Original Research Paper

The Rise of TikTok during the Pandemic:
Association between TikTok Consumption and Students' Engagement

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Abstract: TikTok has been one of the most used Social Networking Services (SNS) worldwide. It has grown into a platform with a broad range of content, including sports, fashion, performing arts, and education, encouraging learners to join the community. In this, this descriptive-correlational aimed to determine the relationship between TikTok Utilization and the Level of Engagement of BPeA students of the City College of Angeles. After gathering data from 103 respondents through an online survey, the findings revealed that the BPeA students undergoing online classes use the TikTok application moderately and responsibly. Also, the level of students' engagement during online classes was found to be very high. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was observed between TikTok utilization and students' engagement. Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that the Institute of Education, Arts, and Sciences (IEAS), in partnership with the College Guidance Office (CGO), collaborate on providing webinars or trainings on how SNS such as TikTok can be a helpful tool or distraction at the level of engagement of the students. Additionally, instructors/professors may also use the TikTok application as an educational tool to provide a better and more engaging classroom environment. Moreover, conducting the same study with the addition of other degree programs offered by the college to determine if the results may support or refute the findings is highly recommended. Lastly, other variables may be added to this present study to understand further the relationship between TikTok consumption and students' engagement.

Keywords: Engagement, Pandemic, Performing Arts Students, TikTok, Utilization.

1. Introduction

TikTok has been one of the most used Social Networking Services (SNS) in the Philippines and worldwide. Different generations have used it, and it has been a gateway for different people to interact with other content creators, from the typical "meme" down to performing arts such as dance and song covers. TikTok was introduced in 2017 by Bytedance, a Chinese multinational internet technology company headquartered in Beijing. It's a social media app that lets users make 15 to 60-second lip sync, comedy, acting, and talent videos with the help of accessible background music. TikTok's social media platform style allows students to become influencers", so it encourages learners to join in the community by simply creating a schoolwide, or even districtwide, group. Universities have been urged to use TikTok, a popular social media site, to reach out to prospective students, promote the school experience, and inspire learning with bite-sized content. TikTok has grown into a platform with a broad range of content, including sports, fashion, and Education. It was the world's most downloaded monthly application for the past 12 months.

At this point, TikTok has essentially taken over the world. While learners were stuck at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they probably spent much time going through their FYP (for you page), learning new dances, discovering recent trends, and creating content. Many teachers have started using TikTok to create shortened versions of their classroom lessons. This allows students to refer back to subjects they may have missed in class or if they need a refresher, whether they are learning science, English, arithmetic, or physical Education. Others use the platform to extend the day's lesson, encouraging students to learn outside the classroom. Individuals may even use TikTok to remind students of important dates or upcoming deadlines or to give productivity or course material advice. Students are more likely to engage with the information if it is delivered in one of their favorite forms of mobile entertainment, regardless of the format they use to generate their lessons [1].

In line with the aforementioned relevant studies, the researchers aim to determine if using TikTok may be highly related to students' engagement. The entire study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How may the respondents' level of TikTok Application utilization be described?
2. How may the level of students' engagement be described?
3. Is there a significant relationship between TikTok Application utilization and students' engagement?

The Null hypothesis for the study is TikTok has no statistically significant relationship with student engagement.

2. Literature Review

COVID-19 is the novel coronavirus that has stopped our ordinary lives. According to Halim et.al [2], Covid-19 or Coronavirus, is affecting our everyday lives and is slowing down the economy. This pandemic has affected many people around the world. It affects thousands of people who have fallen ill or died due to the spread of the disease, from simply going out to buy our everyday needs, to directly affecting our work and Education. The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Philippines was on January 30, 2020. A 38 years old woman from Wuhan, China, where the coronavirus occurred, went to the Philippines [3]. Classes at all levels in the City's public and private schools, starting from noon of 10th to 13th of March 2020, were suspended after President Rodrigo Roa Duterte declared a health emergency in the country. The increasing cases of the said virus eventually led to a complete lockdown, putting a halt on the face-to-face classes of schools in the country, including the City College of Angeles, in March 2020.

The study of Christopher et.al [4] tried to analyze how the student's mental and physical states adapted to the TikTok app. According to Christopher and Swathi, the respondents were N=430 students, 230 males, and 200 females. Five hypotheses were framed to see if there is any significance between the two variables: the time spent on TikTok and the student's academic performance. Therefore, the authors concluded that social media like TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and others have e positive and negative impacts on students' academic performances. However, these are not the only media that have an effect, as this is only one of the primary factors affecting the students' performances.

Dilons [5] state study shed light on the mobile app TikTok. It aims at young students who have taken up the use of the TikTok application. It looks at how the app influences the lives of the Gen Z. 650 Thai girls and boys from 16-25 years old participated in anonymous interviews and were asked to fill out a survey about their use of TikTok and its purpose mobile application. The overall findings of

this study resulted in an overwhelming amount of target users favoring the mobile application. This research concluded that the use of TikTok seems to be of more concern to spectators of the users than the actual users [6] [7].

Literat [8] study examines how students share their online learning experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher relied on searching on TikTok, the #onlineschool, as a methodological tool for data selection, which allows an intentional corpus in which young people who want to share their experiences with others use a particular hashtag for collective expression [9]. Findings indicate that youth utilize TikTok by creating content that portrays their experiences during an online class. TikTok has become their preferred mode of expression, and while most of the content is humoristic, it is an important window into young people's emotions, voices, and perceptions [10]. A study by Guzman [11] attempted to explore and analyze students' use of social media in their academic performance and technology ethics decisions. Three hundred seven students were selected as respondents out of the 1141 Apayao State College, Luna Campus students. Based on the findings, the study concludes that this college's students are adequately associated with the benefits of using social media in Education and learning [12]. Most of the respondents are moderately aware of their ethical level in dealing with issues and trends which impact their academic performance and use of social media. However, some social media utilization still has a significant effect on it.

3. Research Methods
3.1. Design
The research is quantitative-correlational in design to determine the relationship between TikTok Application utilization and students' engagement.

3.2. Population and Sampling
The sampling technique that will be used to gather participants is Universal Sampling. This refers to selecting a sample in which not all people in the population are equally likely to be included in the selection, and each one's chances of being selected are unknown.

3.3. Instrumentation
The instruments used for the study are all open and free to use in public, thus open-source. However, for ethical standards and protocols, the researcher will send a letter to the original authors requesting the usage of the questionnaires for the conduct of the study. The tool were used: instrument from the study of Guzman [13]. From the original eight scenarios used in the said study, the researchers have only used one design to be fitted on the survey [14]. It is a 23-item questionnaire where it describes the extent of the Social Networking Site (SNS) utilization of the respondents, which in this study, particularly in TikTok. Responses will then be recorded on a 4-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 4 (Strongly agree) and 2. The student Engagement Questionnaire (SEQ) by Handelsment et.al [15], a 23-item questionnaire, will be adapted to describe the level of students' engagement in learning. Responses will be recorded on a 4-point Likert scale from 1 (Not at all characteristic of me) to 4 (Very characteristic of me).

3.4. Data Gathering
A letter addressed to the Dean of the Institute of Education, Arts and Sciences (IEAS) of City College of Angeles was sent electronically to obtain approval to float the online questionnaire. The said online questionnaire can be filled-up within 10-15 minutes. All data gathered from Google Forms were in an excel file for analysis. After using the data collected for research, the excel file was encrypted with a strong password to which researchers have only personal access.

3.5. Data Analysis
Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) were used to analyze students' TikTok utilization and engagement. Spearman-Rho was used to determine the relationship between variables TikTok Application utilization and students' engagement.

4. Results and Discussion
To analyze the results from the data obtained, IBM SPSS 26 has been used. 103 BPeA students answered the survey questionnaires.

Table 1 shows the extent of the respondents' utilization of SNS/TikTok. The results showed that most of the respondents focus more on academics (M=3.39, SD=0.67), and they only use SNS/TikTok when they have time for it (M=3.33, SD=0.78) which corresponds to "Very High." On the other hand, most of the respondents are responsible for schoolwork (M=3.25, SD=0.69), and they do not allow SNS/TikTok to impact their academics (M=3.09, SD=0.80) which are both "Moderately High." Respondents can multitask with SNS/TikTok while studying (M=2.50, SD=0.83), and SNS/TikTok is an academic distraction (M=2.40, SD=0.85) which both corresponds to "Low."

Table 1. Level of TikTok Utilization

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I use my SNS/TikTok account for schoolwork.	2.46	0.86	Very Low
I use my SNS/TikTok account to communicate with my classmates.	2.28	0.77	Very Low
I use my SNS/TikTok to communicate for group projects.	2.29	0.77	Very Low
I use my SNS/TikTok as a break while studying.	2.95	0.85	Moderately High
I use my SNS/TikTok as a free time activity.	3.27	0.79	Very High
I use my SNS/TikTok to procrastinate when I should be studying.	2.25	0.75	Low
I use my SNS/TikTok to procrastinate if I am struggling.	2.57	0.88	Low
SNS/TikTok is time consuming.	2.85	0.82	Moderately High
SNS/TikTok is an academic distraction.	2.40	0.85	Moderately High
SNS/TikTok decrease my academic performance.	2.28	0.84	Low
SNS/TikTok take time away from studying.	2.39	0.80	Low
SNS/TikTok distract me from studying.	2.23	0.80	Low
I multitask with my SNS/TikTok while studying.	2.50	0.83	Low
I am a responsible person about schoolwork.	3.25	0.68	Moderately High
I am good at multitasking with SNS/TikTok.	2.70	0.84	Moderately High
No one on my SNS/TikTok is worth me getting failing grades.	2.77	0.80	Moderately High
I do not spend excessive amount of time on my SNS/TikTok.	3.04	0.73	Very High
I do not go on SNS/TikTok during class.	3.02	0.79	Very High
I check my SNS/TikTok during class.	2.26	0.76	Moderately High
I do not have SNS/TikTok up while doing homework.	2.83	0.79	Moderately High
I don't allow SNS/TikTok to impact my academics.	3.09	0.80	Very High
My academics are my main focus.	3.39	0.66	Very High
When I am doing my work for school; I do not check my SNS/TikTok	3.03	0.78	Very High
I only use SNS/TikTok when I have the time for it.	3.33	0.77	Very High
Total	**2.73**	**.881**	**Moderately High**

Lastly, respondents use SNS/TikTok to communicate for group projects (M=2.29, SD=0.78) and use SNS/TikTok account to communicate with classmates (M=2.28, SD=0.78), which are "Very Low." Overall, the respondents' extent of SNS/TikTok Utilization is (M=2.73, SD=0.89), which is "Moderately High."

Table 2 shows the level of engagement of respondents. The results show that most of the respondents are taking good notes in class (M=3.18, SD=0.69), stay up with the readings (M=3.18, SD=0.67), and look over class notes between classes to make sure they understand the material (M=3.19, SD=0.72) which denotes "Moderately High." Being Organized (M=3.43, SD=0.60), finding ways to make the course material relevant to respondents' lives (M=3.43, SD=0.62), putting forth effort (M=3.45, SD=0.58), and listening carefully in class (M=3.45, SD=0.56) signifies a "Very High." Respondents' overall level of engagement is M=3.29, SD=0.67, which denotes "Very High."

Table 3 shows the Correlation between the Utilization of the TikTok Application and Student Engagement. Spearman's rho was performed to determine the relationship between TikTok Utilization and Students' Engagement. The results showed that it has a range of (r= 0.393) and a probability value of (p= <.001), which means that there is a significant relationship between TikTok Utilization and Student Engagement.

Table 2. Level of Students' Engagement

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Raising my hand in class	3.07	.081	Moderately high
Participating actively in small group discussions	3.34	0.66	Very high
Asking questions when I don't understand the instructor	3.14	0.80	Moderately high
Doing all the homework problems	3.43	0.58	Very high
Coming to online class everyday	3.51	0.55	Very high
Going to the professor's office hours to review assignments or tests, or to ask questions	2.89	0.83	Moderately high
Thinking about the course between class meetings	3.07	0.68	Moderately high
Finding ways to make the course interesting to me	3.27	0.66	Very high
Taking good notes in class	3.78	0.68	Moderately high
Looking over class notes between classes to make sure I understand the material	3.19	0.72	Moderately high
Really desiring to learn the material	3.36	0.55	Very high
Being confident that I can learn and do well in the class	3.31	0.62	Very high
Putting forth effort	3.45	0.57	Very high
Being organized	3.43	0.60	Very high
Getting a good grade	3.40	0.56	Very high
Doing well on the tests	3.33	0.58	Very high
Staying up on the readings	3.18	0.66	Moderately high
Helping fellow students	3.37	0.55	Very high
Making sure to study on a regular basis	3.31	0.57	Very high
Finding ways to make the course material relevant to my life	3.43	0.62	Very high
Applying course material to my life	3.36	0.62	Very high
Listening carefully in class	3.45	0.55	Very high
Total	**3.29**	**0.66**	**Very High**

Table 3. Relationship between TikTok Utilization and Students' Engagement

Correlations		
	Students' Engagement	
	r	*p-value*
TikTok Utilization	.0393	<.001
N	103	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The main objective of this study is to determine the relationship between the TikTok Application Utilization and the Engagement of students taking Bachelor of Performing Arts at City College of Angeles. Apart from its primary objective, this study also aims to provide a recommendation from the results drawn.

The TikTok utilization result found that most of the respondents use the application most of the time, which was described as "Moderately High" based on the extent of respondents' usage. Important points such as "respondents are much focused on academics" and "respondents only use TikTok when they have time for it" is highly significant as this denotes that, even though the respondents use this application most of the time, it can be generalized that most of the students are responsible users, focused on their academics. This application is only treated as one of their recreational activities during their free time. From the analysis of the complete result, it can be said that most of the students are responsible users of the TikTok Application. This is only another way to entertain themselves or as a stress reliever in between class and after tons of coursework.

The level of students' Engagement in their academic coursework is significantly very high. Highlighted points were respondents answered from the survey questionnaire, such as "taking good notes in class," "stay up with the readings," "looking over class notes between classes to make sure they understand the material," "being organized," "finding ways to make the course material relevant

to their lives," and "listening carefully to class" which are described as "Moderately High" and "Very High" respectively which signifies that most to students are highly engaged on their classes in an online class setting.

Lastly, on the relationship between respondents' TikTok Utilization and Level of Engagement, it was found that the two variables are highly significant, which rejected the null hypothesis formulated by the researchers. From the study of [9], it was ascertained that 90% of the respondents that use social networking sites (e.g., Tiktok, etc.) positively helped them to help their academic performance, which supported the result of this study. On the other hand, the survey by [10] where results found that TikTok can negatively impact college students' abilities to pay attention and get their coursework done, which can lead to worst academic performance; and, [4] where there is a negative correlation between time spent on TikTok and class participation.

5. Conclusion

In partnership with the College Guidance Office, the Institute of Education, Arts and Sciences may collaborate on providing webinars or training on how Social Networking Sites such as Tiktok can be a helpful tool or distraction in the level of engagement of the students. Dissemination on the proper use of Social Networking sites/applications, their advantages, and disadvantages may help the students utilize these sites/applications properly. Also, instructors or professors may also use the TikTok Application as another Educational Tool to provide a better and more engaging classroom environment. Instructors and professors may use TikTok to disseminate information by providing short clips connecting to their field of expertise. It may be a platform where students can showcase their talent and understanding of the course or topic related to their program. Moreover, in the case of the Performing Arts Program, this application may be used to showcase the students' talents in dancing, where they can post a video of themselves as their output.

One of the limitations of this study is that it only focuses on students who are taking Bachelor of Performing Arts at City College of Angeles. Additional respondents from other programs or students in a college setting are highly recommended to understand the relationship between the two variables further. Lastly, applying mixed-method with the combination of interviews and surveys is recommended to understand how students use the TikTok Application and how it is highly related to their engagement in class and verify if the results will be similar or different.

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