#Eduwow: Tiktok App As An Educational Creative Platform

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This qualitative study explores the impact of TikTok's #EduWOW initiative on students across various educational levels, including those from public and private universities and high schools. Employing a combination of in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD), the study aimed to understand how students perceive educational content delivered through TikTok, the effectiveness of pedagogical techniques used, and the influence of such content on student engagement and motivation to learn. The analysis revealed that TikTok's educational content significantly enhances accessibility and engagement, utilizing storytelling, humor, and visual aids effectively to captivate and educate users. However, it also highlighted the need for a balance between engaging delivery and educational depth. Recommendations for optimizing educational content on TikTok include increasing collaboration with educators, enhancing content depth, and regularly updating teaching strategies based on learner feedback. The findings underscore TikTok's potential as a viable educational tool, suggesting that with strategic enhancements, it can significantly contribute to formal and informal learning environments. This study not only contributes to the academic understanding of social media's role in education but also offers practical insights for educators and digital content creators aiming to leverage new media for educational advancement. **Keywords:** *TikTok in Education; Digital Learning; Educational Technology; Social Media and Learning; Pedagogical Techniques; Student Engagement; Visual earning; Interactive Learning; Content Creation in Education; Multimedia Learning*

Introduction

The rapid evolution of digital media has significantly transformed traditional educational environments, introducing innovative tools that cater to the dynamic needs of modern learners. Among these tools, social media platforms, particularly TikTok, have emerged as significant educational resources. TikTok, originally designed for entertainment, has seen a surge in educational content through initiatives like #EduWOW. This study aims to explore the impact of TikTok's #EduWOW initiative on learning outcomes among students from various educational levels.

TikTok has quickly become one of the most popular social media platforms globally, with over 1 billion active users who engage with short-form videos daily (Du et al., 2022). The platform's unique algorithm and engaging content format have allowed it not only to entertain but also to serve as a pedagogical tool, facilitating educational content delivery in engaging and innovative ways.

TikTok Philippines launched a campaign in response to the word "*Edi Wow*," which is often used in smart-shaming. One of the most important lessons learned from the pandemic is the continuity and stability of change. Aside from the global trend to work from home, schools have also shifted to the digital domain, allowing students to continue their education from the comfort of their own homes. TikTok, a video app and content churner renowned for snackable and viral content, is an excellent example of such an educational platform, particularly with its progressive move to *#EduWow*. TikTok has started an advocacy campaign to combat smart-shaming and disinformation in order to promote objective and comprehensive education via the TikTok application with the hashtag "EduWow" (*#EduWow).*

The #EduWOW initiative, launched by TikTok in 2021, aims to capitalize on this potential by fostering a dedicated community of content creators and learners focused on educational topics ranging from science and mathematics to arts and humanities (TikTok, 2021).

Despite the growing use of TikTok for educational purposes, there is a significant gap in empirical research concerning its effectiveness as a learning tool. Previous studies have primarily focused on general user engagement and content analysis without delving deeply into the educational outcomes associated with specific initiatives like #EduWOW (Adnan et al.,2021). Moreover, there is a lack of understanding about how different educational levels interact with and benefit from educational content on TikTok. This research aims to fill these gaps by providing a detailed analysis of #EduWOW's impact on these diverse student groups. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for educators and policymakers aiming to integrate social media effectively into educational frameworks and to harness its potential to enhance student learning and engagement.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute valuable insights into the role of social media in education, particularly in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. By examining the #EduWOW initiative, this research will provide evidence-based recommendations for content creators, educators, and platform developers to optimize educational content on TikTok. Additionally, this study will inform educational policy by highlighting the benefits and challenges of integrating social media into formal and informal learning environments, thereby shaping future educational strategies in the digital age.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore how students from different educational levels perceive the educational content delivered through TikTok's #EduWOW initiative.
2. To investigate the specific pedagogical techniques used in #EduWOW content and their effectiveness from the students' perspectives.
3. To assess the impact of TikTok's #EduWOW content on student engagement and motivation to learn.
4. To provide recommendations for educators and content creators on optimizing educational content on TikTok based on student feedback.

Review of Related Literature

Social Media in Education: An Overview

The integration of social media into educational settings has become increasingly prominent, influencing various aspects of teaching and learning. This review synthesizes current research to understand the multifaceted roles of social media in education, emphasizing its benefits and challenges.

Social media offers unique affordances in education, enhancing communication and collaboration among students and educators. Greenhow, Galvin, and Staudt Willet (2019) highlight that social media extends learning opportunities beyond traditional classroom settings, facilitating ongoing professional development and community engagement among educators. Similarly, Tess (2013) discusses the prevalent use of platforms like Facebook and Twitter in higher education, noting their potential to mediate instruction and foster active learning environments, despite a lack of robust empirical support for their efficacy.

The benefits of social media in educational contexts are significant. According to M. Sasikala (2021), social media supports diverse learning activities, from accessing informational resources to engaging in collaborative projects. Faizi, Afia, and Chiheb (2013) further illustrate that social media can enhance student engagement, promote creativity, and facilitate quicker teacher-student and student-student interactions. These platforms enable students to express their thoughts comfortably, which can be particularly beneficial for those who feel intimidated or disengaged in conventional classroom settings.

Despite its advantages, the use of social media in education is not without challenges. Chugh and Ruhi (2018) raise concerns regarding privacy, information reliability, and equity in digital access. There is also skepticism among some educators about the pedagogical relevance of social media, which can hinder its integration into formal educational frameworks (Salmon, Ross, Pechenkina, & Chase, 2015).

Social media holds transformative potential for educational practices, offering substantial benefits in enhancing communication, collaboration, and engagement. However, its integration into educational settings must be navigated carefully, considering both the opportunities it presents and the challenges it poses. As such, ongoing research and adaptation will be crucial to optimize the use of social media in education effectively.

TikTok's Emergence as an Educational Platform

TikTok, primarily known for its entertainment value, has recently been recognized as a valuable educational platform, particularly for engaging the younger, tech-savvy generation. Research into its educational potential reveals that TikTok uniquely caters to the preferences of Gen Z students, offering an engaging and relevant way to deliver educational content across various disciplines including management education, special education, and speech-language pathology. Middleton (2022) demonstrates how TikTok complements traditional teaching methods in undergraduate courses, enhancing engagement through its familiar, multimedia approach (Middleton, 2022). Similarly, Perrotti et al. (2023) highlight TikTok's effectiveness in disseminating specialized knowledge to educators, noting its capacity to facilitate professional development and caregiver counseling through targeted content (Perrotti, Puwo, & Jayarathna, 2023).

Moreover, TikTok's format supports emerging pedagogical theories such as micro-learning and nano-learning, which are shown to improve learning outcomes by breaking complex information into smaller, more digestible pieces. Khlaif and Salha (2021) explore how TikTok can be integrated into educational settings to deliver concise learning units, enhancing the absorption of knowledge in less than a minute. This capability is particularly impactful in fields such as financial education, where Narimo et al. (2023) found that TikTok significantly boosts engagement and learning effectiveness, facilitating both knowledge acquisition and retention (Narimo, Mustofa, Anindhita, & Gano-an, 2023).

TikTok has been identified as an effective tool for improving student motivation and fostering creative learning processes in higher education settings, particularly in courses like sport sciences where the platform's features complement expressive and creative content (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021).

Also, a duoethnographic study in higher education revealed that TikTok could facilitate a posthuman educational encounter, which blends human and non-human elements in teaching and learning, thereby enhancing the educational experience in diverse international settings (Heyang & Martin, 2022).

While TikTok offers novel educational opportunities, challenges such as the potential for spreading misinformation and the need for effective content moderation are critical to maintaining its educational value (Nguyen & Diederich, 2023). Factors such as perceived usefulness and user satisfaction significantly influence the continuance intention of users accessing higher education content on TikTok, suggesting the need for platform improvements to meet educational needs (Rahimullah et al., 2022).

While the benefits are significant, the challenges of using TikTok in educational contexts cannot be overlooked. Concerns regarding misinformation, content validity, and the superficial treatment of complex subjects are prevalent. However, these challenges also present opportunities for further research and development in digital literacy, content moderation, and the development of pedagogical strategies tailored to short-form video content.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach to explore the educational impact of TikTok's #EduWOW initiative on students from a variety of educational settings, including public and private universities, as well as public and private senior and junior high schools. Participants were recruited through announcements posted on Facebook and TikTok, targeting students who actively engaged with educational content associated with the #EduWOW hashtag. These announcements directed potential participants to a screening form designed to confirm their eligibility based on their engagement levels and educational backgrounds.

Data collection was conducted using two primary methods: In-depth Interviews (IDI) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The in-depth interviews aimed to understand individual student experiences and perceptions. These interviews were semi-structured, allowing flexibility to explore topics in depth based on the responses of the interviewees. Each interview involved one student and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes, conducted virtually via Zoom and Meet, depending on participant availability and preference. To achieve a thorough understanding of the students' experiences, the study incorporated thematic analysis of the interview data. This analysis involved an initial coding phase based on predefined themes related to digital learning interactions, followed by an iterative coding process that allowed for the identification of new themes as the analysis progressed. This method ensured that the study remained responsive to the data and captured a nuanced understanding of the educational dynamics at play.

Focus group discussions were utilized to gather a broader range of perspectives and to foster interaction among students regarding their common experiences with the #EduWOW content. Each focus group consisted of 6-8 students, segmented by their educational level and type of institution (public or private). These sessions were designed to last approximately 90 minutes and were facilitated by a researcher skilled in qualitative methods.

Discussions were structured around predefined questions that encouraged participants to engage with one another and share their views openly.

The study employed a purposive sampling strategy to ensure a diverse representation of participants across the various educational types and levels. The goal was to conduct approximately 30 in-depth interviews and 10 focus group discussions, aiming for data saturation where no additional themes were identified. Thematic analysis was applied to the data collected from both methodologies to identify and analyze recurring themes, providing insights into students' perceptions and experiences with educational content on TikTok.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, with minors requiring additional parental consent. Participants were assured of their confidentiality and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Results and Discussion

The qualitative analysis of the data collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions provided rich insights into how students from various educational levels perceive, interact with, and are impacted by TikTok's #EduWOW initiative.

Theme 1 - Student Perceptions of TikTok as an Educational Tool

Accessibility and Convenience
During a focus group discussion with junior high school students, the convenience of accessing educational content on TikTok was highlighted. One student shared,

"Mas sayon ra gyud tan-awon ang video sa TikTok kaysa maminaw sa taas nga lecture. Makatan-aw ko bisan kanus-a nako gusto, sama panahon sa biyahe pauli sa jeep, bus o bisan sa mga break. Naa ra sa akong phone, pipila ka tap lang." – FGD2
(It's way easier to just watch a video on TikTok than having to sit through a long lecture. I can watch whenever I want, like during a bus ride home or even during breaks. It's right there on my phone, just a few taps away.)

This response underscores the flexibility and user-friendly nature of TikTok, which aligns with the platform's appeal to younger audiences seeking spontaneous and brief educational interactions.
Students appreciate the ease of accessing educational content on TikTok, which aligns with the findings by Ettisa (2023) that highlight both the positive and negative aspects of TikTok's influence on students, including its accessibility and convenience for learning.

Content Relevance and Appeal
Content relevance also emerged as a significant factor during an in-depth interview with a senior high school student who mentioned,

"Ang mga naa sa TikTok mao gyud ang kasagaran ma discuss sa eskwelahan, pero ang mga video mas makalingaw ug tan-awn. Nakasabot ko dayon sa point nga dili na kinahanglan magbasa pa ko sa libro."- IDI 3
(The topics are exactly what we discuss in school, but the videos are more fun and direct. I get the point quickly without having to dig through a textbook.)

This response illustrates how TikTok tailors its educational offerings to mirror and complement formal education, while also adding a layer of engagement through entertaining delivery.

Content relevance is a significant factor in TikTok's appeal as an educational tool. This is supported by Liu (2023) who discusses the psychological, physical, behavioral, and positive influences of TikTok, suggesting content quality varies and can significantly affect students.

Theme 2 - Pedagogical Techniques and Their Effectiveness

Storytelling and Contextualization
During a focus group discussion with university students, the impact of storytelling and contextualization in educational videos on TikTok was emphasized. One participant shared,

"May isang video kung saan ikinuwento ng gumawa ng video ang tungkol sa pagkakatuklas ng penicillin. Di' lamang ito mga katotohanan; para itong isang mini documentary. Ang kwento ay nakatulong sa akin

na maintindihan hindi lang ang 'ano' kundi pati na rin ang 'bakit' sa likod ng science, na siyang dahilan kung bakit ito tumatak sa isip ko." – IDI 2
(There was this video where the creator told a story about the discovery of penicillin. It wasn't just facts; it felt like a mini documentary. The story helped me understand not just the 'what' but the 'why' behind the science, which made it stick.)

This response highlights how storytelling transcends mere presentation of facts by weaving them into a coherent narrative that enhances understanding and retention. Storytelling helps contextualize scientific discoveries and historical events, making them more relatable and easier to grasp. It provides a narrative hook that keeps students engaged and makes complex information more digestible.

Sidorenko-Bautista et al. (2021) and Firamadhina and Krisnani (2021) discuss how storytelling, particularly through social media platforms like TikTok, is evolving. They suggest that these platforms provide an immersive narrative experience that is becoming more popular with younger audiences such as Generation Z. This approach to storytelling in education through TikTok could be seen as a form of informal education that benefits learning and engagement.

Humor and Engagement
A senior high school student described their experience during an in-depth interview:

"Sa tingin ko yung' humor ang nagpapanatili sa akin sa TikTok.. Like, mayroong isang video na nagpapaliwanag ng Physics, at gumawa ng joke ang creator tungkol sa gravity. Nagstick sa akin ang subject dahil ito ay nakakatawa at naiiba."
(I think the humor is what keeps me hooked. Like, there was this video explaining physics, and the creator made a joke about gravity keeping us down, literally and figuratively. It made the topic stick in my mind because it was funny and different from just facts.)

This example illustrates how humor not only enhances engagement but also aids in retention of information. By embedding educational content within humor, creators make learning a more enjoyable and memorable experience, thus increasing the likelihood of students recalling and applying the knowledge gained.

Humor on TikTok plays a critical role in engagement and learning. Firamadhina and Krisnani (2021) note that TikTok can serve as a form of informal education, enhancing student engagement through entertainment and humor.

Visual Aids
The effectiveness of visual aids was emphasized by a university student in an in-depth interview:

"Ang pagtan-aw og video nga nagpasabot sa statistics nga atong gihisgutan sa klase nakatabang og dako jud. Nakita nako ang mga movement sa curves ba ug sa distribusyon nga naglihok-lihok, nga mas klaro kaysa mga images gikan sa slide sa PPT."- IDI 5
(Seeing a video that visually explained the statistics concepts we covered in class helped a lot. I could see the distribution curves move, which made it clearer than static images from a lecture slide.)

This feedback underscores the unique advantage of dynamic visual aids in facilitating a deeper understanding of abstract concepts.

Visual aids, such as infographics and animations on TikTok, are essential for explaining complex concepts, as highlighted by Xiuwen and Razali (2021) who emphasize their importance in English communication competence learning.

Theme 3 - Impact on Engagement and Motivation

Enhanced Curiosity and Independent Learning
An enthusiastic response came from a junior high school student during an FGD:

"Pagkahuman nako og tan-aw og TikTok video, nag online ug nagbasa pa og dugang about sa mga black holes. Katingalahan kaayo kung unsa pa ka daghan ang akong gustong mahibal-an kung kani gipresent sa makalingaw na pamaagi."- FGD 2
(After I watched a TikTok video, I went online and read more about black holes. It's amazing how much more I want to learn when it's presented in a fun way.)

This student's experience reflects a broader trend where initial exposure to educational content on TikTok can lead to further self-driven exploration, deepening educational engagement and extending learning beyond the platform itself.

This aligns with the observations by Fitria (2023), who noted that the use of TikTok in language learning for pronunciation can motivate learners to independently explore and practice beyond the app, suggesting a potential for broader applications across different educational fields.

Interactive Learning Experience
A university student highlighted the interactive aspect of TikTok during an IDI:

"Nangutana ko about sa problema sa math sa mga comment section, ug dili lang ang creator ang nagtubag, apil sad ang ubang mga estudyante sad. Gibati nako nga kita tanan nagtinabangay sa pagkasulbad niini." – IDI 6
(I asked a question about a math problem in the comments, and not only did the creator reply, but other students also chimed in. It felt like we were all figuring it out together.)

This response demonstrates how TikTok facilitates a collaborative learning environment, which is crucial for educational development and community building.

MacKinnon, Kia, and Lacombe-Duncan (2021) discuss the platform's potential for community-engaged digital knowledge mobilization, which aligns with the idea of using TikTok for interactive learning experiences. The platform's tools enable a global audience to engage and exchange knowledge, demonstrating its capacity to create collaborative learning environments.

Theme 4 - Recommendations for Content Optimization

Balancing Depth with Engagement
During an in-depth interview, a university student expressed concerns about the depth of educational content on TikTok:

"Kasagaran, ang mga video naghatag ra ug overiew sa complicated topics like sa topic namo na quantum mechanics or advanced economics, nga kinahanglan gyud og mas lalom na coverage. Gipamub-an nila ang mga video para makalingaw, pero daghang importante nga detalye ang nawala, ug kining mga detalyeha need ni para mas dali masabtan. Mas nindot ug magprovide sila ug links para sa detailed references or naa pay lain na video para masabtan ug mayo ang topics." – IDI 8
(Often, the videos only give a basic overview of complex topics like quantum mechanics or advanced economics, which really need more in-depth coverage. They keep the videos short and engaging, but important details are missing, and these details are necessary for a better understanding. It's good for a quick introduction, but it's not enough for thorough learning. I think they could improve this by providing links to more detailed resources or additional videos that go deeper into the topics.)

This feedback highlights a crucial tension between maintaining user engagement with concise, entertaining content and providing the depth of information required for higher educational purposes.

Brame (2016) discusses the principles for maximizing student learning from educational video content, emphasizing the importance of considering cognitive load and student engagement. The study suggests that while videos need to be engaging, they must also be designed in a way that supports learning without overwhelming students.

Also, Shen, Tan, and Pritchard (2022) investigate the effects of visual cueing on engagement with YouTube educational videos, a finding that could be transferable to TikTok. Their research suggests that certain visual elements can enhance engagement without necessarily adding depth to the content.

Collaboration and Credibility
A senior university student suggested during an FGD,

"Makatutulong kung paminsan-minsan ay may iinvite sila na mga professors or experts sa mga video sa TikTok. Sa ganitong paraan, nakasisiguro tayo na mapagkakatiwalaan ang nilalaman at nadadagdagan ang pagiging seryoso natin sa pag learn.." – FGD 9
(It would be helpful if TikTok videos occasionally included guest appearances by professors or industry experts. That way, we know the content is reliable and it adds a level of seriousness to the learning.)

This recommendation highlights the need for enhancing content credibility through expert involvement, ensuring educational integrity and trustworthiness.

Ramos et al. (2021) discuss pedagogical models for video-supported collaborative learning and stress the importance of including structured conceptual and content-specific support, such as expert insights, to enhance learning outcomes.

Furthermore, MacKinnon, Kia, and Lacombe-Duncan (2021) discuss how TikTok's unique potential for collaborative knowledge mobilization could be leveraged for engaging with underserved communities and equity-seeking groups. Their study suggests that involving experts in TikTok videos can enhance the credibility and depth of information, which is crucial for education and community engagement.

Summary of Findings

Table 1 shows the summary of results of organized structured thematic analysis based on the qualitative results, organizing it into key themes that emerged from the data.

Table 1. Thematic Analysis

Main Theme	Sub-theme	Description
Student Perceptions of TikTok as an Educational Tool	**Accessibility and Convenience**	Students appreciated the ease of accessing educational content on TikTok, which allows for learning at their own pace and on-the-go.
	Content Relevance and Appeal	Content appeal varied by educational level, with younger students favoring visually engaging content and university students preferring in-depth analysis.
Pedagogical Techniques and Their Effectiveness	**Storytelling and Contextualization**	Storytelling was effective in making complex subjects relatable and memorable, aiding in contextualizing academic content with real-world applications.
	Humor and Engagement	Humor played a critical role in maintaining student interest and engagement, making learning enjoyable.
	Visual Aids	Visual aids such as infographics and animations were crucial for explaining abstract concepts, enhancing understanding and retention of information.
Impact on Engagement and Motivation	**Enhanced Curiosity and Independent Learning**	The engaging and interactive nature of the content boosted students' curiosity and motivated them to explore topics further independently.
	Interactive Learning Experience	TikTok's interactive features, like comments and direct responses from creators, enriched the learning experience by fostering a sense of community and dialogue.
Recommendations for Content Optimization	**Balancing Depth with Engagement**	Students recommended that content should balance educational depth with engaging elements to enhance learning without sacrificing interest.
	Collaboration and Credibility	Suggestions included fostering collaborations between educators and content creators to ensure the educational validity and credibility of the content on TikTok.

The thematic analysis reveals that while students appreciate TikTok's #EduWOW initiative for its accessible and engaging educational content, featuring effective use of humor, storytelling, and visual aids, they suggest enhancements in content depth and credibility through expert collaboration, and recommend balancing educational thoroughness with engaging delivery to better cater to diverse learning needs across all educational levels.

Conclusion

The investigation into TikTok's #EduWOW initiative revealed a substantial impact on the educational experiences of students across various levels and institutions. The thematic analysis demonstrated that the initiative effectively leverages TikTok's engaging format and wide reach to enhance educational accessibility,

motivation, and engagement among students. Key findings from the analysis highlighted the importance of storytelling, humor, visual aids, and interactive learning environments in fostering an effective educational experience.

Students appreciated the convenience and engaging nature of the platform, which made learning more adaptable to their lifestyles and more appealing than traditional educational methods. However, the analysis also revealed areas for improvement, particularly in balancing the depth of content with engaging delivery and ensuring the credibility and accuracy of educational materials.

Recommendation

Based on the insights gathered from the study, the following recommendations are proposed to optimize TikTok as an educational tool:

1. While maintaining the engaging and concise nature of TikTok videos, creators should strive to delve deeper into topics to provide a more comprehensive understanding. This could be achieved through linked series or multi-part videos that explore subjects in greater detail.
2. To enhance the credibility and instructional quality of TikTok's educational content, greater collaboration between experienced educators and content creators is recommended. These collaborations can ensure that the educational material is not only engaging but also pedagogically sound and aligned with academic standards.
3. As storytelling and contextualization have proven effective in enhancing comprehension and retention, TikTok creators should continue to employ these techniques extensively. Training sessions or workshops could be offered to creators to refine their storytelling skills specifically for educational content.
4. TikTok should further develop and promote features that facilitate interaction, such as Q&A sessions, live discussions, and community challenges related to educational content. These features can enhance the sense of community and active participation among learners.
5. Establish a monitoring system to ensure that educational content on TikTok meets certain quality standards. This could involve a review process by educational experts or peer reviews within the TikTok educational community to prevent misinformation and ensure
6. Recognize and address the diverse learning needs by providing varied content that caters to different learning styles and levels. This includes offering content that ranges from introductory to advanced levels, accommodating learners' varying prior knowledge and interests.
7. Implement a system for regular feedback from learners and educators on the educational content. Use this feedback to continually refine content strategies and address any emerging educational needs or gaps.

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