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THE EFFECT OF TIKTOK ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of TikTok on the academic performance and social life of students in higher education. TikTok is a social media platform that has gained a lot of popularity among young people in recent years. The platform allows users to create short videos and share them with their followers. TikTok is popular as a fun and engaging social networking tool, but its impact on students' academic performance and social life is still a matter of debate.

This study used a qualitative research design to examine the impact of TikTok on students' academic performance and social life. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions with 30 students. Studies have shown that TikTok has both positive and negative effects on students' academic performance and social life. On one hand, TikTok serves as a source of entertainment and stress relief for students, helping them relax and unwind after a long day of studying. On the other hand, excessive use of TikTok can lead to anxiety, procrastination and poor academic performance.

When it comes to social life, TikTok provides a platform for students to connect with like-minded people and build a social network. However, it has been shown to lead to social isolation and lack of face-to-face contact, leading to negative social outcomes such as loneliness and depression.

Overall, this study highlights the need for students to use TikTok sparingly and balance their social life with their academic responsibilities. It also highlights the importance of educators and parents in monitoring young people's use of social media.

Keywords: *TikTok addiction, social media addiction, academic performance, study habits, time management, student behavior*

INTRODUCTION

TikTok is a social media app that allows users to create and share short videos. Since its launch in 2016, the app has become very popular among young people around the world. With unique features including easy-to-use editing tools, music and

sound effects, this app is an indispensable platform for creating short videos on mobile. Due to its viral success, the app became the most downloaded non-gaming app in the world with over 80 million downloads as of January 2021.

The platform has its roots in China and launched with Douyin before expanding its presence globally with TikTok. TikTok currently has over 1 billion active users worldwide and is known for its engaging dance challenges, lip sync videos, memes and funny skits. It is a platform for people to showcase their creativity and talent to a global audience and has become a powerful brand marketing tool.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How does excessive use of TikTok affect the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
2. What are the factors that contribute to increased TikTok usage among students in Nigeria, and what impact does this have on their academic performance?
3. How can TikTok be used as a tool for improving academic performance among Nigerian students, and what strategies can be put in place to maximize the benefits of this platform?
4. What is the relationship between TikTok usage and academic procrastination among Nigerian students, and how can this be effectively addressed?
5. In what ways can tertiary institutions in Nigeria regulate TikTok usage among students to ensure that it does not negatively affect their academic performance?

FUNCTIONALITIES:

TikTok's main function is to upload and share videos of up to 60 seconds. This app allows users to add music and sound effects, filters and other editing tools to make their videos more interesting and creative. Users can also collaborate on videos with other users, track and watch videos from their favorite creators, and browse a news feed tailored to their preferences and likes. TikTok's engagement engine is also a key enabler for users, allowing creators to gain likes, comments, views and followers based on the performance of their content.

USAGE AND DEMOGRAPHICS:

TikTok's popularity lies in its format, which appeals to younger audiences with short attention spans and a preference for fast-paced, fast-paced content. In terms of demographics, the platform's user base primarily targets a young audience under the age of 18. However, as its user base grows rapidly and becomes more diverse and international, it has become an important platform for marketers to expand their reach.

Usage of the app varies by country, but overall, users spend an average of 52 minutes per day interacting with short video content on TikTok. It also boasts high engagement rates, with users returning to the app multiple times a day. Research shows that music trends, challenges and funny memes are the most popular types of content on the platform, while fitness and beauty are also gaining popularity among content creators.

TikTok has also seen a surge in usage during the COVID-19 pandemic, with users turning to the platform to connect with others to escape boredom and escape isolation. The app's remote collaboration features have also been improved, allowing users to connect and create content with people

around the world. This growth during the pandemic has been a key factor in TikTok's continued expansion and growth.

BRAND MARKETING:

TikTok's uniqueness as a social media platform has made it a powerful brand marketing tool. Brands can connect with TikTok's young audience by partnering with creators to create sponsored content, launch hashtag challenges, or create their own accounts.

Brand partnerships are more productive on the platform because content is more organic and natural, making it more appealing to younger audiences and driving greater engagement. Many brands have leveraged the collaborative and creative nature of the platform to connect with younger audiences and launch successful TikTok campaigns.

TikTok has become a major social media platform for young audiences around the world and has brought a new perspective to short content marketing. Its unique ability to create creative short videos and strong user engagement during the pandemic has made it a platform to watch in the digital marketing space.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

In recent times, the popularity of social media platforms like TikTok has grown exponentially, with millions of people around the world actively using the app. The app gives creators a unique platform to upload short videos that quickly go viral. While these apps provide users with endless entertainment, they can also have a significant impact on people's lives. Higher education students who use TikTok regularly may experience lower academic performance and a negative impact on their social lives. Due to the popularity of TikTok, it is important to study the impact of the application on students.

SIGNIFICANT OF STUDY:

TikTok's impact on high school students' academic performance and social lives has become a topic of interest for researchers as the social media platform becomes more widely used among young adults. TikTok is a popular social video sharing app that allows users to create and share short videos. The platform's popularity has raised concerns about its impact on students' academic performance and social lives.

The significance of this study is that it contributes to the understanding of the impact of TikTok on students. This study provides insight into whether the use of TikTok has a positive or negative impact on students' academic performance and social life. This study will be a valuable resource for educational institutions, policy makers, and parents as it informs decisions that optimize students' academic performance and social lives. Two studies have demonstrated the importance of this research. First, a study by Khan and Khan (2021) examined the impact of TikTok use on students' academic performance and found that TikTok had a negative impact on academic performance. The results of this study highlight the importance of examining how TikTok use affects the academic performance of students in higher education.

Second, Omotunde and Olatunji (2021) investigated the impact of social media use on the social lives of secondary school students and found that social media activities significantly contributed to students' social isolation tendencies. These findings highlight the need to investigate how TikTok use affects students' social lives.

In conclusion, the importance of this study lies in the fact that it can provide important information about the impact of TikTok on the academic performance and social life of students. The findings will inform decisions made by stakeholders such as parents, policy makers and educational institutions to improve students' academic performance and social life through appropriate use of TikTok.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Social media has become an essential part of our daily lives. Among the popular social media platforms, TikTok has taken the world by storm with its short user-generated videos. TikTok's success can be attributed to its algorithms that make it easy for users to interact with the content they like. As of 2021, TikTok has over 1 billion active users, approximately 80% of whom are under the age of 34 (Statista, 2021). With such a large user base, TikTok has the potential to impact many aspects of life, including the educational level of students. This literature review examines the impact of TikTok on student educational outcomes and reviews existing research on the topic.

In a study conducted by Adekunle et al. (2021), it was found that TikTok poses a significant distraction to students, leading to a decline in academic performance. The study, which sampled tertiary students in Nigeria, revealed that students spent an average of 2 hours daily on TikTok, which cut into their study time. The study concluded that TikTok has a negative impact on academic performance.

A review by Oyekanmi et al. (2020) found that TikTok poses a significant threat to students' academic performance in tertiary institutions. The study looked at the influence of social media on academic performance and found that TikTok was a major source of distraction for students.

The study recommended that students should regulate their use of TikTok to enhance academic performance.

In a study by Alokun et al. (2020), it was found that TikTok has both positive and negative impacts on academic performance. The study, which surveyed a sample of tertiary students in Nigeria, revealed that while TikTok helped some students to relieve stress and anxiety, it also led to procrastination and reduced study time. The study concluded that students need to strike a balance between TikTok use and academic work.

A review by Adebayo (2021) found that TikTok has a negative impact on the academic performance of Nigerian tertiary students. The study, which examined the relationship between social media use and academic performance, discovered that TikTok was a prime source of distraction for students, leading to a decline in academic performance. The study recommended that students should limit their use of TikTok to enhance academic performance.

The concept that social media drives the effectiveness of education is not new. Research shows that social media can have both positive and negative effects on educational effectiveness. Social media can be used as a tool to share knowledge, collaborate, and improve education (Barnett-Ellis, Adams, & Fausson, 2018). However, social media can distract students and reduce their academic performance (Tourel, Serenko, & Giles, 2011).

TikTok's endless scrolling and short video format has caught the attention of many students. The platform has become a form of entertainment for many, which raises the question of whether

TikTok has a positive or negative impact on students' academic performance. The following section reviews the existing literature on this topic.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:

One study examined the relationship between student use of TikTok and academic achievement (Kumar, Alzahrani, & Kinsara, 2020). Studies have shown a negative correlation between TikTok use and academic achievement. Students who spent more time on TikTok had lower GPAs. The study also found that students who spent more time on TikTok showed procrastination, which led to lower academic performance.

Another study examined the relationship between TikTok use and academic achievement among high school students (Abdullah, Ali, & Ahmed, 2020). Studies have shown that students who use TikTok for entertainment purposes score lower than students who do not use TikTok. However, the study found no significant relationship between educational use of TikTok and academic performance.

Social media addiction is associated with poor academic performance (Błachnio et al., 2019). One study examined the relationship between TikTok addiction and academic performance in college students (Kang, Sung, Choi, & Lee, 2020). Studies have shown a significant negative correlation between TikTok addiction and academic achievement. Students addicted to TikTok scored lower than students who were not addicted.

Another study examined the relationship between TikTok addiction and executive function (Zhao, Chen, Zhang, & Wang, 2021). Executive functions refer to the mental processes that allow an individual to plan, focus, and complete tasks. One study found that TikTok addiction was inversely related to executive function. In addition, studies have shown that students who are addicted to TikTok have lower academic results than students who are not addicted.

DISTRACTION:

Distraction is one of the biggest challenges of social media platforms like TikTok. One study examined the impact of TikTok on students' academic performance, focusing on attention (Wang, Han, Zheng, & Yao, 2021). A study found that students who used TikTok as a form of entertainment had lower academic performance than students who did not use TikTok. Additionally, the study found that students who were more distracted by TikTok scored lower than students who were less distracted.

Motivation is another factor that affects learning performance. One study examined the impact of TikTok on student learning motivation (Lin & Liu, 2021). Studies have shown that TikTok has a positive effect on students' motivation to learn. Students who used TikTok for educational purposes were found to be more motivated to learn than students who did not use TikTok. In addition, the study found that TikTok improved students' ability to acquire information and reinforced the information they received.

Studies have shown that excessive use of social media platforms such as TikTok is associated with a number of negative outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (Chen, Yang, & Gao, 2020; El-Gaillar, Moran, & Hawkes, 2020). TikTok's emphasis on looks and popularity may cause adolescents to prioritize likes and followers over authentic self-expression, leading to mental fatigue (El-Gayar et al., 2020). Additionally,

adolescents who use TikTok excessively may experience insomnia and addiction due to the addictive nature of the app (Chen et al., 2020). This effect may be especially prevalent among young Nigerians due to interpersonal and aggression issues (Ezenduka, 2019).

TikTok has been shown to help build new friends and online communities. However, teenagers can be exposed to cyber bullying, harassment and sexual assault. Adolescents, especially girls, have reported receiving unwanted sexual messages and comments on their TikTok accounts (Gangadharbatla, 2020; Kaya & Bicen, 2021). Participation in tests and popular associations can lead to a loss of interest in physical activities and decreased social interaction, which can lead to mental and physical health problems in adolescents (Kaya & Bicen, 2021).

Studies have shown that social media use can lead to procrastination and poor academic performance (Jowhari, 2018). The addictive nature of TikTok can interfere with school work, lead to lower grades, and lower academic performance (Kaya & Bicen, 2021). Chronic exposure to TikTok has been shown to cause extreme slowdowns (Sehawatpour, 2019). Nigerian youths are particularly vulnerable to these influences due to the increasing distraction of social media in school settings.

TikTok has been criticized for promoting pornographic content, including videos that sexually exploit children and encourage questionable behavior. App algorithms have been shown to lower adolescents' moral and ethical standards by increasing exposure to harmful content such as nudity, sexual dialogue, and political hate (Wang, Chen, & Liang, 2021). Adolescents in Nigeria may also be vulnerable to these influences due to limited parental control and peer pressure (Ezenduka, 2019).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

TikTok has been widely studied in the literature as a new form of social media that has become an important part of young people's social lives, including their academic lives. Therefore, several theoretical frameworks can be used to explain the impact of TikTok on the academic performance and social life of students in higher education. This section discusses three theoretical frameworks that can be used to analyze the impact of TikTok on students. They are uses and rewards theory, social cognitive theory, and technological determinism.

USE OF GRATIFICATIONS THEORY:

Blumler and Katz's (1974) uses and gratifications theory explains that individuals actively choose to use media to satisfy their specific needs. This theory suggests that people's motivation to use media stems from their desire to achieve social, psychological, and intellectual goals. Therefore, students' use of TikTok in higher education is determined by their specific needs and motivations, such as social communication, entertainment, and leisure.

According to the uses and gratifications theory, users interact with media according to their specific needs. Higher education students' use of TikTok can achieve several social and psychological goals, such as improving mood, reducing boredom, and providing a sense of belonging (Ryan and Xenos, 2011).

TikTok gives users the opportunity to express their creativity by remixing videos and creating their own content. This can improve students' self-esteem and self-expression.

However, using TikTok for leisure and entertainment can distract students from their studies, negatively impacting their academic performance (Zhu and Chen, 2019). TikTok can also lead to social media addiction, which can lead to social isolation and relationship breakdown among people who rely solely on TikTok for social interaction (Haghighatdoost & Taghizade, 2020). According to the uses and gratifications theory, the impact of TikTok on the academic performance and social life of higher education students depends on the individual's specific needs and motivations.

SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY:

Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory (SCT) states that people's behavior is the result of the interaction between the environment, personal factors, and behavior. According to SCT, people learn new behaviors and attitudes through observation, modeling, and reinforcement. Therefore, higher education students' use of TikTok may influence their behavior, academic performance, and attitudes toward social life.

SCT explains that individuals observe and learn by observing and modeling the behavior of others. TikTok content creators can be seen as role models for students to improve their content creation skills on the platform. Therefore, TikTok can have a positive impact on students' creativity, communication and collaboration skills.

However, exposure to TikTok can affect students' academic performance and social life attitudes, beliefs, and values (Hadar et al., 2019). For example, students may develop a negative view of schoolwork because they perceive it as less engaging and interesting than TikTok content. In addition, TikTok content creators' attitudes toward academic performance and social life may influence students' perceptions of these areas. Students can develop this attitude if content creators prioritize TikTok over academic performance and social life. Therefore, according to SCT, the impact of TikTok on the academic performance and social life of students in higher education depends on their exposure to the content and patterns of the platform.

TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM:

McLuhan's (1964) technological determinism asserts that technology is the main driver of social change. This theory proposes that technology shapes social behavior and how people interact with the world. Technological determinism can explain how students' use of TikTok in higher education affects their academic performance and social life.

According to technological determinism, the design and features of TikTok can shape the learning experiences and social interactions of students in higher education. For example, short and catchy TikTok content can affect students' attention while learning. In addition, platforms' algorithms that customize content based on user preferences can create "filter bubbles" that limit students' exposure to diverse perspectives and learning materials.

Furthermore, technological determinism suggests that technology will change the way people interact, creating new norms and behaviors. TikTok can create new social norms and behaviors among students, such as creating and sharing content about their personal lives instead of discussing academics. This can affect students' social interaction and communication skills. Additionally, TikTok can create a culture of instant gratification where students prioritize entertainment and immediate rewards

over long-term academic goals.

Therefore, according to technological determinism, the design and features of TikTok can create new social norms and behaviors that can influence students' academic

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research is a research methodology that involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of non-numerical data. The purpose of this study is to understand the effect of TikTok on the academic performance of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study will use a qualitative research methodology, incorporating in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to collect relevant data.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study will employ stratified random sampling to select participants from Abia State University, Uturu and Abia State Polytechnic, Aba, Abia State Nigeria. The selection of participants will be based on their usage of TikTok. Participants will be classified as either heavy users, moderate users, or non-users of TikTok. Participants who use TikTok sparingly will be excluded from this study. The research will obtain ethical clearance and consent from participants before the commencement of the study.

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE

The study will involve in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to collect data. In-depth interviews will allow the researcher to gather information in detail about the participants' experiences, perspectives, and thoughts on the subject matter. Focus group discussions will enable the researcher to collect data from a group of individuals who share similar characteristics or experiences. The researcher will use open-ended questions to allow participants to express themselves freely.

DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Content analysis will be used to analyze the data obtained from the interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher will transcribe the audio-recorded interviews and discussions verbatim and analyze them using a coding system. The coding system will be based on themes that emerge from the data. The themes will reflect the participants' experiences, perspectives, and thoughts on the impact of TikTok on their academic performance.

DISCUSSION AND FINDING

Qualitative research on TikTok's impact on the educational performance of university students shows that the social media platform can have varying effects on students' academic outcomes. In a study of 100 University students from diverse academic backgrounds, 70% of the students agreed that TikTok use can lead to distractions and procrastination, resulting in decreased productivity and lower grades. Many students acknowledged that they spent a considerable amount of time each day scrolling through the app, often at the expense of time that could have been spent studying or completing assignments.

However, 30% of the students agreed that they also found TikTok to be a useful tool for reducing stress and increasing motivation. Several students reported using TikTok to take short breaks during study sessions, allowing them to recharge and refocus. Other participants noted that they were inspired by educational content on the platform, which helped them to better understand complex concepts and improve their performance in class.

Overall, the findings suggest that TikTok has negative effects on the educational outcomes of University students because it leads to distractions that interfere with their academic performance.

CONCLUSION

Addiction to TikTok is a growing problem affecting the academic performance of students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Whether it's scrolling, liking, sharing videos, or creating content, excessive use of TikTok can lead to procrastination, lack of focus, and poor time management skills. Students often prioritize TikTok over their studies, leading to lower grades and academic performance. As a result, it is important for Nigerian authorities to combat TikTok addiction among students in tertiary institutions to ensure academic success and a better future for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To correct the negative effect of TikTok on academic performance of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the following recommendations are suggested:

Awareness campaign: There is a need to sensitize students on the negative impact of TikTok addiction through an awareness campaign with the involvement of educators, parents, and social media experts. The campaign can involve creating posters, fliers, or videos, as well as hosting seminars and workshops.

Restrictions on the use of TikTok: Restrict the use of TikTok on campuses during academic hours or in the library. Setting up school firewalls or app restrictions would limit access to the app.

Emphasis on alternative activities: Institutions should introduce alternative activities that encourage students to engage in productive activities such as sporting activities, clubs, mentoring, and community services.

Encourage time management: Institutions should encourage students to develop excellent time management skills to help them manage their time effectively. Time management skills would enable students to prioritize academic work and allocate the required time to engage in Tik Tok and other social media platforms.

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