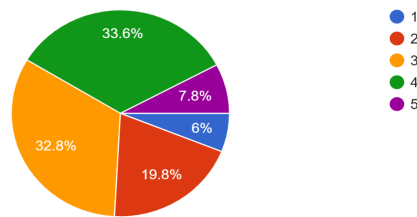
e. I spend a significant amount of time watching pro-attitudinal content (supporting my views) on TikTok



10 respondents (8.6%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "I spend significant time watching pro-attitudinal content (supporting my views) on TikTok," while 24 respondents (20.7%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 35 respondents (30.2%) stated that they agreed, and 6 respondents (5.2%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 41 respondents (35.3%) who answered neutral.

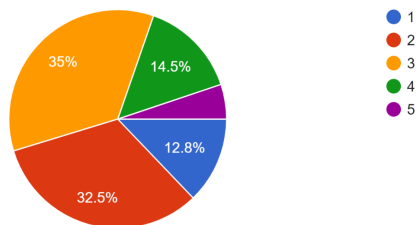
3) Influence on Opinion and Perception

a. After seeing content related to an issue on TikTok, my views became stronger and more powerful than before



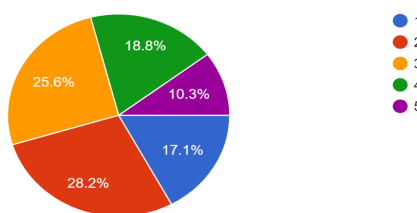
7 respondents (6%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement, "After seeing content related to an issue on TikTok, my views became stronger and more rigid than before," while 23 respondents (19.8%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 39 respondents (33.6%) stated that they agreed, and 9 respondents (7.8%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 38 respondents (32.8%) who answered neutral.

b. I tend to ignore or outright reject comments/content on TikTok that contradict my views



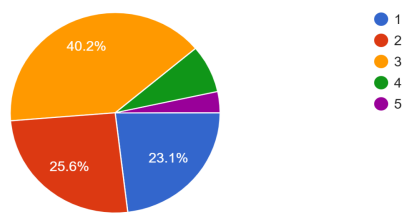
15 respondents (12.8%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I tend to ignore or immediately reject comments/content on TikTok that contradict my views," while 38 respondents (32.5%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 17 respondents (14.5%) stated that they agreed, and 6 respondents (5.1%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 41 respondents (35%) who answered neutral.

c. I feel reluctant to dialogue or interact with other users who have different views on TikTok



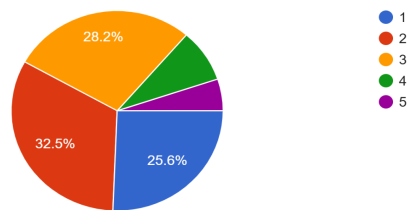
20 respondents (17.1%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I feel reluctant to engage in dialogue or interaction with other users who have different views on TikTok," while 33 respondents (28.2%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 22 respondents (18.8%) stated that they agreed, and 12 respondents (10.3%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 30 respondents (25.6%) who answered neutral.

d. I became more convinced that the side I support is completely right, and the opposing side is completely wrong, after seeing content on TikTok



27 respondents (23.1%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I became more convinced that the party I support is completely right, and the opposing party is completely wrong, after seeing TikTok content," while 30 respondents (25.6%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 9 respondents (7.7%) stated that they agreed, and 4 respondents (3.4%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 47 respondents (40.2%) who answered neutral.

e. I tend to only look for and believe information on TikTok that supports my views (Confirmation Bias Phenomenon)



30 respondents (25.6%) stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement "I tend to only look for and believe information on TikTok that supports my views (Confirmation Bias Phenomenon)," while 38 respondents (32.5%) stated that they disagreed. The data also showed that 10 respondents (8.5%) stated that they agreed, and 6 respondents (5.1%) stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, followed by 33 respondents (28.2%) who answered neutral.

4. DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a study targeting students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UI) class of 2025, it was found that out of 117 students, 33 were male (28.2%), and 84 were female (71.8%). This sample showed a significant imbalance in respondents, with more female respondents than male respondents. This suggests that women are more active in using TikTok than men. This is due to the assumption that women are more sensitive and emotional, requiring a place/person to exchange ideas. Social media provides this, making women feel comfortable pouring out their hearts (Fitri M. & Chairael L., 2019).

This study also showed that the majority of respondents (99 students) were aged 18-24. There were also 18 respondents under 18 (15.4%), while there were no respondents aged 25 or over (0%). This shows that the respondents are teenagers/young adults, the age of the respondents is quite specific, namely under 18 years to 24 years. Specifically, the majority of respondents are late teenagers/young adults who are experiencing an identity crisis or role confusion so they are easily exposed to buzzers on TikTok social media. The self-identity that teenagers seek is an effort to explain who they are, what their role is in society, whether they are a child or an adult, whether they can become a father or mother, whether they are able to be confident and overall will they

succeed or fail? (Fatmawaty R., 2017). In this condition, individuals will be more easily exposed to social media content that can be consciously or unconsciously contains buzzer content in it that can trigger attitude polarization.

4. 1 TikTok Usage Intensity

Based on the sample results, the frequency and duration of TikTok use by respondents were considered quite high. For the statement "I use TikTok every day," 25 respondents (21.4%) agreed, and 57 respondents (48.7%) strongly agreed. Furthermore, for the statement "I spend a lot of time watching TikTok content," 28 respondents (23.9%) agreed, and 41 respondents (35%) strongly agreed. The results showed that the majority of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with both statements, indicating that respondents agreed and acknowledged that TikTok is a social media platform that plays an important role and has become part of their routine.

Furthermore, based on the sample results, the exposure and function of opinion/issue content on TikTok were also considered quite high. For the statement, "I often see opinion, social issue, or political content on TikTok," 48 respondents (41%) agreed, and 24 respondents (20.5%) strongly agreed. Furthermore, with the statement "TikTok is one of my sources of information on current issues," 43 respondents (36.8%) agreed, and 36 respondents (30.8%) strongly agreed. This also shows that the majority of respondents chose to agree and strongly agree, so it can be concluded that the TikTok social media platform plays a major role in obtaining information about the respondents' own social/political issues. The development of TikTok in Indonesia is very interesting because of the diverse selection of content presented by TikTok creators, so users can freely choose content according to their wishes (Pardianti M. et al., 2022). Respondents are proven to make TikTok one of the important social media used to obtain information widely..

The results obtained from the four statements referring to the frequency and duration of TikTok use as well as exposure and function of opinion/issue content, that female respondents aged >18-24 years have a particular interest in TikTok social media, so they tend to spend their time watching TikTok content which they consider as a place to obtain information related to issues that occur widely. It was stated by Kompastekno 2025, from the data the number of Indonesian social media users reached 180 million users, and 56.3 percent of them are women, while the rest, namely 43.7 percent are men. The phenomenon of the increasing growth of TikTok social media users can be observed from a positive side, namely that it is starting to be widely used as an educational medium in this case providing information to the public, especially millennials and Gen Z as the most users (Bur R. et al., 2023). This data also shows that respondents consider TikTok social media as an important platform in their daily lives so they will always spend time watching the content of the social media.

4.2 Exposure to Buzzer Content

Based on the sample results with the statement "I often see content on FYP (For You Page) that has a uniform/same message even though it is uploaded by different accounts.", as many as 49 respondents (41.9%) chose to agree and as many as 29 respondents (24.8%) chose to strongly agree with this. This indicates a tendency for duplication of messages or dominant trends adopted by many content creators. This is also greatly influenced by the TikTok social media algorithm that encourages liked content to appear more often on TikTok's FYP (For Your Page). This algorithm uses various factors, such as user behavior, preferences, and previous interactions, to determine the content that will appear in each user's home feed (Chandra E., 2023).

Furthermore, Based on the sample results with the statement "Content containing calls to defend or attack one party/group appears repeatedly on my FYP (For Your Page).", as many as 33 respondents (28.2%) chose neutral and as many as 35 respondents (29.9%) chose agree. These two percentages of answer choices are dominant in the statement. This indicates that most users remain exposed to potentially divisive/partisan content. However, the high neutral score indicates that this experience is not shared equally by all TikTok users.

Furthermore, the sample results for the statement "I feel that the content I see on TikTok often steers my opinion toward a particular point of view." 35 respondents (29.9%) chose neutral, and 46 respondents (39.3%) agreed. This suggests the role of TikTok's algorithm, which tends to present consistent content initially but over time can potentially reinforce a single point of view, leading users to feel their opinions are being steered. Furthermore, the sample results for the statement "I often see content that uses emotional and provocative language related to sensitive issues," 35 respondents (30.2%) chose neutral, and 46 respondents (39.7%) agreed. This suggests that content that triggers emotions (such as anger or sympathy) receives more interaction and reach on TikTok. This also shows that content creators have the potential to upload similar content to increase virality and active audience interaction. The virality of content on TikTok is a phenomenon that cannot be separated from the power of the algorithm and very high user engagement. Viral content can spread exponentially in a short time, reaching millions of users from various parts of the world (Nasution F. et al., 2025). Furthermore, the sample results for the statement "I spend significant time watching pro-attitudinal content (supporting my views) on TikTok." Forty-one respondents (35.3%) chose neutral, and 35 respondents (30.2%) agreed. This indicates that respondents do not fully acknowledge that they spend significant time watching such content. TikTok offers the convenience of creating, editing, and sharing short videos with engaging effects and a robust recommendation algorithm. This phenomenon has made TikTok a primary medium for people, especially the younger generation, to express themselves and obtain information (Nasution F. et al., 2025). Although TikTok offers easy access to information, not all respondents spend time on it.

Based on these five statements, it can be concluded that the tendency for message duplication and TikTok's social media algorithm influence respondents' opinions in a particular direction. Public polarization refers to the division of society into groups with very different and conflicting political views (Srikandi M., 2024). However, in contrast to the polarization of public attitudes, it appears that not all respondents defend/insult opinions that are the same as/different from their own.

4.3 Influence on Opinion and Perception

Based on the sample results with the statement "After seeing content related to an issue on TikTok, my views have become stronger and more rigid than before.", as many as 38 respondents (32.8%) chose neutral and as many as 39 respondents (33.6%) chose agree. This indicates the existence of significant opinion manipulation on users caused by the TikTok social media algorithm. The TikTok algorithm has an important role in determining the content displayed to users, this algorithm takes into account various factors such as user preferences, previous interactions, content popularity and other factors (Putri A. & Nurhayati S., 2024) However, the high number of neutrals indicates that the impact of this opinion manipulation is not felt to the extreme by all users. Furthermore, based on the sample results with the statement "I tend to ignore or immediately reject comments/content on TikTok that contradict my views." as many as 38 respondents (32.5%) chose disagree and as many as 41 respondents (35.0%) chose

neutral. This shows that respondents tend to think openly so they can still accept comments/content that contradict themselves. This also indicates that respondents consciously avoid exposure to the effectiveness of TikTok's social media algorithm.

Furthermore, based on the sample results, with the statement, "I feel reluctant to dialogue or interact with other users who hold different views on TikTok," 33 respondents (28.2%) disagreed, and 30 respondents (25.6%) chose neutral. This indicates that the majority of respondents have broad perspectives and continue to accept and interact with users who hold differing views. The age of the respondents, who are predominantly 18-24, also significantly influences each individual's mindset, making it difficult to easily become reluctant to interact with others who hold differing opinions. The affective side that drives individuals to consciously and consistently apply cognitive skills is known as thinking dispositions (Aditomo A., 2019). Furthermore, based on the sample results, with the statement, "I became more convinced that the party I support is completely right, and the opposing party is completely wrong, after viewing content on TikTok," 30 respondents (25.6%) disagreed, and 47 respondents (40.2%) chose neutral. This indicates that the majority of respondents do not readily judge what they believe and what the opposite is. Respondents are also consciously reluctant to acknowledge extreme polarization.

Furthermore, based on the sample results, "I tend to only seek and believe information on TikTok that supports my views (Confirmation Bias Phenomenon)," 38 respondents (32.5%) disagreed, and 33 respondents (28.2%) were neutral. This indicates that respondents have a broad perspective, not only viewing content that reinforces their views. Respondents also consciously reject confirmation bias and remain open-minded in viewing content. Confirmation bias involves the tendency to support one's own opinion, ignore correct information, and dislike listening to opinions that contradict one's own (Naja F. & Kholifah N., 2020). Based on these five statements, it was found that buzzer content/content that repeatedly appears on TikTok does not significantly influence individual opinions and perceptions. This is largely influenced by the breadth of views and mutual respect experienced by individuals. Respondents consciously reject changes in attitude polarization. Polarization causes one group to believe that its views and principles are the most correct, while the opposing group is perceived as having the wrong political and moral views (Annas F. et al., 2019). This also demonstrates the respondents' broad mindset, making them less easily influenced by extreme TikTok content.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted on students from the Faculty of Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UI) class of 2025, the majority of whom were female and aged 18–24, comprehensive conclusions can be drawn. First, it was found that the intensity of TikTok use by respondents indicates that the platform functions not only as a medium for entertainment, but also as a source of information and a significant means of social interaction. Second, regarding exposure to buzzer content, most respondents had a high level of awareness of the efforts to sway opinion through repetitive content. However, the main point of this study confirms that despite high exposure to buzzer content on TikTok, this did not significantly influence user attitude polarization. These results indicate that the strong views and mutual respect held by students have proven to be fundamental factors and foundations capable of preventing and reducing efforts to polarize attitudes in the digital media realm.

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