

Extent of Students' Use of Tiktok in Relation to Their Class Engagement

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Abstract

This study examined the extent of students' use of TikTok in relation to their class engagement among 145 first- to third-year College of Teacher Education students of Central Philippines State University – Cauayan Campus. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, using a self-made questionnaire covering TikTok engagement for educational purposes, socialization and communication, entertainment, and class engagement. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage, mean and standard deviation, t-test, analysis of variance, and Pearson correlation. Results showed that overall TikTok engagement was at an average extent ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.14$). Engagement was high for entertainment ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.24$), average for educational purposes ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.26$), and low for socialization and communication ($M = 2.01$, $SD = 0.24$). Class engagement was high ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.24$). TikTok engagement differed significantly by sex ($t = 33.72$, $p < .001$), but not by family monthly income ($F = 0.50$, $p = .607$). Neither sex ($r = .11$, $p = .19$) nor family monthly income ($r = .03$, $p = .72$) was significantly related to class engagement. Overall TikTok engagement was significantly and positively related to class engagement ($r = .22$, $p = .007$), with educational purposes ($r = .18$, $p = .027$) and entertainment ($r = .18$, $p = .034$) showing significant low positive relationships, while socialization and communication did not ($r = .02$, $p = .82$). The findings suggest that TikTok may support class engagement to a small extent, particularly when its use is connected to educational and engaging content.

Keywords: TikTok, student engagement, class engagement, social media, educational technology

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Social media platforms have become widely used in contemporary life, including education, business, and entertainment. Gupta and Bashir (2018) identified enjoyment, sociability, informational, and intellectual purposes as major reasons for social media use. As educators increasingly incorporate social media into language teaching and learning, these platforms have also become relevant to educational engagement.

TikTok is a video-sharing social media platform characterized by short, user-generated videos. Although it is commonly associated with entertainment, the platform is also used to disseminate instructional and informational content. Its combination of brief videos, visual elements, text overlays, and user interaction may provide opportunities for learners to access content in an engaging format.

At Central Philippines State University – Cauayan Campus, the researchers observed that many college students use TikTok. This observation prompted an inquiry into the extent of students' TikTok engagement and its relationship with their engagement in class. The study therefore examined how students use TikTok for educational purposes, socialization and communication, and entertainment, and whether these forms of engagement are associated with class engagement.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored in Paivio's Dual-Coding Theory, which proposes that information can be processed through verbal and nonverbal or visual systems. TikTok learning videos commonly combine spoken or written language with visual aids, potentially supporting comprehension and memory. The study is also informed by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes observational learning, environmental influences, and self-efficacy. Through TikTok, students can observe language models, practices, and behaviors and may interact with content and other users. These theoretical perspectives provide a basis for examining how the characteristics and uses of TikTok may be associated with students' engagement.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex and family monthly income?

2. What is the extent of TikTok engagement of the respondents in terms of educational purposes, socialization and communication, and entertainment?
3. What is the extent of the respondents' engagement in class when taken as a whole?
4. Is there a significant difference in the extent of respondents' TikTok engagement when grouped according to demographic profile?
5. Is there a significant relationship between respondents' class engagement and their socio-demographic profile?
6. Is there a significant relationship between respondents' class engagement and their extent of TikTok engagement?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Teachers. The findings may help teachers consider TikTok as a supplementary platform for sharing informative and educational content.

Students. The study may help students recognize productive uses of TikTok and its possible value as an interactive learning resource.

Parents. The findings may provide parents with information that can support appropriate monitoring and guidance of students' social media engagement.

Researchers. The study may provide a reference for examining TikTok engagement and its educational implications.

Future Researchers. The findings may serve as a basis for related studies involving different populations, variables, designs, or interventions.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The study focused on the extent of TikTok engagement and class engagement among 145 College of Teacher Education students from first to third year at Central Philippines State University – Cauayan Campus. It used a descriptive-correlational design and a self-made questionnaire. TikTok engagement was examined in terms of educational purposes, socialization and communication, and entertainment, while demographic grouping variables were sex and family monthly income. Because purposive sampling was used and the respondents were drawn from one campus, the findings should be interpreted within the context of the study and should not be generalized to all college students without further evidence.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 TikTok as an Educational and Social Media Platform

Previous literature cited in the study describes TikTok as a platform that can support language learning, vocabulary development, motivation, and academic engagement. Zhang and Wang (2020) reported improvements in vocabulary knowledge and retention among students who watched TikTok vocabulary videos, while Wang and Zhang (2021) reported potential benefits for listening, speaking, and motivation. Li et al. (2021) likewise reported a positive association between TikTok-based academic content and academic performance.

The literature also highlights the social and motivational dimensions of TikTok. Studies cited in the completed research indicate that the platform can provide interactive, creative, and collaborative experiences. At the same time, concerns have been raised regarding short-form content, attention span, and the possibility that entertainment may displace academic focus. Thus, the educational value of TikTok depends partly on how and why students use the platform.

2.2 TikTok, Language Learning, and Student Engagement

Research reviewed in the study suggests that TikTok can be used to develop listening, speaking, pronunciation, and vocabulary skills. Goh and Lim (2020) reported that TikTok videos could enhance listening and speaking performance among English language learners. Hwang et al. (2021) also examined TikTok videos for English vocabulary acquisition. Other studies cited by the researchers similarly suggest that active engagement with TikTok-based learning content may be associated with improved learning outcomes.

2.3 TikTok, Well-being, Creativity, and Social Interaction

The reviewed literature presents mixed implications of TikTok use. Some cited studies associate TikTok with entertainment, creativity, and motivation, while others raise concerns about social comparison and well-being. These findings support the need to distinguish among different purposes of TikTok use rather than treating all TikTok engagement as equivalent.

2.4 Synthesis and Research Gap

The reviewed studies generally indicate that TikTok has potential educational and motivational value, particularly when students actively engage with learning-oriented content. However, the completed study focuses specifically on the relationship between students' patterns of TikTok engagement and their class engagement within a College of Teacher Education context at CPSU–Cauayan Campus. This local focus provides a basis for examining whether the observed relationships in broader literature are reflected among the study's respondents.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. Descriptive research was used to describe the respondents' TikTok and class engagement, while correlational analysis was used to determine relationships among the measured variables without manipulating them.

3.2 Locale and Respondents

The study was conducted at Central Philippines State University – Cauayan Campus, Poblacion, Cauayan, Negros Occidental. The respondents were 145 first- to third-year College of Teacher Education students officially enrolled during School Year 2023–2024 who engaged with TikTok.

3.3 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used to select respondents who had active TikTok engagement. This ensured that participants had direct experience with the platform relevant to the study variables. The use of purposive sampling limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the target population.

3.4 Research Instrument

A self-made questionnaire was used. Part I collected demographic information, specifically sex and family monthly income. Part II contained 30 items assessing TikTok engagement across educational purposes, socialization and communication, and entertainment, with 10 items per dimension. Part III contained 10 items assessing class engagement. A five-point scale was used, ranging from 1 (Very Low Extent) to 5 (Very High Extent). The questionnaire underwent face and content validation by expert jurors and pilot testing; the completed study reports a validity rating of 3.5 and the use of Cronbach's alpha for reliability testing.

3.5 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sought permission from the Campus Administrator, Research Coordinator, and Program Head of the College of Teacher Education before administering the questionnaire. After approval, the questionnaire was distributed to selected respondents at convenient times. The researchers supervised completion and provided clarifications when needed.

3.6 Data Analysis

Frequency count and percentage distribution were used for the demographic profile. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe TikTok and class engagement. A t-test and analysis of variance were used to examine differences in TikTok engagement by profile variables. Pearson correlation was used to determine relationships between class engagement, demographic variables, and TikTok engagement.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Socio-Demographic Profile

Among the 145 respondents, 115 (79.31%) were female and 30 (20.69%) were male. In terms of family monthly income, 87 respondents (60.00%) belonged to the low-income-but-not-poor category, 46 (31.72%) were in the poor category, and 12 (8.28%) were in the lower-middle category.

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Male	30	20.69
Female	115	79.31
Lower middle income	12	8.28
Low-income but not poor	87	60.00
Poor	46	31.72
Total	145	100.00

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

4.2 Extent of TikTok Engagement

Overall TikTok engagement was at an average extent ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.14$). Entertainment obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.24$), interpreted as high extent. Educational purposes obtained an average extent ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.26$), while socialization and communication obtained a low extent ($M = 2.01$, $SD = 0.24$). The pattern indicates that respondents primarily used TikTok for entertainment, while educational use was moderate and social interaction through the platform was less frequent.

TikTok Engagement Dimension	Mean	SD
Educational Purposes	2.98	0.26
Socialization and Communication	2.01	0.24
Entertainment	4.0	0.24
Overall	3.0	0.14

Table 2. Extent of students' TikTok engagement.

4.3 Extent of Class Engagement

Students' class engagement was high ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.24$). This indicates that respondents frequently participated in class activities, discussions, and other forms of active learning.

Variable	Mean	SD
Class Engagement	4.0	0.24

Table 3. Extent of students' class engagement.

4.4 Difference in TikTok Engagement by Demographic Profile

TikTok engagement differed significantly by sex ($t = 33.72$, $p < .001$), indicating that the level of engagement varied between male and female respondents. In contrast, TikTok engagement did not significantly differ by family monthly income ($F = 0.50$, $p = .607$). Thus, sex was associated with differences in TikTok engagement within this sample, whereas family income was not.

Profile Variable	Test	Statistic	p-value / Conclusion
Sex	t-test	33.72	< .001; Highly significant
Family Monthly Income	F-test	0.50	.607; Not significant

Table 4. Difference analysis of TikTok engagement by demographic profile.

4.5 Relationship Between Class Engagement and Demographic Profile

Neither sex nor family monthly income had a statistically significant relationship with class engagement. The correlation with sex was low positive ($r = .11$, $p = .19$), while the correlation with family monthly income was also low positive ($r = .03$, $p = .72$). These findings suggest that the respondents' class engagement was not significantly associated with the two demographic variables examined.

Profile Variable	r	p-value	Conclusion
Sex	0.11	0.19	Not significant
Family Monthly Income	0.03	0.72	Not significant

Table 5. Correlation between class engagement and demographic profile.

4.6 Relationship Between TikTok Engagement and Class Engagement

Educational-purpose TikTok engagement had a significant low positive relationship with class engagement ($r = .18$, $p = .027$). Entertainment also had a significant low positive relationship with class engagement ($r = .18$, $p = .034$). Socialization and communication had a very weak/low positive but non-significant relationship ($r = .02$, $p = .82$). Overall TikTok engagement had a highly significant low positive relationship with class

engagement ($r = .22, p = .007$). The results indicate that greater overall TikTok engagement was associated with slightly higher class engagement in this sample, although the strength of the relationship was low.

TikTok Dimension	r	p-value	Conclusion
Educational Purposes	0.18	0.027	Significant
Socialization and Communication	0.02	0.82	Not significant
Entertainment	0.18	0.034	Significant
Overall TikTok Engagement	0.22	0.007	Highly significant

Table 6. Correlation between TikTok engagement and class engagement.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

- The respondents were predominantly female, and most belonged to the low-income-but-not-poor family income category.
- Overall TikTok engagement was at an average extent, with entertainment as the dominant use, educational use at an average extent, and socialization and communication at a low extent.
- Class engagement was high among the respondents.
- TikTok engagement significantly differed by sex but not by family monthly income.
- Sex and family monthly income were not significantly related to class engagement.
- Overall TikTok engagement had a highly significant but low positive relationship with class engagement. Educational and entertainment uses showed significant low positive relationships, while socialization and communication did not show a significant relationship.

5.2 Recommendations

For educators. Educational content may be designed for TikTok in ways that are informative, concise, interactive, and aligned with curriculum needs. Entertainment-oriented features may be used strategically to increase interest without compromising learning objectives.

For students. Students may be encouraged to use TikTok intentionally, balancing entertainment with educational content and maintaining responsible social media habits.

For parents. Parents may provide guidance on healthy and productive social media use and encourage students to distinguish educational content from purely recreational content.

For institutions. Teacher education programs may explore responsible social-media integration and digital literacy initiatives that help students evaluate and use online content effectively.

For future researchers. Future studies may use larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, qualitative interviews, or intervention approaches to examine the direction and mechanisms of the relationship between TikTok use and class engagement.

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Appendix

Research Questionnaire

“Extent of students’ use of TikTok in relation to their class engagement”

Part 1: Socio-Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Name: (Optional) _____

Sex: ☐ M ☐ F

Family Monthly Income:

- ☐ P219, 141 and above (Rich)
- ☐ P131, 485 to P219, 140 (Upper Middle but not Rich)
- ☐ P76, 669 to P131, 484 (Upper Middle)
- ☐ P43, 829 to P76, 668 (Middle)
- ☐ P21, 915 to P43, 828 (Lower middle)
- ☐ P10, 958 to P21, 914 (Low-income but not poor)
- ☐ Below P10, 957 (Poor)

Part II: Extent of Students’ Tiktok Engagement

DIRECTION: Kindly put a check ☒ on the appropriate column which corresponds to your response on each items with interpretation as follow:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (5) Very High Extent | (Student always engages on Tiktok) |
| (4) High Extent | (Student engages often on Tiktok) |
| (3) Average | (Student engages sometimes on TikTok) |
| (2) Low Extent | (Student engages seldom on TikTok) |
| (1) Very Low Extent | (Student engages rarely on TikTok) |

A. Educational Purposes	5	4	3	2	1
1. I am using TikTok to find educational content that is informative.					

2. I am using TikTok to interact with educational content through likes, comments, and shares.					
3. I am using TikTok to watch educational videos based on my interest.					
4. I am using TikTok to participate in educational challenges and trends.					
5. I am using TikTok's collaborative features like duets and stitches that allows me to interact with educational content in creative ways, fostering collaboration with my peers.					
B. Socialization and Communication					
1. I am using TikTok to connect with my friends and classmates in a fun and interactive way.					
2. I am using TikTok to share my thoughts and ideas with a wider audience.					
3. I am using TikTok to discover and engage with people who share					
4. I am using TikTok to create and share content which boosted my confidence in expressing myself.					
5. I am using TikTok to give and receive constructive feedback					
6. I am using TikTok to stay connected with my friends and family, even when we're far apart.					
7. I am using TikTok to meet new friends from around the world.					
8. I am using TikTok to meet new friends from around the world.					
9. I am using TikTok to understand and appreciate different cultures.					

C. Entertainment	5	4	3	2	1
1. I am using TikTok to find funny and relatable videos that brighten my day.					
2. I am using TikTok to watch diverse contents to ensure I never get bored.					
3. I am using TikTok to follow my favorite creators, as they consistently post entertaining content.					
4. I am using TikTok to take a quick entertainment break between study sessions.					
5. I am using TikTok to watch comedy sketches which always make me laugh and help me relax after a long day.					
6. I am using TikTok to join in interactive features, like polls and Q&A sessions to keep me entertained and involved.					
7. I am using TikTok to participate in virtual events and challenges which adds excitement to my routine.					
8. I am using TikTok to use filters and effects which make creating content even more fun and engaging.					
9. I am using TikTok to watch a wide range of content which ensures there's always something to entertain me.					
10. I am using TikTok to join dance challenges which help me stay active and have fun at the same time.					

Part III: Extent of the students class engagement

DIRECTION: Kindly put a check ☒ on the appropriate column which corresponds to your response on each items with interpretation as follow:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| (5) Very High Extent | (Student always engages on TikTok) |
| (4) High Extent | (Students engages often on TikTok) |
| (3) Average | (Students engages Sometimes on TikTok) |
| (2) Low Extent | (Students engages seldom on TikTok) |
| (1) Very Low Extent | (Students engages rarely on TikTok) |

A.Class Engagement	5	4	3	2	1
1. I feel connected to the lesson when my teacher uses interactive activities.					
2. I am asking questions during classes which helps clarify any confusion and keeps me involved in the learning process.					
3. I am staying engaged when the lessons are relevant to real-world applications.					
4. I appreciate when my teacher uses diverse teaching methods to cater to different learning styles.					
5. I am participating in class discussions especially when my teacher employs hands-on activities and experiments.					
6. I enjoy classes where the teacher encourages open dialogue and values student input.					
7. Project-based learning keeps me actively involved and allows me to apply what I've learned.					
8. Classroom games and competitions make learning fun and encourage my participation.					
9. I stay focused during lectures, even though there are some distractions around.					
10. I am interested to listen to discussions when my teacher uses multimedia resources videos.					