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# Transformative Learning: The Significance of TikTok in Building Elementary School Students' Learning Motivation

#### Rora Rizky Wandini<sup>1</sup>, Nirra Fatmah<sup>2</sup>, Noorhisham Hamzah<sup>3</sup>

UIN Sumatera Utara Medan, Indonesia¹, Universitas Islam Tribakti Lirboyo, Indonesia², Kebangsaan Beranang School, Hulu Langat Selangor, Malaysia³

Email correspondence: <a href="mailto:rorarizkiwandini@uinsu.ac.id">rorarizkiwandini@uinsu.ac.id</a>

#### **Abstract**

This study aims to find out how students use the TikTok application and the impact of the TikTok app on students' learning motivation. This type of research is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach. The subjects of this study are classroom teachers, students, and guardians in class V. Data on the impact of TikTok social media use on student learning motivation are collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of this study conclude that the use of the TikTok application by students is influenced by the existence of adequate signals, the availability of supporting internet quotas, and various interesting content available on the TikTok application. The use of TikTok social media has a positive impact on students, such as increasing students' motivation to learn, including the desire and desire to succeed, the encouragement and need in learning, and students' enthusiasm in participating in learning. In addition, the use of the TikTok application also has an impact on increasing students' knowledge and stimulating students' creativity. However, excessive use of TikTok negatively impacts physical and mental health disorders for students.

#### Keywords

TikTok app, social media, learning motivation

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this era, the development of technology greatly affects various fields of human life, the economic, socio-cultural, and especially in the field of education (Andri & SP, 2017). Education is certainly inseparable from technology-based media or increasingly diverse applications that have various kinds of advanced features. The use of these media can support the effective and efficient teaching and learning process (Nagle, 2018; Patahuddin et al., 2022). The use of applications, especially social media in learning, both at school and outside of school, will certainly attract students' motivation to learn, but there are also some applications whose influence is still questionable because they only serve as entertainment to drive away children's boredom due to the tight schedule given to students in the current curriculum (Seraji et al., 2023). The use of social media applications today is very massive among students, especially elementary school students who have started to use such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, and other social media applications. The granting of freedom to students to have a mobile phone by parents makes social media increasingly loved by students to communicate. Social media is often used by students and is even very attached to their daily lives (Fajar & Machmud, 2020).

One of the applications whose influence is still questionable is the TikTok application. The TikTok application is an application equipped with unique and interesting special effects that can be used by all people without exception (Damico & Krutka, 2018). This application is used to create cool short videos accompanied by music and dance that can attract the attention of many people, besides that this application can encourage creativity to be shown to the public so that it can become valuable content for others (Sitorus, 2018). TikTok predicts that this application will be one of the applications that are widely loved by children, teenagers, and adults, as evidenced in 2020 social media that has experienced rapid development to become a popular culture in Indonesia is the TikTok application (Falgoust et al., 2022).

Looking at the number of TikTok users in Indonesia, it can be concluded that the TikTok application is a primadonna, interesting, and loved application by millennials (Andriani, 2021). This application is expected to increase students' motivation to learn if it is processed as interesting and creative as possible (Aji & Setiyadi, 2020). Student learning motivation will arise if a child has a strong drive to achieve maximum achievement (Ismiyanti & Afandi, 2022). In other words, motivation in learning activities is everything that is intended to encourage or encourage someone who conducts learning activities to become more active in learning to obtain even better achievements (Cahyaningtyas et al., 2022).

The observable relationship between the use of the TikTok application and learning motivation is that this application is understood as an interesting application and can make people who use it feel happy and excited, if associated with the element of learning motivation is very possible to be used as one of the aspects that can increase a student's learning motivation. As explained by Maria Cleopatra in her journal, motivation is energy in a person that is characterized by feelings and preceded by a response to goals (Cleopatra, 2015). However, the use of social media cannot be separated from the negative impact on its users. As revealed by Andara, et al. in their research the negative impact that often appears on elementary school students is content that is not appropriate for their age and even makes them indicate that they are addicted to these contents (Andara et al., 2022).

So far, there have been several studies that have been conducted related to the use of TikTok social media in education. First, research on the use of TikTok social media as an online learning medium (Ramdani et al., 2021). Second, research on the effectiveness of TikTok-based learning models (Ardiyanti, et al., 2021). Third, research on student responses to the use of TikTok social media as a learning medium (Mana, 2021). Fourth, research on the use of TikTok social media as a medium for learning Indonesian (Dewanta, 2020). In addition, there are also many studies that state that social media has a negative impact on students in elementary schools. First, social media has a negative impact on student learning achievement (Asdiniah & Lestari, 2021; Suryaningsih, 2019). Second, social media has a negative impact on students' behavior or character (Hudaya, 2018). Third, social media has a negative impact on students' interest in learning (Handayani et al., 2022; Sahlan & Sihombing, 2022; Umam et al., 2023). Fourth, social media has a negative impact on students' motivation to learn. Fifth, social media can also make students experience psychological disorders such as lack of confidence, emotions,

excessive anxiety, low social attitudes, and even students experience stress (Feliyandra et al., n.d.; Fitri, 2017).

This fact is contrary to the fact that occurred at the SD Plus Rahmat, Pesantren subdistrict, Kediri district. Based on research data, students actually use TikTok as a learning medium. There are around 45% of students use the TikTok application as a learning medium, especially when studying at home. According to the teacher's statement, the TikTok application is not only used as entertainment for students when playing with their friends, in fact, students use the TikTok application as a learning medium that can encourage student motivation to learn (Observation, 2023). Therefore, through this study, researchers explore the impact of social media use on learning by analyzing the impact of TikTok media use on students' learning motivation in elementary school. This study also improves previous studies that have not revealed specifically the positive and negative impacts of social media use on student learning motivation.

#### **METHOD**

This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach. The design in this study was carried out using a phenomenological method. This phenomenological method is one of the approaches used in qualitative research, to try to understand the meaning of a phenomenon or event that occurs in a certain situation (Cahyaningtyas et al., 2019; Ismiyanti & Permatasari, 2021; Ulia, Ismiyanti, et al., 2019). Data from this phenomenological method is obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. This research was carried out at SD Plus Rahmat, Pesantren sub-district, Kediri district. Meanwhile, the subjects of the research were class teachers, class V students totaling 33 students, and some guardians of students totaling 10.

The instruments used in this study are in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were carried out in the neighborhood around the researcher's residence and at SD Plus Rahmat with the aim of finding out how the use of the TikTok application by students impacts their learning motivation. The second data collection technique is an interview conducted with three respondents, namely teachers, parents, and students. Furthermore, to support observation data and interviews, documentation activities are also carried out. Documentation includes documents in the form of records, photos, images, videos, school archives, and data related to research obtained during observation and interview activities. The data was analyzed by the stages of data presentation, data condensation, and conclusion drawing which were carried out continuously on the data obtained (Miles, et al., 2014). To obtain accurate data, the researcher combines data from interviews with data from observation and documentation (data triangulation).

#### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Use of TikTok Application by Students**

Based on the results of the research, students at SD Plus Rahmat use the TikTok application for entertainment to drive away boredom in their free time. There are also some students who use TikTok to learn in order to realize the goals that have been set. As for the time of using the TikTok application that is often used by students, it varies. But

most students access TikTok starting when students come home from school and only stop when students have other activities that do not allow them to bring their cellphones such as when students go to the mosque to recite. The intensity of using the TikTok application by grade V students at SD Plus Rahmat is quite large due to the influence of various interesting content watched by students. The content that students often watch includes learning content, entertainment content, and creative content. The learning content itself is content related to materials that are often taught in schools, such as mathematics, English, and cultural arts content (Observation, 2023).

Based on the data above, it can be understood that the intensity of gadget use is a factor that affects the learning process and outcomes of students. The intensity of gadget use can be interpreted as a level or level of how often a person uses gadgets. The use of gadgets is not only for communication and play but also for learning (Van Bommel et al., 2020). This is in line with the results of research which states that the intensity of gadget use can help students to search for information, activate students to search for and solve problems, add interesting and easy learning resources, and provide encouragement to learn at any time (Alifah et al., 2023; Febry et al., 2022; Hastini et al., 2020).

Based on observations and interviews, researchers found that the intensity of TikTok social media use by students, especially as a learning medium, is quite large, on average students in a day can access the TikTok application for approximately 4 to 5 hours depending on the signal speed and the availability of internet quota. One of the students, DK, stated "I like to forget the time and forget the quota, sometimes a day it can run out of about 2 GB of internet quota". A similar opinion was also expressed by one of the student's parents, El, "For the time, it is not certain. Because if I have opened the cellphone, my child likes to lose time, especially if his friends are playing at home and continue to open TikTok, they can play it for hours" (Interview, 2023).

This fact proves that humans use media to help and facilitate their activities. The use of media itself is interpreted as an effort to create and maintain daily behavior (Shim, 2023). The level of media usage can be measured by the frequency of use as well as the duration of its use. With the number of internet quotas available on mobile phones and the smoother the network used by students, the higher the time or intensity of social media use by students in accessing the TikTok application. The high need for the use of internet-based gadget technology causes students to often spend most of their time accessing social media (Pebrianti, 2021).

# Various Perceptions of the Use of TikTok in Learning

Referring to the research facts, the use of TikTok social media turned out to have a positive impact on students. First, there is a desire and desire to succeed. The results of interviews with teachers also stated that students' passion and desire to succeed are important factors for students to use TitTok social media as a means of learning or not.

"From what I observe, the desire to learn and the desire to succeed of each student is indeed different. This can be seen from the student's ability to ask and answer questions during class. Students who have a passion and desire to succeed will be diligent in learning, so students will take advantage of the TikTok application as a means of learning. Meanwhile, students who lack desire and desire to succeed will tend to be indifferent during the learning process, so these

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students are not able to use the TikTok application as a means of learning but are only used as a means of entertainment or looking for fun" (Interview, 2023).

One of the students, FDS, also stated:

"I am very interested in the TikTok application, I often open TikTok to look for content about learning that is easy to understand, because many on TikTok are easy ways or tricks to learn quickly. In addition, the content on TikTok is also exciting like dancing content, and there is also music, so sometimes I like to memorize it and continue to practice it with friends" (Interview, 2023).

Grade V students of SD Plus Rahmat, Pesantren sub-district, Kediri district. have different desires and desires to succeed in using the TikTok application as a means of learning. Some students show desire and desire to succeed because of their confidence and motivation to achieve a goal. This is as Sardiman said that students who have intrinsic motivation (desire and desire to succeed) will have the goal of becoming educated, knowledgeable, and expert in certain fields (Sardiman, 2018). In addition, some other students who do not have the desire and desire to succeed show an attitude that tends not to use TikTok media as a means of learning but only as a means of entertainment (Carpenter & Harvey, 2019).

The existence of desire and desire to succeed means that there is an element of intentionality in learning (Uruk, 2021). A person who has a desire and desire to succeed means that the student does have the motivation to learn so of course the results will be better. The desire and desire to succeed in learning and in daily life, in general, is called the achievement motive, which is the motive to succeed in doing a task and work or the motive to obtain perfection. To achieve this perfection, of course, it requires various media that support one of them by utilizing the TikTok application as a means of learning to achieve goals (Hosen et al., 2021).

Second, there is an encouragement and a need to learn. The encouragement arising from the use of the TikTok application to the learning motivation of grade V students at SD Plus Rahmat, Pesantren sub-district, Kediri district. is different. There is an encouragement that arises because of one's own desires, namely with the aim of being a means of entertainment and as a place to hone the abilities and creativity that students have, there is also an encouragement that arises because accessing TikTok can add knowledge and knowledge that has never been known, besides that there is an encouragement that arises because of the influence of parents. One of the student's parents, RD, stated:

"Yes, I often give advice to my son, if you want to open TikTok, you must open good content that is appropriate for his age. That's why I often keep an eye on my child so that he doesn't carelessly open content on TikTok. Moreover, this is related to the use of gadgets, which of course we know that all information can be accessed. Not only information about learning but other information that should not be opened by children at elementary school age. That's why I advise my child to be able to see the content on TikTok that is good. Which can add knowledge and have positive value" (Interview, 2023).

The existence of encouragement or influence from parents aims to ensure that students can use TikTok as a means to motivate their children to learn while at home (Carpenter et al., 2023). Learning motivation is an active driving force or an encouragement for students who are able to provide enthusiasm, passion and desire to carry out a learning process activity (Azizah, 2017).

Learning is a series of activities that are carried out to obtain a change in a person. This process does not happen automatically but must go through encouragement and direction by others who aim to use TikTok to motivate children to learn while at home (Carpenter et al., 2023). Learning motivation is an active driving force or an encouragement for students who are able to provide enthusiasm, passion, and desire to carry out a learning process activity (Azizah, 2017).

Third, there are hopes and ideals for the future. Referring to the statement of one of the students that students use the TikTok application to be able to learn English to achieve their goals, namely studying abroad (Interview, 2021). This is also in line with Uno's opinion that students who have clear hopes and ideals always meet their needs in learning (Uno, 2013). As for students who do not have clear goals, they will use this TikTok application as a mere fun event, even with this application it can make students lazy in the learning process. Students who are lazy to learn are one of the characteristics of low motivation to learn.

Ideals can be interpreted as desires that are always in the mind or goals that a person sets for himself and wants to achieve (Gulo, 2018). A student's hopes and ideals are a very important motivational tool because by understanding the expectations and ideals that must be achieved, there will be a desire in students to continue learning (Rahman, 2022). Some students at SD Plus Rahmat use the TikTok application as a means to find information related to the goals that students want to achieve, with the existence of this TikTok application can give rise to students' hopes and ideals in achieving their dreams, namely by looking for content related to students' motivation to grow their hopes and ideals.

# **From Positive to Negative Benefits**

In addition to having an impact on student's motivation to learn, the use of gadgets, in this case, the use of the TikTok application, also has an impact on other aspects. First, increasing knowledge. One of the benefits of gadgets in the world of education is to support knowledge and prepare children to face the digital world through educational applications (Rahmandani et al., 2018). One of the educational applications that is going viral among children, teenagers, and adults is the TikTok application because in the application there are many interesting features and content related to learning.

Second, stimulating creativity. One of the positive impacts of using gadgets for students, especially grade V students at SD Plus Rahmat is that it can stimulate student creativity. With the use of gadgets that are designed to have a variety of interesting features and effects or filters, students can be used to look creative in making videos or images so that people will be interested in watching them.

Third, it can interfere with health. The use of gadgets for too long can have a bad impact on health. The negative impact of using this gadget is also often felt by students at SD Plus Rahmat. Most students complained of experiencing problems with eye health such

as sore, watery, and red eyes due to exposure to radiation from the use of gadgets too often. In addition to eye problems, students at SD Plus Rahmat also complained of back pain and difficulty sleeping because they played games too often and accessed applications on their gadgets (Shorter et al., 2022).

Fourth, dependence. One of the negative impacts of using gadgets on students is that it can cause dependence. Dependency itself can be interpreted as an attitude that makes students unable to escape from using something (Hidayah et al., 2022). Grade V students at SD Plus Rahmat can be said to be dependent on gadgets because gadgets have become a necessity that cannot be separated from student activities. It can be seen that class V students are very difficult to separate from the gadgets they have even when eating, playing, and in their spare time they always carry gadgets. If students do not hold a cell phone for a day, they will feel that something is lacking and even feel bored. In accordance with the opinion expressed by Amelia and Nugraha that if the gadget is not held by the child, he will continue to ask for the gadget (Kurniawati, 2020).

#### **CONCLUSION**

This research proves that social media does not always have a negative impact on students. Quite the opposite, based on the results of the study, it was found that the use of the TikTok application by students can have a positive effect on student learning motivation. Through various interesting educational content on the TikTok application, students get ease in obtaining various explanations of the subject matter. This convenience results in students being more enthusiastic about learning independently. Students have a desire and desire to succeed, and there is a drive and need to learn. In fact, the TikTok application can also increase students' knowledge, and stimulate students' creativity. However, excessive use of the TikTok application causes students to become dependent which can have an impact on physical and mental health disorders.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

However, due to time constraints, this study has not revealed in detail the negative impacts of the use of the TikTok application in the long term and has also not quantitatively measured the amount of influence of the TikTok application on the learning motivation of students in elementary school. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the aspects that have not been studied can be intensively researched by the next reader or researcher.

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