

ANALYSIS OF TIKTOK USAGE, CHARACTERISTICS, AND LEARNING CONCENTRATION AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRAK

This research is motivated by the rapid use of TikTok social media among elementary school students, which raises concerns about the development of their ethical values and academic focus on learning. This study aimed to analyze the use of TikTok social media and its impact on the character and learning concentration of students at elementary school and the primary focus of this study is the students elementary school. The method used was descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation of students, teachers, and parents. The results show that students use TikTok for self-existence, creativity, and as a learning resource. TikTok usage has a dual impact on character: it has a positive influence on self-confidence and art skills but a negative impact on the use of impolite language if not supervised. Meanwhile, students' learning concentration tends to decrease, marked by a short focus duration (only ten to twenty minutes) and easily distracted due to being accustomed to fast short video stimulation. The conclusion of this research confirms that TikTok usage is negatively correlated with learning concentration and requires a synergy of supervision and guidance from teachers and parents so that the use of digital media remains educational and does not damage students' character.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tiktok has grown rapidly and is easily accessible to elementary school students due to its short, engaging video format and personalized algorithm. These students are at a stage of cognitive and character development that is still malleable. Uncontrolled use of tiktok can impact two crucial areas: 1. Character, such as discipline, responsibility, empathy and manners. 2. Learning concentration, including focus, memory and classroom motivation. On the other hand, tiktok can also serve as an

educational tool if used wisely. Therefore, it is necessary school students tiktok usage patterns relate to their character and learnin concentration. These findings are expected to provide insights for chldern toward healthy social media use. Implement “digital literacy” education in schools. Teach students about usage tim limits, hoe to select educational content on tiktok, and the twenty five minutes of study or five minutes of break focus technique. Raise awareness about parental controls and establish rules for gadget use at home. Supervise children while they use tiktok. Organize a contest for creating engaging, positive and education themed tiktok content. TikTok is a platform featuring short-form videos ranging from fifteen seconds to ten minutes driven by a personalized "For You Page" (FYP) algorithm. Its characteristics include being fast-paced and entertaining, as well as highly addictive due to the combination of an "endless scroll" interface and dopamine-inducing feedback loops. For elementary school students, unsupervised access can lead to excessive usage. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), there are 18 character values: religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democratic spirit, curiosity, national spirit, patriotism, appreciation of achievement, friendliness, love of peace, fondness for reading, environmental awareness, social awareness, and responsibility. Elementary school children (aged 6–12) are still in Piaget’s “concrete operational” stage of development. Consequently, they easily imitate behaviors observed in media, including TikTok trends and challenges. the ability to focus one's attention on a specific learning subject. Signs of low concentration in students include being easily distracted, forgetfulness, declining grades, and frequent daydreaming. Influencing factors include internal elements (such as health and motivation) and external elements (such as gadgets and the environment). Using a mobile phone or TikTok prior to studying can result in “attention residue” where the brain remains preoccupied with the videos, making it difficult to focus. Bandura’s Social Learning Theory: Children learn behaviors through observation and imitation; consequently, content frequently viewed on TikTok can be mimicked and become part of their character. Cognitive Load Theory: Excessive stimuli from short videos can overwhelm a child's working memory, thereby reducing their concentration while learning. Based on the theoretical study above, the following hypotheses are formulated: *H1: There is a positive relationship between the duration of TikTok usage and the decline in positive character traits among elementary school students.* Rationale: The longer one spends scrolling, the greater the likelihood of imitating negative behaviors or disrespectful trends found on TikTok. *H2: There is a negative relationship between TikTok usage and the learning concentration of elementary school students.* Rationale: The more frequently TikTok is used especially before or during study hours the lower the student's concentration and focus in the classroom.

This short-form video social app offers extensive music support, enabling users to showcase their talents through dance, freestyle, and more, thereby fostering their creativity as content creators. In Indonesia, TikTok was launched in May 2017 (Aprilian, 2020). TikTok allows users to create, edit, and share short videos featuring various creative effects. However, the use of this social media platform also raises concerns regarding its impact on character and study concentration, particularly among elementary school students who are still in a crucial stage of cognitive and social development (Hafifah, 2025). In recent years, children have become increasingly familiar with digital devices and social media, with TikTok emerging as one of the most widely used applications among elementary school students. Uncontrolled use of TikTok can influence students' character—affecting their ethics, social interactions, and study habits. Furthermore, many students struggle to maintain concentration on their studies due to excessive use of TikTok (Rasdin, 2022).

Several previous studies have examined similar issues to establish a basis for this study’s originality. Indrajati and Setiawan (2023) showed that TikTok has a dual influence on students' moral values, depending on the type of content consumed. Meanwhile, Satiti and Fitriani (2020) and Rohmani (2022) found that a long TikTok usage duration is negatively correlated with academic focus and students' study time. Unlike previous studies, this study specifically combines character

and learning concentration analyses in one research locus in an elementary school in Maros to provide a comprehensive overview.

2. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type that aims to describe the phenomenon of TikTok usage and its impact on students in depth. The research data processing: 1. Data management, the data collected in the field were then processed using descriptive techniques. The descriptive analysis technique referred to in this study is non statistical analytics with an inductive approach, namely data analysis that starts from a problem or statement or specific theme that is the focus of the research. The data processing technique in this study was carried out iteratively until the data reached a point of saturation. Once data collection was complete, the next step was to process the data using a qualitative method. This method was applied to data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. 2. Data analysis, after the data is collected the next is further analysis. Data analysis in qualitative research involves the systematic process of searching for and organizing data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process encompasses organizing data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing information, identifying patterns, selecting significant data, and drawing conclusions. The objective is to make the data easily understandable to both the researcher and others. 3. Data condensation was carried out by organizing, categorizing and interpreting the condensed data to again a deeper understanding of the relationship between tiktok socialmedia users, the character and learning cocncentration of students at elementary school. 4. Conclusions are drawn by drawing conclusionsbased on the results of data analysis and verifying the research results to obtain answers to research questions. The research subjects were students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros who actively use the TikTok application, their homeroom teachers ang their parents. Data collection was conducted through written records and documentation, as well as by searching for and exploring data available in the field. A research instrument is a tool used to collect data and information relevant to the study. In the research titled "Analysis of TikTok Social Media Usage, Characteristics, and Learning Concentration among Students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros," the instruments employed were observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation sheets, as the data required to address the research problem were obtained through these instruments. The instruments used by the researcher are as follows: 1. Observation guidelines: a data collection technique carried out systematically and intentionally through the observation and recording of the phenomena under investigation—specifically, observing educators or students in a particular situation. The observation guidelines include identification details: research title, observer's name, and the date, location, and time of the observation. The observation sheet covers several aspects: TikTok usage, student character, and student learning concentration. Indicators for TikTok usage include three components: students seen opening TikTok (secretly or openly), students discussing TikTok content with peers, and students imitating TikTok movements or styles within the school environment. Character indicators include three components: students behaving respectfully toward teachers, students displaying negative behavior (using profanity, showing off, etc.), and students demonstrating high self-confidence. Learning concentration indicators include three components: students focusing on the lesson, students frequently daydreaming or becoming distracted during the lesson, and students maintaining attention despite interruptions (noises, mobile phone notifications, peers talking, etc.). 2. Interview guidelines for informants whose roles relate to TikTok usage, character, and learning concentration among students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros. The informants include students, homeroom teachers, and parents. The interview guide covers three main areas: TikTok usage, character, and learning concentration. 3. Documentation sheet containing photographs taken during interviews with students, the homeroom teacher from SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros, and students' parents. The research location was SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros, with the research duration carried out for approximately three months in the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros, involving informants consisting of class teachers (Mrs. Rismawati, S.Pd., Mrs. Musdalifah, S.Pd., and Mrs. Hj. Salma, S.Pd.), parents of students, and students from grades 2, 5, and 6. Based on data collection through observation and in-depth interviews, it was found that TikTok social media has become an integral part of students' daily lives, with usage duration varying from less than one hour to more than six hours every day. TikTok Social Media Usage, interviews with students showed that this platform is used not only for entertainment but also as a means of social interaction and self-expression. Students often discuss viral content and sing popular TikTok songs in school. Impact on Students' Character: The impact of TikTok usage on students' character shows two interrelated sides. On the positive side, TikTok increased students' confidence and creativity in art and dance. Mrs. Musdalifah, S.Pd. stated that students' politeness is generally still controllable and has not shown extreme moral degradation. However, the observation results identified symptoms of digital device dependency, which made children tend to be emotional when gadget usage was limited. Yau and Reich (2019) explain that digital space indeed stimulates creative experimentation, but requires guidance so as not to damage children's ethical norms.



(a) Picture with teachers



(b) Picture with parents of students



(c) Picture with students

Interviews with teachers and parents regarding the impact of TikTok usage on student character reveal that the platform presents a dichotomy of positive and negative effects on student development—socially, emotionally, and academically. On the positive side, TikTok serves as a creative outlet and a means of self-expression. Through the app, students can channel their talents and interests in the arts—particularly dance and entertainment—while building self-confidence and social skills. TikTok can also act as a source of motivation and encouragement when used wisely by teachers; for instance, playing popular songs or trending content can re-engage students who have become bored or fatigued during lessons. Furthermore, some students find that watching TikTok helps alleviate stress and improve their mood after studying, leaving them feeling happier and more motivated.

However, there is a negative side: using TikTok without parental or teacher supervision can adversely affect student development. There is a risk of social media dependency, which can lead to a decline in academic focus. Elementary school-aged children, who lack mature self-control, require guidance and boundaries from parents and teachers to ensure that TikTok usage remains moderate and stays within a positive, educational context.

Interviews with teachers regarding student learning concentration and the use of TikTok among elementary school students, it can be concluded that the platform presents a dichotomy: it offers positive impacts that support student development, yet also carries negative effects that require vigilance and supervision from both teachers and parents. TikTok has the potential to serve as a medium for informal learning and personal development, provided its use is well-controlled, directed toward creative activities, and accompanied by character education and parental oversight. Conversely, without supervision and guidance, its use can disrupt learning concentration and foster a dependency on digital media. Therefore, the roles of teachers and parents are crucial in providing supervision, values-based education, and boundaries regarding social media usage. With a prudent approach, TikTok can become an educational yet enjoyable tool that helps children optimally develop their potential without neglecting their academic responsibilities.

The impact on learning concentration was more significant. The data on students' focus duration in class are presented in Table 1.

Indicator concentration	findings in the field	Average duration of focus
Initia focus	Students calm down when the teacher begins to explain	10-15 minutes
Persistence	Students start to get restless and disturb their friends	15-20 minutes
Distractions	Easily distracted if there are sounds of guests entering or visiting the school.	very fast

Based on Table 1, students' focus capacity is very limited. The observation results reinforce this finding, showing that students easily get bored, restless, and distracted by external stimuli after passing that duration.

Puskur (the Center for Curriculum) defines character as an individual's disposition, nature, moral fiber, or personality—formed through the internalization of virtuous values that become deeply held beliefs and serve as the foundation for one's perspective, thought processes, attitudes, and actions. Character manifests as an individual's understanding and knowledge of various values—including moral, ethical, legal, and virtuous principles, as well as religious and cultural tenets—which are expressed through daily attitudes, behaviors, and personality, enabling one to distinguish right from wrong. Thus, the concept of character is closely linked to ethics; an individual with good character naturally possesses ethical awareness and conducts themselves in accordance with the ethical standards prevailing in society. According to Daniel Goleman (2019), character encompasses a range

of qualities—such as integrity, empathy, and resilience—that influence how an individual interacts with others and faces challenges. Character is not merely about behavior but also about the underlying values.

Similarly, Angela Duckworth (2020) defines character as a combination of courage, perseverance, and integrity, emphasizing its role as a key factor in achieving long-term goals and overcoming obstacles. David Brooks (2021) states that character comprises the moral and ethical qualities that shape a person's actions and decisions, highlighting the importance of social relationships and community in shaping individual character. In line with this, Paul Tough (2021) argues that character is a set of social and emotional skills that help individuals adapt and succeed in various situations, underscoring the importance of character education in child development.

Michele Borba (2022) defines character as the moral foundation that helps individuals distinguish between right and wrong. She emphasizes the need for character education to foster positive values within society.

This phenomenon can be explained through Cognitive Load Theory by Sweller (2011), which states that human working memory capacity is limited; continuous exposure to fast short videos on TikTok decreases students' ability to process complex and slow learning materials. Additionally, Watson and Strayer's (2010) distraction theory supports this finding, stating that intensive social media use causes distraction, reducing attention to academic tasks. Overall, TikTok usage at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tumalia Maros has a negative correlation with students' learning concentration but has a more neutral to positive influence on character creativity development under parental and teacher supervision. Mulyadi (2023) explains that children's character at the elementary school age is still malleable and easily influenced by the environment. Social media has become a new environment that plays a significant role in shaping children's attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, the use of TikTok must be balanced with consistent character education at school and home.

Selvi (2024) emphasizes that character education in the digital era cannot be separated from the reality of students' social media usage. Teachers must understand students' digital world to provide relevant and contextual guidance. In this case, TikTok can be utilized as a creative learning medium if it is packaged with educational content and positive values. Wahyullah (2016) emphasizes that integrating technology-based learning media is a strategic solution to address students' low interest in classroom learning. The use of digital devices and multimedia not only renders abstract concepts more concrete but also fosters an interactive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Consequently, the effective use of technology has been shown to significantly boost students' intrinsic motivation to actively engage in the process of exploring knowledge. The findings of this research are also in line with the Social Learning Theory proposed by Bandura (2022), which states that children learn through observation and imitation of behavior. In the context of TikTok, students tend to imitate the speaking style, attitude, and behavior of content creators they see, thus directly influencing the formation of their character.

Michael Posner (2018) defines concentration as the ability to selectively direct attention toward specific information while ignoring distractions, emphasizing the importance of the attentional system in cognitive processes. Meanwhile, research by Amirhossein Fathi (2019) describes concentration as a mental process involving focus on a specific task, enabling individuals to process information more efficiently; he highlights the role of motivation in enhancing concentration. Michele A. H. P. D. de Vries (2020) states that concentration is the ability to sustain attention on a single object or task for a certain period, noting that it can be influenced by various factors, including the environment and emotional state. Barbara Oakley (2020) emphasizes that concentration is key to understanding and retaining information, recommending strategies such as taking regular breaks to improve focus. David L. Strayer (2021) suggests that concentration involves regulating attention amidst a multitude of

competing information; his research indicates that multitasking can diminish both concentration levels and performance.

Based on these expert definitions, it can be concluded that concentration is a crucial ability in learning and cognitive processes, influenced by various factors such as the environment, motivation, and the learning techniques employed.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the use of TikTok social media has become a significant phenomenon among students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tualia Maros, with the majority of students actively using the application for an average of 3–5 hours every day. Regarding the first research objective, TikTok has proven to be highly popular among elementary school students. The majority of students are familiar with and actively use the app, with usage times ranging from less than one hour to over six hours daily; the most common duration of use falls within the 3-to-5-hour range. Students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tualia Maros use TikTok in various ways. Most use it to watch entertaining and engaging videos, while others create their own content. They also use the platform to interact with friends—such as by sending messages and commenting on posts. Motivations for use include seeking entertainment and stress relief, as well as a desire to improve content creation skills. Additionally, they use TikTok to connect with friends and boost their self-confidence. Two, TikTok usage significantly impacts student character; students who use the platform regularly tend to be more active—showing increased self-confidence—and demonstrate high levels of creativity, as the content they consume inspires them to create new things. While TikTok boosts self-confidence, it can also negatively influence character—for instance, by leading students to bring TikTok trends into the classroom or adopt the catchphrases of TikTok influencers, such as "anjai." Therefore, strategies are needed to address these negative effects and enhance the quality of student character. Finally, The use of the social media platform TikTok impacts the study concentration of students at SDN 241 Inpres Perumnas Tualia, Maros. TikTok usage has a negative effect on students' concentration, resulting in limited attention spans (only 10–20 minutes) and a reduced ability to process information due to the distractions associated with the app. Consequently, strategies are needed to improve student concentration, such as managing TikTok usage time, increasing parental supervision, and enhancing the quality of education. A key reason students struggle to control their emotions is excessive and prolonged mobile phone use; they become agitated when asked to stop using the device. Therefore, it is crucial for parents to establish limits and provide supervision for children who frequently use mobile phones.

Based on the findings and conclusions that have been presented, the researcher provides several suggestions which are expected to be input for various parties involved in the process of educating children the digital era. First, students are expected to use tiktok wisely and not excessively Students need to manage the time they spend on social media—particularly TikTok—to avoid interfering with their studies, and they should choose content that is beneficial and educational. Second, it's crucialfor parents to consisrwnly monitor their children's social media activities regarding children's social media activities. Parents are expected to set limits on mobile phone usage, provide guidance on the nature of the content, and create a home environment that supports their child's learning process. Furthermore, it is important for parents to foster open communication so that children can understand the positive and negative impacts of social media, particularly TikTok. Third for teachers and schools. Efforts are needed to imorove digital literacy within the school environment Teachers can integrate character education and digital ethics values into daily lessons. Schools can also organize activities or programs aimed at educating students on the healthy and responsible use of social media, particularly TikTok. Finnaly for future researchers it is It is hoped that this study can be expanded to include a larger sample and involve a different group of students. Future research could delve deeper into the impact of the social media platform TikTok on

children's psychological development and examine its relationship with other variables, such as academic achievement, motivation, and social interaction.

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