

THE IMPACT OF TIKTOK SCROLLING ADDICTION ON STUDENT PRODUCTIVITY

Retno Ayuningsih ^{*1}
Rifa Aulia ²
Nayla Aprillia Maharani ³
Andhika Mochamad Siddiq ⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Study Program, Communication Science Study Program Inaba University

*e-mail : retnoayuningsih@gmail.com

Abstract

The increasing use of social media has significantly influenced the daily activities of university students, especially through TikTok. Its personalized algorithm and endless short-video content encourage users to spend more time scrolling, often without realizing how much time has passed. Among students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), TikTok has become one of the most popular platforms for entertainment, information, and social interaction. However, excessive use of TikTok may reduce students' focus on academic responsibilities and affect their productivity. This study aims to examine the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on the productivity of students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), Bandung. The research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to active undergraduate students who use TikTok. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression to determine the relationship between TikTok scrolling addiction and student productivity. The results indicate that TikTok scrolling addiction has a significant negative effect on student productivity. Students who spend excessive time scrolling on TikTok tend to experience difficulties in managing their study time, maintaining concentration during lectures, completing assignments on time, and staying focused on academic goals. The findings also show that prolonged TikTok use is associated with increased procrastination and decreased learning motivation. In conclusion, TikTok scrolling addiction negatively affects the productivity of students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). Therefore, students are encouraged to use social media more responsibly by balancing entertainment with academic activities. Maintaining good time management and self-control is essential to improving productivity in the digital era.

Keywords: TikTok Scrolling Addiction, Student Productivity, Social Media Usage

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The development of information and communication technology has changed the way people communicate and access information. One of the most significant developments is the rapid growth of social media, which has become part of everyday life. Today, social media is not only used for communication but also for entertainment, education, business, and sharing information. Among the many social media platforms available, TikTok has become one of the most popular applications, especially among university students. TikTok offers short-form videos that are easy to watch and supported by a personalized recommendation system. This feature allows users to continuously receive content based on their interests, making it easy to spend a long time scrolling without realizing it. Many students initially use TikTok to relax after studying, find educational content, or follow current trends. However, over time, excessive use of the application may become a habit that is difficult to control.

University students are expected to manage their time effectively because they have various academic responsibilities, such as attending lectures, completing assignments, participating in discussions, and preparing for examinations. Good productivity is important because it helps students complete their academic work efficiently and achieve better learning outcomes. However, when students spend too much time scrolling through TikTok, they may lose valuable study time and become less focused on their academic activities. This phenomenon can also be found among students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). Based on daily

observations, many students access TikTok during lecture breaks, while waiting for classes, or even while completing assignments. Although not all students experience negative effects, some admit that they often continue watching videos longer than they originally intended. As a result, they postpone assignments, reduce their study time, and sometimes struggle to concentrate on academic work. This condition suggests that excessive TikTok use may influence student productivity. Several previous studies have reported that excessive social media use can affect students' learning behavior, concentration, and time management. However, most existing studies discuss social media addiction in general or focus on its impact on academic performance. Research specifically examining TikTok scrolling addiction and its relationship with student productivity, particularly among students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), is still limited. Therefore, this topic deserves further investigation to provide a better understanding of how excessive TikTok use may influence students' academic lives. This study focuses on the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on student productivity. The findings are expected to contribute to the field of communication studies by providing insight into how digital media consumption affects students' daily behavior. In addition, the results may encourage students to become more aware of their social media habits and motivate them to manage their time more effectively so that entertainment and academic responsibilities can be balanced.

1.2 Research Phenomenon

The rapid development of social media has changed the way people communicate and spend their daily activities. One of the platforms that has experienced significant growth is TikTok. The application has become very popular because it offers short videos with various types of content, such as entertainment, education, lifestyle, and the latest trends. For many university students, TikTok is no longer just a social media platform but has become part of their daily routine. Among students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), TikTok is frequently used during free time, after classes, or while taking breaks from studying. Many students open the application with the intention of watching only a few videos, but they often continue scrolling for much longer than expected. The endless scrolling feature and personalized content recommendations make it difficult for users to stop using the application. As a result, students may spend several hours on TikTok without realizing how much time has passed. This situation has become a concern because university students have many academic responsibilities that require good time management. When too much time is spent on TikTok, students may postpone completing assignments, delay studying for examinations, or lose concentration during learning activities. Although TikTok also provides educational content, excessive use may reduce students' productivity if they are unable to control the amount of time spent on the platform. This phenomenon can also be observed in the current digital era, where many students depend on social media as their main source of entertainment. The habit of continuously scrolling through short videos may gradually influence students' daily routines and academic performance. Therefore, it is important to understand whether TikTok scrolling addiction has a significant impact on student productivity, particularly among students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). The findings of this study are expected to provide a clearer understanding of this phenomenon and encourage students to use social media more wisely.

1.3 Research Gap

Many previous studies have discussed the relationship between social media use and students' academic performance. Most of these studies explain that excessive use of social media can affect students' concentration, time management, learning motivation, and academic achievement. In addition, several researchers have examined social media addiction by combining different platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, X (Twitter), and TikTok into one variable. However, studies that specifically focus on TikTok scrolling addiction and its impact on student productivity are still limited. Most previous research measures academic performance using indicators such as Grade Point Average (GPA) or learning achievement, while fewer studies examine productivity from the perspective of students' ability to manage time, complete

assignments on schedule, stay focused during learning activities, and carry out academic responsibilities effectively. Another gap is related to the research setting. Most previous studies were conducted at large public universities or in different regions, while research involving students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA) is still rarely found. Since every university has different learning environments, student characteristics, and social media usage patterns, the results of previous studies cannot always be directly applied to students at INABA. Based on these gaps, this study focuses on examining the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on the productivity of students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). By concentrating on one social media platform and a specific group of students, this research is expected to provide a more detailed understanding of how excessive TikTok use influences student productivity and to contribute to the existing literature in the field of communication studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) was first introduced by **Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973)** to explain why individuals actively choose particular media to satisfy their personal needs and desires. Unlike earlier media theories that viewed audiences as passive recipients of information, Uses and Gratifications Theory considers audiences to be active participants who consciously select media based on their motivations and expected benefits. According to this theory, people use media not because they are forced to do so, but because they believe that the media can satisfy specific psychological, social, informational, or entertainment needs. Katz et al. (1973) identified several motivations for media use, including information seeking, entertainment, personal identity, social interaction, and escapism. In the digital era, these motivations have become even more relevant because social media platforms provide users with unlimited access to information, communication, and entertainment. Consequently, users are able to choose media platforms that best fulfill their individual needs.

TikTok has become one of the most popular social media platforms among university students due to its ability to provide diverse forms of content in a short-video format. The platform offers educational materials, entertainment, news, lifestyle content, business ideas, and communication tips that attract users from different backgrounds. Through its personalized recommendation algorithm, TikTok continuously displays content based on users' viewing history and preferences, encouraging them to remain engaged for longer periods. From the perspective of Uses and Gratifications Theory, university students actively use TikTok to fulfill various needs. Many students access TikTok to relax after attending classes, reduce stress caused by academic activities, seek entertainment, follow current trends, obtain educational information, develop new skills, and interact with online communities. These motivations explain why TikTok has become an important part of students' daily routines. However, although TikTok provides numerous benefits, excessive use may produce negative consequences. When students spend excessive amounts of time watching TikTok videos, they may gradually neglect academic responsibilities, postpone assignments, experience reduced concentration, and develop poor time management habits. In this situation, the gratification obtained from entertainment may outweigh the students' academic priorities, ultimately decreasing their learning productivity.

Therefore, Uses and Gratifications Theory provides an appropriate theoretical framework for this study because it explains both the motivations behind TikTok usage and the consequences of excessive media consumption. The theory helps clarify that students intentionally use TikTok to satisfy certain needs, but when media use becomes excessive and difficult to control, it may negatively influence their academic productivity.

2.2 TikTok Scrolling Addiction

TikTok scrolling addiction refers to a condition in which individuals experience difficulty controlling the amount of time they spend watching and scrolling through TikTok videos. The platform's personalized recommendation algorithm continuously presents content that matches

users' interests, making it highly engaging and encouraging prolonged use (Montag et al., 2021). As a result, many users continue scrolling far longer than they originally intended. Among university students, TikTok is widely used for entertainment, relaxation, social interaction, and access to educational information. The platform provides short, engaging videos covering a wide range of topics, making it an attractive source of both leisure and learning. However, its endless scrolling feature and highly personalized content can increase the risk of excessive use.

Previous studies have shown that excessive TikTok usage is associated with decreased concentration, increased procrastination, poor time management, reduced self-control, and lower academic performance (Omar & Dequan, 2020). Students who frequently spend several hours on TikTok may struggle to maintain focus on academic tasks because they are repeatedly distracted by new content. In addition, excessive TikTok use may interfere with students' daily routines, including sleeping patterns, study schedules, and assignment completion. Over time, these behavioral changes may reduce students' academic productivity and overall learning effectiveness.

2.3 Student Productivity

Student productivity refers to a student's ability to complete academic responsibilities effectively, efficiently, and consistently within a specific period. Productive students are generally able to manage their study time effectively, complete assignments before deadlines, participate actively in classroom discussions, maintain concentration during learning activities, and achieve their academic goals. Student productivity is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include motivation, self-discipline, learning strategies, and time management skills. External factors include family support, the learning environment, technological developments, and social media usage. Technology provides numerous opportunities to support learning. Social media platforms, including TikTok, enable students to access educational resources, language-learning videos, communication tutorials, business insights, and other valuable information. However, excessive social media use may reduce the time available for studying and completing academic tasks. Students who spend excessive time scrolling through TikTok often experience distractions that interrupt their learning process. They may postpone assignments, lose concentration while studying, and have difficulty balancing entertainment with academic responsibilities. Consequently, excessive TikTok use may reduce students' overall academic productivity.

2.4 Previous Studies

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between social media use and students' academic performance. Keles, McCrae, and Grealish (2020) reported that excessive social media use is associated with decreased concentration, increased academic stress, anxiety, and lower academic achievement among adolescents and university students. Montag, Yang, and Elhai (2021) explained that TikTok's personalized recommendation algorithm encourages continuous scrolling behavior, making users more likely to spend extended periods using the platform. Similarly, Omar and Dequan (2020) found that although TikTok offers educational opportunities, excessive use may interfere with academic responsibilities because students devote more time to entertainment than learning. Andreassen (2015) also argued that problematic social media use can negatively affect users' daily activities, including work performance, learning effectiveness, and interpersonal relationships. Students who experience excessive social media engagement often demonstrate lower levels of productivity due to distractions and poor self-regulation. Despite these findings, relatively few studies have specifically explored the relationship between TikTok scrolling addiction and student productivity using a qualitative approach. Moreover, research focusing on undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA) remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this research gap by exploring students' experiences and perceptions regarding TikTok scrolling addiction and its impact on academic productivity.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study examines the relationship between **TikTok scrolling addiction** as the independent variable and **student productivity** as the dependent variable. Based on Uses and Gratifications Theory, university students actively use TikTok to satisfy various needs, including entertainment, relaxation, information seeking, social interaction, and educational purposes. These motivations encourage students to engage frequently with the platform. However, when TikTok use becomes excessive, students may experience difficulties managing their time, maintaining concentration, and completing academic responsibilities. Excessive scrolling behavior may increase academic procrastination, reduce learning efficiency, and ultimately decrease student productivity.

Therefore, this study proposes that TikTok scrolling addiction has a significant influence on student productivity among undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). The conceptual framework assumes that while TikTok can provide educational benefits, excessive and uncontrolled use is more likely to produce negative effects on students' academic performance and productivity.

METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design because it aimed to gain a deeper understanding of how TikTok scrolling addiction affects student productivity. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate since the study focused on exploring students' experiences, opinions, and behaviors rather than measuring them using numerical data. Through this approach, the researcher was able to understand the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives and describe it in detail.

3.2 Research Participants

The participants in this study were undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), Bandung, who actively use TikTok in their daily lives. Participants were selected because they were considered capable of providing information related to the research topic. The study involved 10–15 students. or until the information collected reached data saturation, meaning that no new information emerged from additional interviews.

3.3 Sampling Technique

This study used *purposive sampling* to select the participants. This technique allows the researcher to choose participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives.

The criteria for selecting participants were as follows:

- Undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA).
- Active TikTok users.
- Use TikTok regularly every day.
- Willing to participate in interviews and share their experiences.

These criteria helped ensure that the participants had sufficient experience to provide meaningful information about the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on student productivity.

3.4 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' experiences regarding their TikTok usage, study habits, time management, and academic productivity. The interview format allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions whenever additional information was needed. Observation was also carried out to support the interview findings by understanding participants' behaviors related to TikTok use in their daily activities. In addition, documentation such as previous studies, journal articles, books, and relevant academic publications was used to strengthen the theoretical foundation of the research.

3.5 Research Instrument

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model developed by "Miles and Huberman (1994). The analysis consisted of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification".

Data reduction involved selecting and organizing important information obtained from interviews and observations. Data display was carried out by presenting the findings in the form of descriptions, tables, or themes to make interpretation easier. Finally, conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and relationships found in the data and verifying them throughout the research process.

To improve the credibility of the findings, the researcher also applied *source triangulation* by comparing information obtained from different participants and supporting documents. This process helped ensure that the findings accurately reflected the experiences of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Research Findings

Based on the semi-structured interviews conducted with undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA), several important themes emerged regarding the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on student productivity. The findings indicate that although TikTok provides entertainment and educational content, excessive use has influenced students' academic activities in various ways.

a. Excessive Time Spent on TikTok

Most participants reported that they initially opened TikTok for only a few minutes to relax after studying or during their free time. However, because of TikTok's personalized recommendation algorithm and endless scrolling feature, they frequently spent much more time on the application than they had intended. Several participants admitted that they often lost track of time while watching videos. Instead of spending only ten to fifteen minutes on the platform, they sometimes remained active on TikTok for more than one hour. This habit gradually reduced the amount of time available for studying and completing academic assignments. These findings suggest that TikTok's design encourages prolonged engagement, making it difficult for users to control their screen time.

b. Decreased Learning Concentration

Another important finding concerns students' concentration during academic activities. Most participants explained that frequent TikTok use affected their ability to maintain focus while studying. After watching numerous short videos, they often found it difficult to concentrate on reading textbooks, completing assignments, or listening attentively during lectures. Several participants stated that they repeatedly checked TikTok notifications even while studying. This habit interrupted their learning process and reduced their overall concentration. Consequently, students required more time to complete academic tasks because they were frequently distracted by social media.

c. Increased Academic Procrastination

The interviews also revealed that excessive TikTok use contributed to academic procrastination. Many participants admitted postponing assignments because they preferred watching TikTok videos before beginning their academic work. Although they intended to study after a short break, the continuous stream of recommended content often encouraged them to remain on the platform much longer than expected. As a result, assignments were sometimes completed close to submission deadlines, creating additional academic pressure and reducing the quality of their work.

d. Time Management Difficulties

The findings indicate that students who frequently used TikTok experienced challenges in managing their daily schedules. Participants explained that they occasionally prioritized

entertainment over academic responsibilities. This behavior disrupted their study plans and reduced the amount of productive learning time available each day. Although several participants attempted to limit their TikTok usage by setting screen-time reminders or deleting the application temporarily during examination periods, maintaining consistent self-control remained difficult.

c. Positive Aspects of TikTok

Despite the negative impacts, participants also acknowledged several positive aspects of TikTok. Many students stated that TikTok provides educational content related to communication, public speaking, language learning, business, and technology. Some participants explained that they had learned useful academic skills through educational creators on the platform. Furthermore, TikTok helped students reduce stress after completing demanding academic activities. Therefore, participants emphasized that TikTok itself is not inherently harmful; instead, problems arise when users fail to control the amount of time spent using the application.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that TikTok scrolling addiction influences students' productivity in several significant ways. Excessive use reduces study time, weakens concentration, encourages procrastination, and negatively affects time management. These findings support **Cultivation Theory** proposed by Gerbner, which explains that repeated exposure to media gradually shapes individuals' attitudes and behaviors. Continuous interaction with TikTok content encourages habitual scrolling behavior, eventually influencing students' daily routines and academic priorities. The results are also consistent with previous studies reporting that excessive social media use negatively affects students' academic performance, concentration, and self-regulation. Participants in this study experienced similar challenges, particularly in balancing entertainment and educational responsibilities.

However, this study also reveals that TikTok can provide educational benefits when it is used responsibly and in moderation. Several participants explained that they frequently accessed educational videos related to communication skills, language learning, business, technology, and other academic topics. These videos helped them gain new knowledge, improve their understanding of classroom materials, and discover practical learning resources that were not always available in traditional textbooks. Therefore, TikTok should not be viewed solely as a source of entertainment, but also as a digital platform that has the potential to support learning when used appropriately.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that suggest social media platforms can enhance learning by providing easy access to educational content, encouraging independent learning, and increasing students' motivation to explore new knowledge (Abbas et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the educational benefits of TikTok can only be achieved when students are able to regulate their screen time and avoid excessive scrolling behavior. Without proper self-control, the platform's entertainment features may become more dominant than its educational value, leading to reduced academic productivity. Consequently, the impact of TikTok on students' productivity depends largely on users' ability to regulate their behavior, manage their time effectively, and prioritize academic responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the impact of TikTok scrolling addiction on student productivity among undergraduate students at Universitas Indonesia Membangun (INABA). Using a qualitative research approach, the study collected data through semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences regarding TikTok usage and its influence on their academic activities. The findings indicate that excessive TikTok use significantly affects students' productivity. Most participants admitted that they often spent more time on TikTok than they had originally intended due to the platform's personalized recommendation algorithm and endless scrolling feature. As a result, they experienced reduced

concentration while studying, delayed the completion of academic assignments, and encountered difficulties in managing their daily schedules effectively.

Furthermore, the study found that frequent TikTok use contributed to increased academic procrastination. Many participants preferred watching entertaining content before beginning their academic tasks, which often resulted in postponed assignments and decreased learning efficiency. These findings support Cultivation Theory, which explains that continuous exposure to media content gradually shapes users' attitudes, behaviors, and daily habits. However, the study also revealed that TikTok provides several educational benefits when used appropriately. Participants acknowledged that educational videos available on the platform helped them acquire new knowledge, improve communication skills, and access learning materials more efficiently. Therefore, the impact of TikTok depends largely on users' ability to regulate their screen time and balance entertainment with academic responsibilities. Overall, this study concludes that TikTok is not inherently harmful to university students. Instead, the negative consequences arise from excessive and uncontrolled use. Developing self-discipline, effective time management, and digital literacy is essential to ensure that social media supports rather than hinders students' academic productivity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed.

First, university students are encouraged to develop better self-control in managing their TikTok usage. Setting daily screen-time limits, disabling unnecessary notifications, and prioritizing academic responsibilities before entertainment may help students improve their productivity and maintain a healthier balance between social media use and studying.

Second, lecturers and universities should promote digital literacy programs that educate students about responsible social media use. Workshops, seminars, or awareness campaigns can help students recognize the potential risks of excessive TikTok usage while encouraging them to utilize social media as a learning resource.

Third, parents and families may also contribute by supporting healthy digital habits. Open communication regarding technology use and encouragement to establish balanced daily routines can help students avoid excessive dependence on social media platforms.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to investigate TikTok scrolling addiction using different research methods, such as quantitative or mixed-method approaches, involving larger samples from different universities. Future studies may also examine other factors related to student productivity, including learning motivation, self-regulation, academic stress, digital well-being, and smartphone addiction.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of communication studies and provide practical recommendations for promoting healthier social media usage among university students.

REFERENCES

- Abbas, J., Aman, J., Nurunnabi, M., & Bano, S. (2021). *The impact of social media on learning behavior for sustainable education: Evidence of students from selected universities in Pakistan. Sustainability*, 13(10), 5319. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13105319>
- Bhandari, A., & Bimo, S. (2022). *TikTok and the educational potential of short-video platforms: A systematic literature review. Education and Information Technologies*, 27(8), 11325–11347. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11037-4>
- Keles, B., McCrae, N., & Grealish, A. (2020). *A systematic review: The influence of social media on depression, anxiety, and psychological distress in adolescents. International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25(1), 79–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1590851>

- Montag, C., Yang, H., & Elhai, J. D. (2021). On the psychology of TikTok use: A first glimpse from empirical findings. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9, 641673. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.641673>
- Omar, B., & Dequan, W. (2020). Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies*, 14(4), 121–137. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i04.12429>
- Sun, Y., Zhang, Y., & Liu, X. (2022). Social media addiction and academic procrastination among university students: The mediating role of self-control. *Education and Information Technologies*, 27(7), 10045–10063.
- Wahyuni, S., & Prasetyo, A. (2023). The influence of TikTok usage intensity on students' learning motivation and academic performance. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 39(2), 205–221.
- Yin, H., Wang, X., & Liu, Y. (2023). Digital well-being among university students: The role of social media use and self-regulation. *Computers & Education Open*, 4, 100126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2023.100126>