RESEARCH ARTICLE

Analyzing How TikTok Influences Students' Discipline

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Abstract

TikTok has emerged as one of the most widely used digital platforms among adolescents and young adults worldwide. While the platform offers entertainment, relaxation, and brief educational content, excessive use has raised concerns regarding distraction, self-discipline, and time management. Studies from the United States associate TikTok overuse with addictive behaviors, while research from Asia highlights its influence on students' neglect of academic responsibilities. In the Philippines, increasing media exposure has similarly affected students' behavior, spending habits, and academic routines. This study examined the influence of TikTok on platform engagement, students' discipline, and time management among students from the College of Teacher Education and the Arts at Indiana Aerospace University. Conducted in June 2025, the study employed a quantitative research design using a structured questionnaire administered to education students. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale, and data were analyzed through frequency, simple rate, weighted mean, and ranking. Findings revealed that educational professionals generally agreed that TikTok significantly influences students' platform engagement, discipline, and time management. As an output, the researchers proposed intervention strategies, including a webinar, a three-day workshop, panel discussions, digital information campaigns, and the development of digital wellness policies to promote responsible social media use.

Keywords: *platform engagement, student discipline, time management, tiktok influrnces, digital platforms*

Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital platforms has significantly reshaped how students interact, learn, and manage their daily routines. TikTok, a short-form video-sharing application that allows users to create and consume content ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes, has become particularly popular among adolescents and young adults. In the United States, recent research has linked excessive social media use to behavioral dependency and reduced well-being among adolescents (Burnell et al., 2024). Similarly, a study in Vietnam identified TikTok as both a self-learning tool and a contributing factor to students' neglect of academic responsibilities (Van Nguyen & Tran, 2024).

In the Philippine context, studies have documented both the positive and negative effects of digital media exposure. Dimangcuan and Guillena (2023) emphasized that while online platforms provide opportunities for communication and learning, they may also contribute to behavioral and psychological challenges. Further research in Cebu City revealed that increased online exposure influences the spending habits and consumption behavior of Generation Z students (Cerna et al., 2024). With improved internet accessibility, students at Indiana Aerospace University—particularly those in the College of Teacher Education and the Arts—can easily access and consume digital content, making TikTok a dominant presence in their daily lives.

Several theoretical frameworks support the examination of TikTok's influence on student behavior. The Uses and Gratifications Theory explains that individuals engage with media to satisfy personal needs such as entertainment, social interaction, and information seeking (Vinney, 2024). Meanwhile, the Dual System Model of Self-Control highlights the tension between impulsive behavior and cognitive regulation, suggesting that excessive screen time can impair focus and self-discipline (Zahrai et al., 2022). Time management is further explained by the Temporal Motivation Theory, which emphasizes the role of self-discipline and goal orientation in regulating behavior (Bok et al., 2024).

Despite its benefits, TikTok's highly engaging, scroll-based design encourages prolonged use, which may disrupt students' routines and weaken discipline. Continuous exposure to short-form content can fragment attention, reduce academic focus, and consume time that

could otherwise be allocated to school-related tasks. Concerns such as Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) further exacerbate compulsive platform engagement, potentially leading to stress, social comparison, and behavioral imbalance (Yoosefi et al., 2025). Additionally, social media fatigue has been linked to irritability, burnout, and decreased motivation (Zheng & Ling, 2021).

This study addresses the growing concern over TikTok's influence on platform engagement, student discipline, and time management. It seeks to determine whether frequent TikTok use contributes to weakened academic habits and reduced self-control among education students. Specifically, the study examines how students balance screen time with academic responsibilities and whether TikTok's fast-paced content affects behavior in academic settings. Ultimately, the research aims to provide empirical evidence on how a single social media platform can significantly influence student discipline.

The researchers, belonging to Generation Z, possess firsthand familiarity with digital technologies and social media platforms. Their academic background in science, mathematics, computer science, and education enables them to critically examine the behavioral implications of digital media use. This technological fluency strengthens their capacity to analyze TikTok's influence and contribute meaningful insights to discussions on digital well-being in education.

Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to assess the influence of TikTok on students' discipline among the College of Teacher Education and the Arts at Indiana Aerospace University for the A.Y. 2024-2025. Specifically, this study focuses on the following:

1. To investigate the influence of TikTok on education students in terms of:
    1.1. platform engagement;
    1.2. student's discipline; and
    1.3. time management?
2. Rank the problems encountered by the College of Teacher Education and the Arts students.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to analyze the influence of TikTok on platform engagement, student discipline, and time management. Numerical data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale. The quantitative approach enabled systematic measurement, statistical analysis, and objective interpretation of students' perceptions regarding TikTok use.

Respondents

The respondents consisted of 100 students from the College of Teacher Education and the Arts at Indiana Aerospace University, drawn from a total population of 122 education students. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring representation across year levels from first to fourth year. As future educators, these students are trained in instructional theory, teaching methods, and student development, making their perspectives particularly relevant to the study.

Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire was used as the primary data-gathering instrument. The first part assessed TikTok's influence on platform engagement, student discipline, and time management using a four-point Likert scale (4 – Strongly Agree, 3 – Agree, 2 – Disagree, 1 – Strongly Disagree). The second part consisted of ten items identifying problems encountered by students, where respondents were allowed to select multiple statements they considered relevant.

Procedure

Data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms and distributed using Messenger. The survey was conducted among education students from first to fourth year, following the stratified random sampling procedure. Responses were automatically recorded, organized, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, including frequency counts, simple rate, weighted mean, and ranking. The four-point Likert scale responses were assigned numerical values and interpreted using descriptive equivalents to assess TikTok's influence on platform engagement, student discipline, and time management.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits prior to participation. Informed consent was obtained, and participation was entirely voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by excluding personal identifiers and securely handling all data. The study minimized potential discomfort and upheld honesty, fairness, and integrity in data reporting and analysis.

Results and Discussion

Platform Engagement

Table 1 presents the influence of TikTok in terms of platform engagement.

Table 1. *Platform Engagement*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I learn useful ideas on TikTok and apply them in the class.	3.22	Agree
2. I stay updated on trends through TikTok without ignoring schoolwork	3.20	Agree
3. I use TikTok as an outlet for relaxation without losing focus on studies.	3.18	Agree
4. Engaging with TikTok boosts my creativity in both school and content.	3.11	Agree
5. I connect with friends on TikTok while being able to prioritize school.	3.08	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.15	Agree

Legend: 3.25-4.00 –Strongly Agree, 2.50-3.24 –Agree, 1.75-2.49 –Disagree, 1.00-1.74 – Strongly Disagree

Platform engagement refers to the frequency with which students spend time on digital platforms. Platform engagement has become a relevant component of TikTok, contributing to the understanding of the digital platform in students' disciplines.

This is supported by Vinney (2024), who notes that students use the application as they feel the need to scroll, thereby fulfilling their desire until they are satisfied, in line with the Uses and Gratification Theory. The compulsive need to stay connected online, also known as the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) trait, explains the desire for adolescents to use TikTok in anticipation of missing out on trends (Yoosefi et al., 2025).

Student's Discipline

Table 2 presents the influence of TikTok on student discipline.

Table 2. *Student's Discipline*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I am aware when TikTok has become a distraction in my sleep schedule, so I stop.	3.29	Strongly Agree
2. I am consistent with my academic performance despite using TikTok.	3.29	Strongly Agree
3. I can stop using TikTok once it is time to study	3.23	Agree
4. I avoid checking my notifications on TikTok in the middle of making a project.	3.22	Agree
5. I regulate my use of TikTok to have better retention in memory.	3.03	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.21	Agree

Legend: 3.25-4.00 –Strongly Agree, 2.50-3.24 –Agree, 1.75-2.49 –Disagree, 1.00-1.74 – Strongly Disagree

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a student is someone who "attends a school." The same source discipline refers to the process of training that shapes, refines, or strengthens the mind and moral character. A student's discipline plays a significant role in their academic performance. This is a required trait to limit TikTok usage.

Overuse may have a negative impact on behavior and focus; therefore, it is essential to regulate screen time (Zahrai et al., 2022). Media exposure also causes irritability, burnout, and loss of interest, which affects students' discipline (Zheng & Ling, 2021).

Time Management

Table 3 presents the impact of TikTok usage on time management.

In the Cambridge Dictionary, time management refers to the skill of effectively and efficiently utilizing available time and planning how to allocate time between activities to maximize productivity. Time management is crucial for students to plan their TikTok usage during designated breaks. Being able to manage time and balance work and life gives students more time allotted for care and study sessions, which is the result of a combined effort in self-discipline and punctuality (Bok et al., 2024). Students also scroll endlessly through impulse, leading to procrastination and poor time management (Flanigan et al., 2023).

Table 3. *Time Management*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. I set clear limits on TikTok usage to stay on a routine.	3.21	Agree
2. I plan my TikTok usage in a way that schoolwork comes before leisure.	3.14	Agree
3. I use TikTok without letting it disrupt deadlines.	3.14	Agree
4. Using TikTok does not let me lose track of time which leads to rushed work.	2.99	Agree
5. TikTok improves my ability to do several tasks at once.	2.91	Agree
Average Weighted Mean	3.07	Agree

Legend: 3.25-4.00 –Strongly Agree, 2.50-3.24 –Agree, 1.75-2.49 –Disagree, 1.00-1.74 – Strongly Disagree

Problems Encountered

Table 4 contains the following problems encountered in Analyzing How TikTok influences students' discipline.

The top 5 highest problems encountered are as follows: 1st difficulty in breaking the habit of scrolling, 2nd staying up late to watch videos, causing sleep fatigue, 3rd difficulty in maintaining a study routine, 4th engaging in TikTok for a prolonged period, and 5th using TikTok during class hours.

Table 4. *Problems Encountered*

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
Students find it difficult to break their habit of scrolling in TikTok.	71	1
I stay up late watching videos in TikTok causing sleep fatigue.	69	2
TikTok usage make it difficult for students in staying on a study routine.	52	3
Engaging in Tiktok for an extended period affects student's focus.	48	4
Frequent use of TikTok in class hours disrupts my studies.	39	5
Tiktok usage creates loss of interest to with homework compliance.	38	6
Students prioritize uploading videos or watching Tiktok rather than academic tasks.	31	7
Students delay school submissions because of TikTok.	24	8
Lessons discussed are harder to recall after using TikTok.	21	9
Interacting on TikTok results in students failing to meet deadlines.	20	10

The most significant problem encountered is the difficulty in breaking the habit of scrolling, which occurs at a frequency of 71. With technology continually providing innovations and outlets for entertainment, digital platforms like TikTok are becoming increasingly popular. With students using their phones 24/7, they may come across trendy videos on TikTok, which can become addictive.

The second-highest problem is staying up late to watch videos, causing sleep fatigue with a frequency of 69. Students often, after an exhausting day, turn to their gadgets for comfort. This becomes a problem later because they stay up late, causing them to be drowsy, low on energy, and irritable.

The third most significant problem is the difficulty in maintaining a study routine at a frequency of 52. An outstanding academic performance requires focus, combined with hard work and a consistent study schedule. But the addictive content packed in 60-second videos on TikTok may interfere with a rigid study habit.

The fourth most significant problem is engaging in TikTok for an extended period, with a frequency of 48. Being able to access anything on the internet with a click comes with its cons. This hinders students' ability to concentrate in class, as a minute of scrolling can turn into hours, interfering with their attention in general.

The fifth highest problem is using TikTok during class hours, with a frequency of 38. Discussions are a time for learning and knowledge, but lessons can become boring at times. This drives students to stimulate themselves and focus their attention elsewhere on something engaging, such as TikTok.

Conclusion

The research revealed that education students generally agreed on the three variables examined: platform engagement, student discipline, and time management. Findings showed that TikTok, when used productively, can serve as a motivational platform that fosters creativity and even functions as a micro-learning tool. In terms of discipline, many students demonstrated the ability to regulate their screen time. In terms of time management, they were able to maintain a consistent study routine despite their online activities. These insights suggest that with proper self-regulation, TikTok can be integrated into students' lives without significantly disrupting their academic priorities.

Based on the challenges identified, several recommendations are proposed to help balance TikTok usage with students' academic responsibilities. Students should gradually lessen habitual scrolling by engaging in alternative educational activities and hobbies. They are encouraged to practice responsible screen habits, such as limiting late-night usage to avoid sleep fatigue and separating study time from entertainment to maintain focus. Restricting prolonged TikTok engagement can also improve concentration, allowing more time for schoolwork and self-care. Lastly, to avoid class disruptions, students should refrain from using TikTok during lessons and keep their phones silent, reserving them for after-school hours. These practices promote healthier discipline and time management, ensuring that TikTok use remains balanced with educational goals.

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