

INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK USAGE ON SUSTAINABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ONWUKWALONYE, Benjamin C.

Department of Mass Communication, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu
gmbenochuks@gmail.com; 08067709826

ODOH, Miriam Chinemerem

Department of Mass Communication, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu
miriamodoh@gmail.com; 07032570770

WOGU, Rosemary K.

Department of Mass Communication, Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu
rosemarywogu28@gmail.com

Abstract

Social media platforms are now an integral part of life for most young people. There are growing concerns about the influence of the use of these platforms on various aspects of society. This study seeks to investigate the influence of TikTok on the pursuit of quality education which is number four among the Sustainable Development Goals. The study seeks to find out how students' exposure and use of the App impacts either positively or negatively on students' academic performance in Enugu Metropolis. This research aims to investigate the purpose for which university students use TikTok most, the extent to which TikTok is of academic assistance and the extent students are addicted to it and the implications for quality education. The study was anchored on technological determinism theory which holds that the advancement of technology defines and shapes the society. Survey research design was used while questionnaire was employed to generate data. Sample size of 369 was drawn from a population of 9,296 to participate in the study. Findings from this study reveal that students use TikTok for social engagements and entertainment. They rarely use the App for academic purposes. Their addiction to the App is a distraction to quality education. Based on the findings, the study recommends constant orientation of students to balance the use of the App. Lecturers should device ways to engage their students on social media apps like

TikTok. Students require regular counselling on how to minimize addiction to social media Apps, especially TikTok.

Keywords: Influence, TikTok, Sustainable Quality Education, Academic Performance

Introduction

Social media platforms since its emergence have become a popular means of communication especially among young people. Mbodila (2019) claims that the relevance of the platforms in today's digital culture may get people addicted to it in future. Social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter, Zoom, Skype, Yahoo Messenger, TikTok, Likee and Snapchat among others have become the primary channels for communication, interaction, and entertainment for most people. It has increased people's ability to take part in online communication through texting, blogging and other means (Rahmi & Othman, 2018).

Majority of young people's attention has switched from interpersonal relationships to online friendships which might have an effect on important tasks like writing and studying. TikTok among well-known social media applications stands out as the popular choice for creating short-form mobile videos with a significant followership. Introduced by Byte Dance in September 2016, TikTok is found accessible in more than 150 markets and 75 different languages (Lauren 2018). It enables users to produce and share videos with music, effects and sound bites that last between 15 and 60 seconds. The "duet" feature of TikTok allows users comment on other users' films and start a chain of answers.

According to Tamayo & Cruz (2019) recent data shows that TikTok have surpassed other social media platforms boasting around one billion active users per month. In Nigeria, TikTok accounts for 47.7% of the country's 34 million

social media users. It has significantly increased in popularity and has become the go-to social networking tool. Some experts claim that while moderate use of TikTok and others may not have a substantial influence on students' learning; excessive use can be harmful (Tamayo & Cruz, 2019). Therefore, there is worry among experts and many people that students are using these social media platforms excessively which is resulting in a loss in their study time (Wang *et al.*, 2020). Today, it is typical to see young people having informal discussions even in places that are meant to be official, like churches, mosques, and lecture halls. Some people are so absorbed in their conversations that they keep strolling down crowded streets.

Many students' everyday lives now include TikTok, and it is difficult for them to imagine what their lives would be like without it (Hasnain, 2017). Students check their social media accounts as soon as they get out of bed in the morning and regularly throughout the day until they go to bed. The prevalence of social networking among students has steadily increased over time. It serves as a means to connect with people, both on campus and among friends who are not attending the same educational institution. Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2017) noted that through social network students maintain social groups and an online presence throughout the day regardless of the financial or academic costs. As a result, their limited time for studying is jeopardized by their frequent internet activity.

Statement of the Problem

The major concern of the study is to ascertain how students' academic performance is affected as they devote more time scrolling through TikTok and equally creating their own contents to share on the platform. It has been observed that majority of young people use the app thus leading to a high risk of addiction. Academics have debated the potential positive and negative effects of social media usage on individuals.

This study thus seeks to uncover the effects which TikTok usage and addiction to it may have on students' academic performance and quality of

education in Enugu. It also raises the following questions on whether the app enhances the academic performance of students or if it serves as a distraction from achieving academic excellence?

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the purposes for which university students in Enugu metropolis use TikTok App?
2. To what extent can TikTok be of academic assistance to university students in Enugu metropolis?
3. To what extent can the use of TikTok be addictive and distractive to university students in Enugu metropolis?

TikTok

The foundation for the development of TikTok according to Yifang, Yuzhen and Shuai (2019) was laid by Music.ly, the predecessor of the app and a similar property of the Chinese company Byte Dance in September 2016. TikTok a platform with over 800 million users worldwide focuses on communication that employs playback, hilarious anecdote and mind-soothing content (Yu-Liang, Chun-Chin, & ShuMing 2019). Due to the trend's digital nature, most media practitioners have been forced to innovate by adapting to its distinctive message code and diverse audience (Sidorenko, 2020).

TikTok allows users create whatever types of videos they want and post it for anyone to see thus captivating their followers and causing them to be addicted as they would not want to get off the App (Mekler 2021; Ciplak 2020). TikTok thus has become one of the fastest growing apps and has continued to rise as it recorded more than 3 billion downloads worldwide as of 2022 (Dean, 2022).

TikTok Usage in Education

It is a known fact that TikTok since its inception has been used for entertainment purposes; users engage in trending challenges and creating content to gain followers and entertain them.

Nevertheless, TikTok has been employed by school for teaching and learning. M'antymaki & Riemer (2016) affirmed that the use of TikTok in education is believed to increase students' knowledge as it facilitates a knowledge-sharing environment. TikTok videos on the other hand engage students' attention, increase their interest in learning, and also improve their understanding of the subject (Bernard, 2021; Kalu et al, 2014). The app enables students to communicate with peers, influences their learning activities and allows them search for new kinds of communication through visually engaging materials (Rasheed et al., 2020; Khlaif & Salha, 2021).

Zaitun et al. (2021) stipulated that student writing and speaking ability is enhanced with the use of TikTok. This confirms the study of Yunus, Zakina and Suliman (2019) that primary school pupils in English Second Language (ESL) classroom who find writing challenging improved well on the skill through the use of TikTok. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Ilham (2022) disclosed that using TikTok for learning was effective as it served as a means for teaching students who could not come together. The short videos also served its purpose in assisting foreign language learners especially college students improve in their English communication skills (Rahmawati & Anwar 2022).

Studies on TikTok

Among researches conducted on TikTok relevance and its challenges on young people especially students' academic performance; Muzzy (2012) noted that despite the fact that TikTok makes it easier for users to connect with people; it has distanced them away from having face-to-face interactions among themselves. This is because they have made TikTok destinations their preferred mingling powers (Deore, 2012). On the impact of TikTok on teenagers, Crosby (2012) noted that social media has hindered students' ability to communicate and study effectively as they use it at least once every 15 minutes. On the other hand, Hui (2017) noted that the number of vulgar parody videos has increased on social media. This is evident as teens develop

video addictions in the same way thus having a negative impact on their physical and mental health.

Stressing on the relationship of social media and the academic performance of students, Herath (2020) affirmed that majority of UvaWellassa University of Sri Lanka students spend more than two hours per day on social media while lesser number of them were addicted to TikTok. The study also revealed that although TikTok has a positive effect on students' creativity and mental health, it has a negative impact on their academic performance as they spend more time watching and posting videos on TikTok. Mekler (2021) further revealed that the increased usage of TikTok among students from Bridgewater State University and UMass Amherst distract them from their academic work as they pay more attention to TikTok app other than completing their schoolwork. Okpongpong and Bassey (2023) disclosed that TikTok had a negative impact on Ritman University's Mass Communication students' academic performance.

Nevertheless, Ling (2016) x-rayed on the usefulness of educational short videos as it helps improve users' fundamental life skills and study requirements by covering a wide range of subjects. The brief video applications equally support students and school through a consolidated structure. Consequently, these brief videos on TikTok aid in stress reduction and broaden the students' perspective on life as it can actually convey a positive vibe (Zhi, 2018). Meanwhile Haruna et al. (2022) noted that in as much as students in Bauchi State are highly exposed to the use of smartphones; it is beneficial to their academic performance. Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) opined that student in Thailand's Phanang-Phakerng School showed a positive impact towards the use of TikTok application as watching English videos lesson increased their learning outcomes in English vocabulary. Similarly, Lialikhova (2014) opined that students are usually enthusiastic about learning English on TikTok. This is evident as the students use the app to practice English with friends or teachers. This finds its relation to the study of BSED-Math students, Dipolog campus by Balanay, Jumalon,

and Sandueta (2023) who revealed that social media platforms have a positive impact on their academic performance.

Theoretical Framework

Technological Determinism theory

Technological determinism theory as stated by Hauer (2017) was coined by Thorstein Veblen who proposed that technology in any given society defines its nature thereby becoming a driving force of culture and change in the society. The theory provides a causative link between technology and a society's nature and equally gives explanation as to who or what could have a controlling power in human affairs (Kline, 2015). As stipulated by Onwukwalonye, Odoh and Onoh (2024) the manner to which young people engage and communicate with one another is shaped and influenced by the current and available social media technologies.

The theory finds its relationship with the study on the basis that advancement in social media apps like TikTok could shape students' lifestyle, behaviours, values and attitude which in turn may influence their academic performance and quality of educational pursuit. The study acknowledges the reciprocal relationship between technology and society by emphasizing more on the broader social and cultural implications of its advancements.

Methodology

The study employed the survey research design while questionnaire was used to elicit information on how addictive TikTok can be, and its possible impact on the academics of students in Enugu State University of Science and Technology and Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu whose population was found to be 9,296. Using Wimmer and Dominick, a sample size of 369 respondents was achieved while the multistage sampling technique was used for the selection of respondents from the aforementioned universities

The universities in Enugu Metropolis were clustered together in stage one and thereafter in

the second stage, the researcher randomly selected two universities to represent the entire universities in the metropolis. In the third and fourth stage, two faculties and departments were selected respectively. In stage five, the selected six departments were used to divide the sample size - 369 to arrive at the number of respondents selected for each department ($369/8=46$) who have access to TikTok.

To test the reliability of the measuring instrument, the researcher used the Cronbach Alpha which gave 0.76 as the internal consistency meanwhile the mean analysis was employed for the data analysis.

Result

The data collected was analyzed to correspond with each research question however 365 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 369 copies shared to the respondents. Thereafter the mean analysis was used to analyze the items whereby the decision rule states thus:

Decision Rule: *If the calculated mean is equal or greater than the criterion mean (2.5), then the decision is accepted but if the calculated mean is lower than the criterion mean (2.5), the decision is rejected.*

Research Question One: What are the purposes for which university students in Enugu Metropolis use TikTok app?

Table 1: Distribution on the purpose of TikTok usage

Option	S A	A	D	S D	Tot al	Me an	Decisi on
I use TikTok several times	20 3	99	43	20	365	3.3	Accept ed
I watch and create videos on TikTok less than an hour	22	68	88	18 7	365	1.7	Reject ed
I use TikTok for meeting new people and to socialize with my friends	13 1	11 0	84	40	365	2.9	Accept ed

I use TikTok for pleasure, entertainment and relaxation	92	13	57	79	365	2.6	Accepted
I use TikTok for love and relationship	95	12	65	76	365	2.6	Accepted
I use TikTok to learn new fashion styles, dance and music	84	14	78	59	365	2.6	Accepted
I use TikTok to increase my followers and follow my favourite celebrities/content creators	101	10	89	70	365	2.6	Accepted
I use TikTok for academic learning	85	75	12	80	365	2.4	Rejected
Average Mean						2.5	Accepted

The analysis above indicates that at a mean value of 2.5, the students confirmed their extensive use of TikTok application for different purposes.

Research Question Two: To what extent can TikTok be of academic assistance to university students in Enugu metropolis?

Table 2: Distribution on the extent of TikTok assistance-ship in academic

Option	S A	A	D	S D	Tot al	Mea n	Decisio n
TikTok app provides opportunities for students to learn the courses taught in the university	91	99	110	65	365	2.5	Accepted
TikTok help students conduct research on issues they are studying in the university	72	93	118	82	365	2.4	Rejected

TikTok provide a platform to promote collaboration and peer learning among university students in Enugu metropolis	90	85	106	84	365	2.4	Rejected
I use TikTok for online lectures	78	95	126	66	365	2.5	Accepted
Lecturers use TikTok to deliver lectures and assignments	76	109	112	68	365	2.5	Accepted
Average Mean						2.4	Rejected

From the result, the students at an average mean of 2.4 disclosed that TikTok has not been of academic assistance to them.

Research Question Three: To what extent can the use of TikTok be addictive and distractive to university students in Enugu metropolis?

Table 3: Distribution of the extent TikTok usage is addictive and distractive

Option	SA	A	D	S D	Tota l	Mea n	Decisio n
Using TikTok can encroach into students' study time, thereby distracting them from studying when they should.	127	88	67	55	365	2.7	Accepted
Using TikTok can cause a student	116	93	73	85	365	2.6	Accepted

to postpone doing an assignment to a later time.							
Students can be distracted by watching videos on TikTok while lectures are on going	157	88	67	55	365	2.9	Accepted
Some videos students watch on TikTok can put one in a mood that is not convenient for academic studies	58	170	92	45	365	2.6	Accepted
The desire to meet a set target on TikTok make students overlook their academic work	151	102	62	50	365	2.9	Accepted
Average Mean						2.7	Accepted

The result shows that at a mean value of 2.7, TikTok was found to be distractive to the students as they are so much attached to the use of the application thereby causing an excessive addiction.

Discussion of Findings

A. The purposes for which university students in Enugu Metropolis use TikTok app

The students have a high exposure to and usage of TikTok. They watch and create contents to be

posted on the app for more than one hour daily. Their usage can be confirmed with their different engagements on the app to socialize, get entertained, learn about current trend (fashion styles, music and dance) and increase their followership. The implication of this finding is that students put TikTok to many uses apart from studying their books; this is to say that the students are actually goal oriented with the above-mentioned reasons.

Crosby (2012) confirms that students often use social media for at least once every 15 minutes. Herath (2020) affirmed that majority of UvaWellassa University of Sri Lanka students spend more than two hours per day on social media while lesser number of them were addicted to TikTok.

This also agrees with Muzzy (2012) who noted that despite the fact that TikTok makes it easier for users to connect with people; it has distanced them away from having a face-to-face interaction with themselves. This is because they have made TikTok destinations their preferred mingling powers (Deore, 2012).

B. The extent TikTok can be of academic assistance to students

Based on the result, it could be deduced that the extent to which TikTok provide academic assistance to students was found to be very low. This is evident as the students barely use it for research, promote collaboration and learning with their peers rather they deplore the app for other activities.

This can be contrasted with the findings of Ling (2016) who noted that educational short videos help to improve users' fundamental life skills and study requirements by covering a wide range of subject thereby supporting students and schools through a consolidated structure. Similarly, it has been noted that the brief videos on TikTok also aid in stress reduction and broaden the students' perspective on life as it can actually convey a positive vibe (Zhi, 2018). TikTok assistance ship towards educational purpose could also been seen in the studies of Lialikhova (2014) and

Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) who noted that TikTok application was used in teaching students' English vocabulary thus making them enthusiastic about learning English. Balanay, Jumalon, and Sandueta (2023) also affirmed that TikTok has aided teachers and students' in Dipolog campus learning process of Mathematics. It can be concluded that while TikTok provides possibilities of academic aid, students in Enugu metropolis choose to use the app more for other purposes other than academics.

C. To what extent can the use of TikTok be addictive and distractive to university students in Enugu metropolis?

TikTok was found to be distractive to the students as they attached so much importance to the use of the application thereby causing excessive addiction. Using the app encroaches into their study time because they tend to postpone doing an assignment to a later time and also watch videos on TikTok while lectures are on-going.

This corresponds with the findings of Crosby (2012) who noted that social media has hindered students' ability to communicate and study effectively because they spend quality time on the app. Similarly, with the increase of vulgar parody videos, the teens have developed video addictions thereby having a negative impact on their physical and mental health (Hui, 2017). Although TikTok has a positive effect on students' creativity and mental health, Herath (2020) disclosed that it equally has a negative impact on their academic performance as they spend more time watching and posting videos on TikTok.

Mekler (2021) further revealed that the increased usage of TikTok among students from Bridgewater State University and UMass Amherst distract them from their academic work as they pay more attention to TikTok app other than completing their schoolwork. This addiction to the app also affects and has a negative impact on the academic performance of Mass Communication students in Ritman University (Okpongpong & Bassey, 2023).

On the contrary, Haruna et al. (2022) believes that in as much as students in Bauchi State are highly exposed to the use of smartphones; it is beneficial to their academic performance as they have shown academic excellence. Rahmawati and Anwar (2022) opined that student in Thailand's Phanang-Phakerng School showed a positive impact towards the use of TikTok application as watching English videos lesson increased their learning outcomes in English vocabulary. Students are usually enthusiastic about learning English and Mathematics on TikTok as they use the app to practice English with their teachers and peers thereby increasing their academic performance (Lialikhova, 2014; Balanay et al. 2023).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Numerous studies have discovered a direct connection between youth education and social media. The benefits and drawbacks of using social media have been extensively studied. The current study's conclusions indicate that there is a bad correlation between TikTok usage and academic success in Enugu metropolis. A student's ability to complete work for their classes is impacted by how much time they spend on TikTok because they lose track of time as they play more on the app.

Based on the findings, the study made the following recommendations:

1. Since students are actively engaged on TikTok for other purposes other than academics, lecturers should come up with creative ways to engage their students with academic contents on apps like the TikTok. This can promote the use of the app for educational purposes and not only for entertainment, relationship and pleasure purposes.
2. Students need to be enlightened more on how to utilize TikTok for educational activities to improve in their academics since it has been proven that the app contains educational contents that could help the students in educational pursuit.

3. As it has been found that TikTok usage can be very addictive, there is urgent need to train students to inculcate healthy social media (especially TikTok) practices and habits to minimize addiction.

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