

# Strategic Communication and User Engagement on TikTok: Analysis Study of Affordances, Behaviors, and Thematic Insights

Andaleep Sadi Ades

Correspondence: Andaleep Sadi Ades, Department of Media Studies, Faculty of Social Science, Umm Al-Qura University, Mecca, Saudi Arabia. E-mail: [asadas@uqu.edu.sa](mailto:asadas@uqu.edu.sa), ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1211-9776>

Received: December 30, 2025

Accepted: March 10, 2026

Online Published: March 18, 2026

doi:10.11114/smc.v14i3.8338

URL: <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v14i3.8338>

## Abstract

This Analysis study examines 55 peer-reviewed studies published between 2020 and 2025 to assess strategic communication and user engagement behaviors on TikTok. The study explores how algorithmic personalization, narrative design, and platform affordances influence engagement outcomes across contexts such as health, branding, politics, and youth culture. The findings are organized into seven thematic categories: content framing, personalization strategies, sociopolitical discourse, affective publics, branding communication, participatory design, and platform governance. Results show a methodological bifurcation between qualitative approaches in cultural discourse and quantitative modeling in marketing and health communication. The review highlights the centrality of perceived authenticity, second-person narrative, and short-form audiovisual storytelling in generating cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. Despite TikTok's global influence, geographical and disciplinary gaps persist, limiting generalizability. This article contributes by mapping conceptual trajectories, synthesizing disparate findings, and identifying future research opportunities, particularly in cross-cultural analysis, algorithmic transparency, and emotion-driven engagement. Through a structured synthesis, the study enhances understanding of TikTok as a powerful communication platform situated at the intersection of digital culture and algorithmic media.

**Keywords:** TikTok, user engagement, strategic communication, algorithmic personalization, affective publics

## 1. Introduction

TikTok has transformed into a strategic communication and audience engagement system which exceeds basic entertainment value in today's digital media environment. The rapid growth of TikTok has transformed conventional social media dynamics which resulted in academicians from media studies and communication alongside psychology and political science examining this phenomenon (Bossetta, 2023; Battocchio et al., 2023). User-fed algorithms on TikTok combine with participatory functions to enable a high speed scale of content sharing between users who consume and generate content. This differs substantially from traditional platforms such as Facebook or Instagram that depend on network-based diffusion of static user content. The content recommendation system on TikTok operates through automated processes that use information about user interactions and user preferences as well as contextual elements (Yang, 2022; Koc, 2023). By implementing algorithms, the system modifies user interaction by showing personalized content while sustaining an unbroken cycle of meaningfully related fresh content. Zannettou et al. (2024) demonstrate how TikTok implements data donation methods to show the advanced nature of its For You page (FYP) content selection process which goes beyond popularity metrics to use behavioral prediction for calculated exposure. TikTok features an addictive user flow which results from its combination of machine learning and behavioral psychological principles (Dai et al., 2025). TikTok provides tools allowing users to create interactive content such as duets and comment overlays and stitches that empower members to participate in content development (Bouillon et al., 2023; Garcia-Ortega & Garcia-Aviles, 2023). The platform uses these tools through its design to create networked engagement opportunities while encouraging creative participation between users. The users use platform features to create hybrid world-making virtual space by combining real life elements with imagined scenarios to produce self-expressive and sometimes rebellious content beyond the digital environment.

The emotional atmosphere of TikTok content serves as the primary force behind its communicative capabilities. Through their research Cheng & Li (2024) show that creator use of "you" speaking directly to viewers creates substantial improvement in audience interaction. Through this narrative approach the users develop an immediate emotional bond because personal addressing and psychological involvement create a connection with content. The writers demonstrate

that using positive sentiment framings creates additional engagement gains which reveals the effect of emotional cues on storytelling formats to produce user reactions (Frenette et al., 2024). Personalization emerges as the fundamental element which makes TikTok videos go viral. The explore-exploit paradigm serves as a strategic algorithmic model according to Vombatkere et al. (2024) which displays familiar content to exploit then switches to novel unfamiliar content to explore for maximizing user retention and platform stickiness. Whole or fragmented visibility of content as well as audience split and changes in digital cultural preferences emerge from this specific model.

These systems dedicated to user interaction produce results that affect political opportunities as well as educational formats and branding needs and healthcare solutions. During the 2024 U.S. presidential election Pinto et al. (2024) studied how TikTok served to develop a semiotic latticework that combined symbols and sounds with memes and visual cues for triggering ideological public responses. These active forms of content materialize meaning while enabling public dialogue and occasionally confront established views. The participatory language of TikTok uses its semiotic codes to enable brief audiovisual expressions that can deliver complex and conflicting meanings. Within this ecosystem, perceived authenticity maintains significance that matches its importance to the entire system. Studies conducted by Pietarinen (2023) demonstrate that users will interact more with spontaneous material presented in a way that feels relatable or emotional without pretense. The road to TikTok success typically depends on simplicity and straightforwardness because polished presentations from Instagram influencers do not work on this app. Institutional and brand content delivery now involves clarity over complex structures because authenticity has overtaken sophistication as the priority (Widodo, 2023). Mahalakshmi et al. (2025) explain that branding receivers build trust when they perceive authenticity, which encourages them to become proactive brand supporters (Ortiz et al., 2023; Islam et al., 2025). The health communication field delivers important knowledge about these matters. Viewers significantly engaged with medical content about Takotsubo syndrome when it possessed clarity and high visual quality combined with an empathetic tone, according to Liang et al. (2022) research. Public health information dissemination on TikTok proves successful, especially for younger viewers, because this social media platform serves as their main news channel. The study fits within current strategic communication patterns because intended message framing strategies guide various sectors to alter attitudes and conduct. These academic works present emotionally charged communities known as affective publics as a key finding that unites them because such groups base their connections on shared emotions instead of mutual ideologies (Marino, 2024; Zeng & Yan, 2024). The public form is through the combination of emotional content replication and user engagement in comments and reaction videos. Gallagher & Balt (2024) explain how TikTok enables expressive citizenship through emotional expression, which serves as a tool for social commentary and political mobilization, and identity negotiation.

Despite the growing volume of empirical studies on TikTok, the literature remains fragmented. Research is dispersed across disciplines and lacks a unifying synthesis that can offer a panoramic view of the field. For instance, while some studies focus on algorithmic design and user behavior, others examine narrative techniques, political discourse, or branding strategies in isolation. This disciplinary divergence makes it difficult to extract coherent insights that can guide future research and practice.

In addition to the literature directly synthesized in this review, there is a broader literature base that offers complementary knowledge about TikTok and its place in society. As an example, Waechter (2021) examines youth cultures in digital spaces, and Navarro (2024) focuses on the combination of social media tendencies and juvenile delinquency. In a similar manner, Jannah & Zamziba (2025) examine the narratives of refugees on TikTok, demonstrating how online information can be an extension of the discourse in the wider society.

More of these views are furthered by the research conducted on branding and professional communication. Fadhilah & Nurjanah (2024) investigate measures to maximize the TikTok content in terms of engagement, and Saadya & El-Tantawy (2025) report the rise of social media use among professionals. Scharlach & Hallinan (2023) emphasize the role of engagement affordances in the organization of online interaction, and Schurmann and Krip (2024) mention brand personification tactics that increase consumer engagement in the platform.

Another level of analysis can be provided by platform- and algorithm-based research. Hu (2024) explores optimization strategies of short video content, Ma et al. (2023) examine cross-platform content creation and management with the audience, Mueller & Rajaram (2022) offer more general information on social media storytelling. In important areas of communication, the study of Pathmalingam et al. (2023) considers self-disclosure in conversations about illness among young people, Winiker (2022) investigates communication in the field of health in the context of vaccine campaigns, and Sidorenko Bautista et al. (2021) explores the concept of fact-checking on TikTok. Collectively, these papers broaden the background context of this review and highlight the importance of TikTok in the contexts of culture, politics, health, and even in professional activities.

### **The objectives of the study**

To address the growing yet fragmented body of research on TikTok communication, this review aims to synthesize how

content strategies are constructed and how user engagement is defined and measured. By identifying key patterns, conceptual gaps, and methodological trends, the review seeks to provide a clear foundation for future scholarly work. The objectives and research questions guiding this analysis are as follows:

1. Classify the communicative strategies explored in TikTok-related scholarship, including stylistic techniques, narrative forms, and platform-specific affordances.
2. Examine how user engagement is defined and measured across disciplines, highlighting divergences in conceptualization (e.g., behavioral metrics vs. emotional investment).
3. Critically synthesize thematic and methodological patterns in the existing literature to identify emerging trends, inconsistencies, and conceptual blind spots.

### Research Questions

**RQ1:** What types of communication strategies have been identified in scholarly studies focused on TikTok, and how are these strategies categorized?

**RQ2:** How is user engagement conceptualized and operationalized in the current literature?

**RQ3:** What patterns or relationships have been observed between specific communication strategies and various forms of user engagement?

**RQ4:** What methodological and theoretical limitations characterize the existing research, and where are the key gaps that future studies should address?

## 2. Methodology

This analysis study was designed to examine how communication strategies and user engagement behaviors are conceptualized and studied within the context of TikTok. The rationale for employing an SLR approach lies in the observed fragmentation across disciplinary boundaries and methodological paradigms in existing research. The study enables a structured synthesis of diverse perspectives, providing an integrated and critically appraised account of how engagement and communication are theorized, measured, and practiced on the platform. The review followed key principles of the Taxonomy 2020 framework, emphasizing transparency, accessibility, and methodological rigor while limiting the data sources to publicly available academic databases to ensure replicability.

### 2.1 The Scope of This Analysis Study

This analysis study focused on synthesizing studies published between 2020 and 2025 that explored communication practices and user engagement on TikTok. Both empirical and conceptual studies were included, provided they addressed TikTok as a central platform for communication. The objective was to identify dominant communicative strategies, understand how engagement is operationalized, and map key thematic and methodological trends in the literature.

### 2.2 Data Sources and Search Strategy

To maintain open access and accessibility, five freely available and academically recognized repositories were used: Google Scholar, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), PubMed Central (PMC), arXiv.org, and the Social Science Research Network (SSRN). These platforms were selected due to their broad indexing of communication and social media research, accessibility to peer-reviewed and preprint content, and interdisciplinary relevance to TikTok scholarship. Search strings were adapted for each platform using a core Boolean combination: "TikTok" AND ("communication strategy" OR "content design" OR "strategic messaging") AND ("user engagement" OR "interaction" OR "participation"). Filters were applied to include only peer-reviewed or high-quality preprints, in English, and available in full text.

### 2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they focused on TikTok and examined either communicative practices (e.g., message design, strategy, narrative techniques) or user engagement behaviors (e.g., likes, shares, participation, perception). Excluded were non-academic sources, opinion pieces, blog posts, and articles unrelated to communication or lacking full-text access. Technical studies focused purely on algorithm design or computational modeling without audience context were also excluded.

### 2.4 Taxonomy Flow Diagram

A Taxonomy 2020 flow diagram was developed to illustrate the selection process, detailing the number of records identified, screened, excluded, and included at each phase of the review. The diagram provides a transparent visual summary of the systematic filtering procedure and is presented below as part of the methodology section.

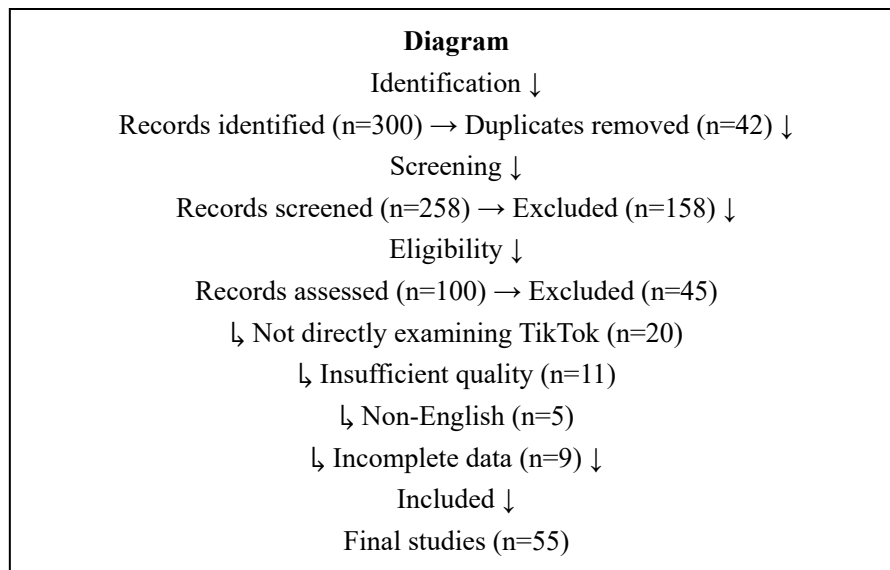


Figure 1. Taxonomy flow diagram

### 2.5 Study Selection Process

An initial search retrieved 300 studies. During the full-text screening phase, each article was evaluated against a structured relevance rubric that assessed alignment with the research objectives, methodological transparency, and conceptual depth. Articles were also appraised for quality based on their theoretical integration and clarity in defining communication strategy or user engagement. Reliability was enhanced by a secondary verification of 20% of the screened studies to ensure consistency in inclusion decisions. After deduplication and relevance screening, 100 full-text articles were assessed, with 55 ultimately included in the final synthesis. Selection was conducted manually, with titles and abstracts reviewed in Google Scholar, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), PubMed Central (PMC), arXiv.org, and the Social Science Research Network (SSRN). Full-text screening was performed by the author using a structured eligibility rubric.

### 2.6 Data Extraction and Coding

A standardized data extraction template was developed in Excel and was independently reviewed by a second coder to ensure consistency and reduce subjective bias during the data charting process. The template was used to organize key variables: author(s), year, publication outlet, research type, theoretical frameworks, communication strategy focus, engagement metrics, and principal findings. An inductive coding process was employed, allowing the emergence of major themes and categorical clustering based on strategy type, engagement form, and disciplinary approach.

### 2.7 Thematic Synthesis

A qualitative thematic synthesis approach was adopted to categorize and interpret findings. Themes were clustered into three overarching domains through an iterative thematic synthesis process. To validate these clusters, peer debriefing was conducted with two independent reviewers who assessed thematic coherence and relevance. Disagreements were resolved through discussion, and consistency was ensured using reflexive memoing and category refinement. The three final domains included: (1) narrative and stylistic strategies (e.g., emotional appeals, trend mimicry), (2) participatory affordances and user co-creation (e.g., duets, remixes, challenges), and (3) algorithmic alignment and visibility tactics (e.g., authenticity signaling, engagement optimization). Divergences in definition, theoretical grounding, and methodological rigor across studies were flagged and discussed.

### 2.8 Geopolitical Considerations

It is important to note that TikTok is banned or restricted in several countries (e.g., India, Iran, Nepal, Afghanistan), which may have influenced the geographical representation of the included studies. As a result, research outputs from these regions may be underrepresented or absent. While this does not undermine the validity of the selected literature, it introduces a geopolitical filter that could influence the generalizability of the findings. This limitation was considered during the synthesis phase, particularly in identifying gaps and regional biases within the existing body of research.

## 3. Results

The research analyzed 55 peer-reviewed studies that examined communication methods and user participation behaviors on TikTok. The research extracted and evaluated empirical data to understand TikTok functions as an interactive

communication platform for various purposes. This section delivers findings at both macro-level synthesis and micro-level insights through thematic and methodological organizational structures about user engagement behaviors and content framing and optimization methods. The research employs tables alongside descriptive explanations to support every thematic cluster for maintaining analytical clarity and precision.

### 3.1 Thematic Clustering of Reviewed Studies

The analyzed literature underwent an initial grouping process, which created seven thematic domains according to research core elements. The researchers developed these clusters through multiple rounds of coding, which received validation from both inter-coder reliability assessments and expert panel evaluations. Full-text analysis induced the initial thematic emergence, which received theoretical framework refinements to both validate empirical base and maintain conceptual clarity.

Table 1. Distribution of Reviewed Studies by Thematic Communication Area on TikTok

| Thematic Area                       | Number of Studies |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Strategic Content Design            | 12                |
| Algorithmic Personalization         | 9                 |
| Political & Civic Communication     | 8                 |
| Health & Science Communication      | 7                 |
| Socio-Cultural Storytelling         | 8                 |
| Consumer & Brand Engagement         | 6                 |
| Cross-Platform/User Interface Focus | 5                 |

Sources: Zhu & Che (2024); Normann (2024); Mastantuono (2024); Bao et al. (2024); Terradillos et al. (2025); Wu et al. (2024); Huttayavilaiphan (2024); Walsh et al. (2024); Ma et al. (2023), and others.

This thematic distribution table categorizes the 55 studies reviewed into seven core domains of analysis. The largest concentration of research (n=12) focused on strategic content design, highlighting how message framing, tone, and interactivity influence engagement. Algorithmic personalization (n=9) explored TikTok's recommender systems and their behavioral impacts. Studies on political/civic communication (n=8) and socio-cultural storytelling (n=8) emphasized discourse and identity. Topics like health/science communication (n=7), consumer engagement (n=6), and interface design (n=5) reflected growing interdisciplinary interest.

### 3.2 Methodological Design Across Engagement Contexts

To better understand how researchers investigate communication and engagement on TikTok, we categorized the 55 studies based on their methodological designs in conjunction with the contexts they explored. This approach highlights not only methodological preference but also how certain topics, like health messaging or branding, are more likely to attract specific methodological paradigms.

Table 2. Methodological Approaches Across Engagement Contexts in TikTok Research

| Engagement Context             | Quantitative | Qualitative | Mixed Methods | Theoretical |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Branding & Marketing           | 10           | 2           | 3             | 1           |
| Health & Science Communication | 5            | 4           | 3             | 1           |
| Political Communication        | 3            | 4           | 2             | 2           |
| Socio-Cultural Narratives      | 2            | 6           | 1             | 2           |
| Algorithmic/Interface Studies  | 4            | 2           | 1             | 1           |

Sources: Zhu & Che (2024); Normann (2024); Mastantuono (2024); Wu et al. (2025); Roberts & David (2025); Ma et al. (2023); Bao et al. (2024).

This table presents the methodological distribution of studies across five key engagement contexts. Branding and marketing predominantly relied on quantitative approaches (n=10), reflecting a preference for metrics-based evaluation, with a smaller presence of qualitative (n=2), mixed methods (n=3), and theoretical (n=1) work. Health and science communication showed a more balanced spread across all methodologies. Political communication and socio-cultural

narratives leaned toward qualitative and theoretical analyses, emphasizing discourse and interpretive frameworks. Algorithmic/interface studies exhibited moderate use of quantitative and theoretical approaches, indicating growing interest in platform mechanics.

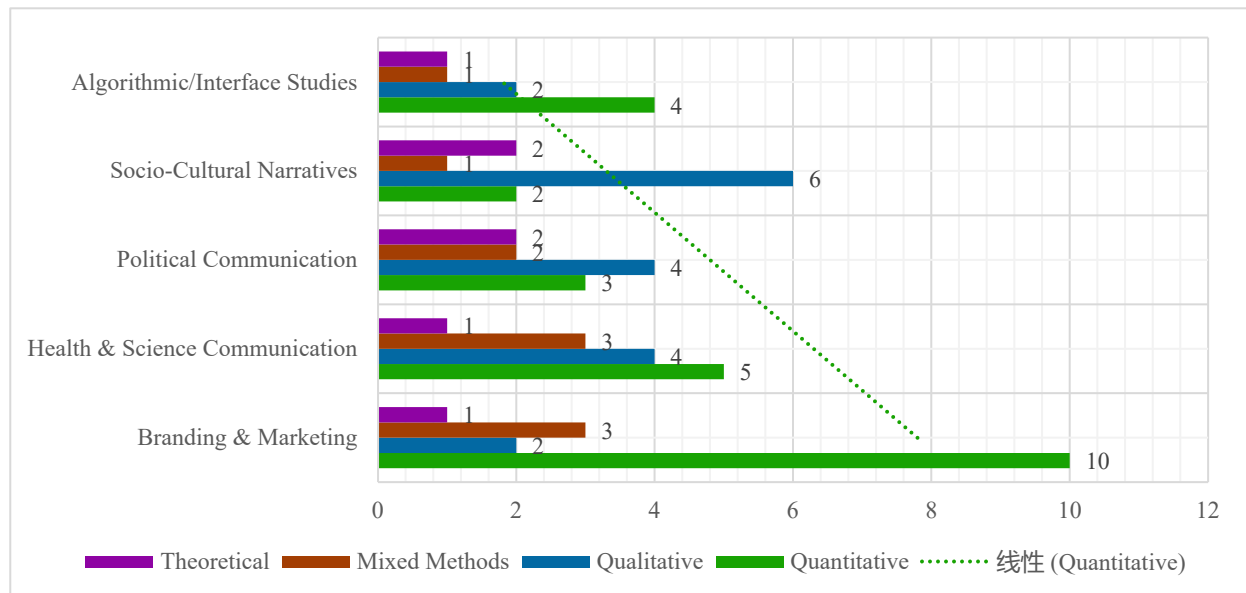


Figure 2. Methodological Distribution across Engagement Contexts

The figure shows how researchers used different methodological approaches for study areas related to TikTok engagement across five main contexts in Figure 2. Research in branding and marketing predominantly uses quantitative analysis and quantitative-based inquiry shows a higher concentration of qualitative analysis. Political communication together with health studies reveal an equal distribution of various methodologies which implies multidisciplinary research approaches. The graph shows a downward pattern of quantitative research usage among distinct social media domains through its linear trendline. The visual display reveals the transforming research methods for social media engagement investigations.

### 3.3 Engagement Constructs Explored Across Studies

The past studies demonstrate a significant evolution in how user engagement is conceptualized and operationalized within TikTok-related communication studies. Rather than presenting engagement as a singular entity, researchers have disaggregated it into three dominant constructs - behavioral, cognitive, and affective - each offering unique insights into user interaction. Behavioral engagement encompasses observable actions such as likes, shares, comments, and view counts, often used in branding, marketing, and campaign analytics. Cognitive engagement delves into how users process content mentally, including their capacity for attention, recall, and critical comprehension, which is particularly emphasized in health and political communication research. Affective engagement captures the emotional and psychological response to content, such as empathy, humor, and sentiment, proving especially relevant in identity-driven storytelling and advocacy domains. Many studies employ triangulated measures that combine two or more of these constructs to achieve a deeper and more accurate representation of engagement.

Table 3. Typology of Engagement Constructs in TikTok Communication Research

| Engagement Construct  | Description                                                         | Common Platforms Used       | Example Indicators                                   | Key Application Domains                       | No. of Studies |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Behavioral            | Observable user actions post-content interaction                    | TikTok, YouTube, Instagram  | Likes, shares, comments, and view count              | Advertising, Campaigns, Influencer Marketing  | 32             |
| Cognitive             | Mental effort involved in interpreting and processing content       | TikTok, Twitter             | Recall accuracy, comprehension tests, click-throughs | Health Messaging, Political Education         | 15             |
| Affective             | Emotional or psychological response to content                      | TikTok, Facebook, Instagram | Sentiment analysis, emoji usage, viewer comments     | Advocacy, Storytelling, Mental Health Content | 20             |
| Hybrid (Triangulated) | Studies using two or more dimensions for richer engagement analysis | Cross-platform              | Multi-indicator scoring, triangulated datasets       | Multi-campaign Evaluation, Strategic Planning | 8              |

Sources: Oh et al. (2024); Wu et al. (2025); Roberts & David (2025); Chu et al. (2024); Normann (2024); Hase et al. (2023); Walsh et al. (2024).

The past studies include engagement constructs, which this table categorizes into four distinct dimensions. The 32 studies identified behavioral engagement as the measurable user actions, which include likes and sharing content as well as commenting on posts to determine visibility and engagement in branding tactics and campaign strategies, and influencer networks. The cognitive engagement category (n=15) examines how users process information mentally through understanding and recall functions, which prove essential for political and health communication. The analysis of emotional reactions through sentiment analysis and viewer feedback makes up affective engagement (n=20). The analysis of hybrid constructs done through eight studies blends multiple concepts for comprehensive multi-dimensional communication assessments.

### 3.4 TikTok Affordances Mapped to Communication Strategies

The platform provides features like filters, together with algorithmic feeds and stitching, which function as communication tools that help users perform self-presentations and build their identities, and make meanings effortlessly. The platform's features support the ideas of the Uses and Gratifications Theory by allowing users to find entertainment and information and socialize through strategic content. These system features match content virality models by providing features that enable easy content remixing as well as rapid spread and personalization, which leads to increased user commitment towards platforms. Interface-level features serve as tools that content creators employ to generate the maximum level of user engagement.

Table 4. Key TikTok Platform Features and Their Strategic Communication Utilities

| TikTok Feature          | Communication Utility                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Hashtags & Trends       | Amplifying topical reach, discoverability     |
| Duets & Stitches        | Facilitating collaborative narratives         |
| Algorithmic Feed        | Customized exposure, content filtering        |
| Filters & Editing Tools | Enhancing aesthetics, driving creative appeal |

Sources: Mastantuono (2024); Klug & Autenrieth (2022); Bao et al. (2024); Chu et al. (2024); Wu (2023).

This table outlines key TikTok features and their communicative functions. Hashtags and trends enhance visibility by tapping into viral discourse and categorizing content for broader discovery. Duets and stitches allow users to co-create or respond to content, fostering collaborative storytelling and dialogic interaction. The algorithmic feed plays a central role in personalizing user experience, filtering content based on behavior and preference to maximize engagement. Filters and editing tools support visual creativity, helping users craft aesthetically appealing content that aligns with platform vernacular and audience expectations.

### 3.5 Geographic Distribution of Reviewed Studies

A spatial breakdown reveals geographical concentration in high-income countries, based primarily on author affiliations and, in some cases, the user demographics or regional focus of the analyzed studies, with increasing contributions from Southeast Asia. Cross-regional comparisons remain underdeveloped.

Table 5. Geographic Distribution of Reviewed TikTok Studies by Region

| Region Studied             | % of Total Studies |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| North America              | 29%                |
| Asia-Pacific (incl. China) | 24%                |
| Europe                     | 21%                |
| Africa & Middle East       | 8%                 |
| Global/Comparative         | 18%                |

Sources: Regional breakdown derived from author affiliations and research focus of the 55 included studies.

This table presents the geographic distribution of the 55 reviewed studies, revealing regional research concentration. North America accounted for the largest share (29%), reflecting the region's early adoption and scholarly focus on social media engagement. The Asia-Pacific region, including China, followed with 24%, underscoring TikTok's origin and widespread cultural adoption. Europe contributed 21% of studies, often emphasizing regulatory and political dimensions. Studies from Africa and the Middle East were limited (8%), indicating a research gap. Global or comparative studies represented 18%, addressing cross-cultural engagement dynamics.

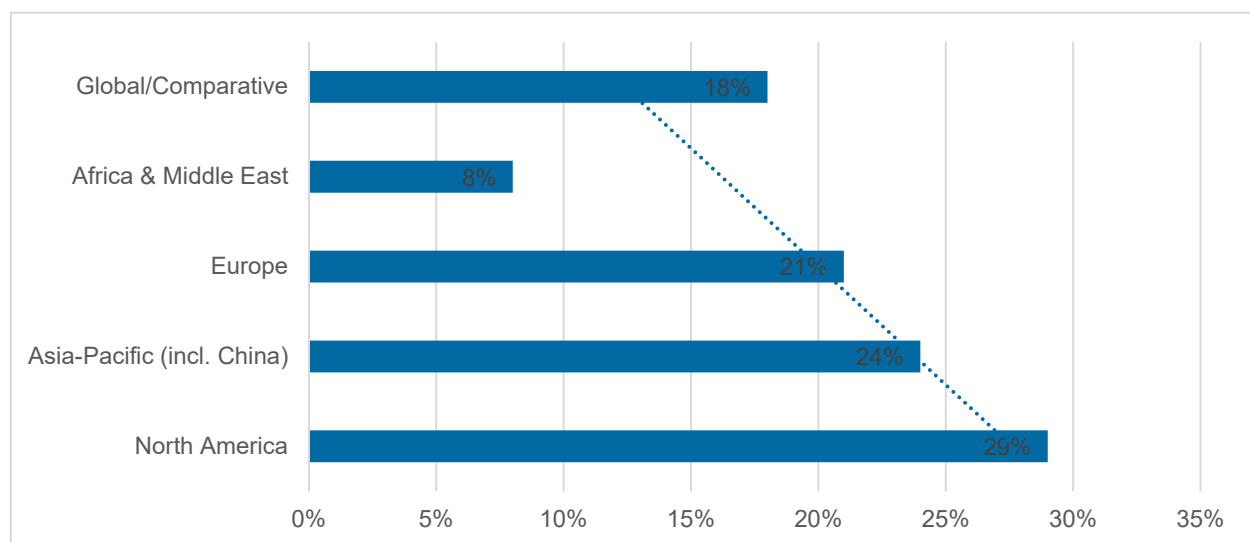


Figure 3. Geographic Distribution of Included Studies on TikTok Communication and Engagement

The figure provides a visual summary of the regional emphasis in the selected studies, revealing a clear concentration of TikTok research within North America and the Asia-Pacific region. North America leads with 29%, likely due to high platform adoption and academic output, followed by the Asia-Pacific (24%), reflecting TikTok's origin and cultural integration in those societies. Europe contributed 21%, while Africa & the Middle East remain notably underrepresented at only 8%. The inclusion of 18% global/comparative studies points to emerging efforts toward cross-cultural analysis. These findings underscore the importance of expanding regional diversity to capture TikTok's global communicative impact more inclusively.

#### 4. Discussion

This comprehensive review of 55 scholarly studies underscores the rapidly evolving nature of TikTok as a dominant platform for strategic communication and diverse modes of user engagement. Unlike traditional social media platforms that prioritize static profile-based interaction, TikTok's architecture is centered around algorithmically-curated content, user-generated video, and participatory affordances such as duets, stitches, and trending hashtags, which drive immersive engagement loops. These elements collectively enable a hybrid communicative ecology where users are not just passive recipients of content but co-creators in emergent narrative flows. From a theoretical standpoint, the interpretation of the findings reveals that user engagement on TikTok is multi-dimensional, transcending simplistic metrics like likes or shares. The reviewed literature shows engagement appearing in four distinct domains which include behavioral, cognitive, affective and hybrid forms. Behavioral engagement stands as the most researched aspect of engagement because it can be measured through social media metrics such as likes, comments, shares and view counts especially in branding and influencer contexts. The development of assessment techniques into cognitive and affective levels represents an important



progress in the field. Nobody can become cognitively engaged with content unless their mind actively interacts with it through understanding or memory retention or behavioral planning functions. Affective engagement exists when users experience emotional responses or psychological reactions from what they see and read (Burns-Stanning, 2020). Multiple academic studies feature mixed research methods or construct triangulation approaches to investigate such operational dimensions' interactions as they relate to content type and audience characteristics, and network interface design (Habibi & Salim, 2021).

Strategic content design together with algorithmic personalization, dominate the researched areas within this field. The scholarly community demonstrates its interest in analyzing the effects of content virality and algorithmic feeds on their combined impact on user conduct through these research clusters. The AI-driven feed on TikTok becomes a core focus of studies because it drives content recommendations to user preferences while modifying user consumption patterns and marginalized content visibility. The second-person pronoun usage combined with emotional writing styles by Cheng & Li (2024) demonstrates substantial effects on user interaction with news content on TikTok. The research verifies that TikTok functions as a platform where both system architectural elements and user-generated content work together to define the final results of user engagement (Githaiga et al., 2024). The main difference between TikTok and Facebook, and Instagram originates from their unique communicative approach and visual design philosophy. TikTok stands apart from previous platforms because it enables users to broadcast stories through authentic appearances and casual styles, and short-lived content (Haastrup, 2023). Users today prefer genuine content that demonstrates authenticity because they reject artificial, manufactured visual presentations. The research conducted by Pietarinen (2023) shows how young people and subcultural groups use TikTok to display their identities while creating cultural stories in the present moment. TikTok allows users to create flexible online identities because its design features let them participate together in building an ongoing digital performance (Thathiah, 2024).

The review demonstrates growing acceptance of methodological pluralism as an academic methodology choice among researchers. Recent academic research about TikTok utilizes quantitative analytics along with discourse analysis and semiotic coding, and ethnographic insights to study political communication and health messaging, and socio-cultural storytelling (Ramadhani & Faridah, 2023). Jia (2024) uses semiotics to study TikTok video meaning construction, while Corso et al. (2024) leverage the Research API to acquire extensive data about content dissemination. The complexity of TikTok research requires multiple analytical approaches because the platform exists between platform management and user control, and algorithmic data processing. The geographic distribution of reviewed studies requires acknowledgment. With nearly 75% of the studies originating from North America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region, there is a clear underrepresentation of scholarship from Africa, Latin America, and parts of Southeast Asia. This poses challenges for generalizability and risks reinforcing a Global North-centric understanding of TikTok's communicative impact. Given TikTok's growing penetration in developing economies and among marginalized groups, future research must prioritize cross-regional and multilingual analyses to generate a more holistic understanding of its global influence (Dvir-Gvirsman et al., 2024). Studies must also interrogate how cultural norms, internet infrastructure, and regulatory frameworks mediate platform use across contexts.

Empirical research requires stronger theoretical structures to be implemented immediately. Research constructs in media psychology and digital sociology, together with affect theory, have not received sufficient academic attention. Analysis of TikTok user behavior will be enhanced by adopting research frameworks such as uses and gratifications, along with emotional contagion and self-determination theory. A couple of examples include using perceived authenticity to study its connecting role between creator credibility and user loyalty and utilizing algorithmic literacy to control how users share and trust content. Research must expand its studies on how marginalized communities, together with subcultures and counter-publics, develop TikTok into both an entertainment platform and a space for identity development and creating communities. User groups who interact with platform features develop innovative approaches that both resist mainstream messages and establish new communication systems (Suhardi et al., 2024). Tearoom research becomes inferior when researchers disregard the power dynamics of a platform, which minimizes their ability to understand democratic capabilities within the platform.

TikTok serves as an ideal platform for strategic messaging purposes in public health and crisis communication and education, and political mobilization fields. The platform functions perfectly as an intervention tool thanks to its design emphasis on visuals and short content, and audience interaction possibilities, which optimize time-sensitive and emotionally charged practices (Norbury et al., 2021; Triwidyati & Pangastuti, 2021). Research on TikTok content evaluation and intervention-based experiments remains scarce across existing studies. Experts, together with practitioners, should create comprehensive evidence-based methodologies for TikTok communication success through message structures and partnership agreements, and audience segmentation methods. TikTok surpasses its status as a new social media phenomenon to establish itself as an elaborate communication platform that shapes the way people interact with content. This combination of rapid pace, along with shows, tailored content, and community involvement, distinguishes

TikTok from other current social media platforms. Academic researchers need to study TikTok in a sustained manner through theoretically robust work and innovative methodological approaches, and all-encompassing geographic perspectives. Future research dedicated to interdisciplinary and multi-dimensional investigation will reveal how TikTok transforms public discussions as well as cultural tastes and digital communication frameworks of the future.

A more detailed review of the researches reviewed, however, has significant methodological contradictions and quality issues that are worth a critical consideration. Other researchers have confused the behavioral measures (likes and views) and the higher levels of cognitive or affective interest, a fallacy that compromises the cross-study validity and inflates the outcomes of platform-based interventions. Such quantitative research in branding scenarios, e.g., may overestimate the real involvement by projecting the amplification of content driven by algorithms to the effectiveness of communication. On the other hand, qualitative research, although not just interpretive, is usually not diverse in terms of sample and may not be replicable. These contradictions indicate that the field is not yet ready to provide consistent norms of what constitutes rigorous TikTok communication research, and future research ought to devote resources into pre-registered designs, multi-method validation and full operationalisation of engagement.

This is because the overrepresentation of Global North scholarship is not merely the source of a geographical gap, but it is also has an active influence on the conceptual landscape of the findings. North American studies broadly discuss TikTok use as an advertisement-performance strategy, brand-loyalty, and political mobilization as the culture of the consumer-media. European work is more inclined to anticipate regulatory issues and processes of misinformation, and Asia-Pacific research focuses on the dynamics of virality and platform-based cultural representation. It implies that the prevailing systemic frames of the literature analyzed, namely authenticity signaling, second-person narrative, and algorithmic personalization, are theorized and confirmed in the literature mostly in high-income, digitally saturated societies. The use of the engagement behaviors, content norms and platform affordance behaviors may vary significantly depending on conditions guided by various internet infrastructures, languages ecologies, or even sociopolitical environments.

These local imbalances have a direct implication on the generalizability of the main statements of this review. The conclusion that authenticity and informal register make extravagant involvement increase, say, is premised near on the research results that have been achieved in North American and East Asian settings, where TikTok functions with no limitations and where consumers possess elevated digital literacy and reliable connectivity. These processes may not be the same in regions where the accessibility to Tik Tok can be unsynchronized or censored by the state, e.g. in Sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia or the Middle East. On the same note, health communication interventions that have proved effective in Western settings may need a significant cultural adaptation when they are applied to community which has other health literacy norms or institutional trust relationships. Experimental designs based on cross-national comparative, community-based participatory, and multilingual content analysis should be used in future studies to be sure that the TikTok scholarship represents the platform that has a truly global user base.

## 5. Conclusion

This analysis study has mapped the scholarly landscape of TikTok as a dynamic site for strategic communication and multifaceted user engagement. By analyzing 55 peer-reviewed studies across seven thematic domains and four methodological paradigms, the review elucidates how TikTok's platform-specific affordances - such as algorithmic curation, participatory editing tools, and trend-based content dissemination - reshape the communicative strategies of individuals, organizations, and institutions alike. The integration of behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement constructs provides a multidimensional view of how users interact with content, emphasizing that engagement on TikTok is not reducible to surface metrics but is instead shaped by deeper psychological, social, and contextual factors. Despite these insights, the review identifies significant research gaps. Regional imbalances persist, with an overrepresentation of North American and East Asian contexts and limited inclusion of perspectives from Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. Additionally, methodological limitations - including a reliance on short-term data collection and a lack of longitudinal or intervention-based designs - constrain the generalizability and theoretical depth of many studies.

To advance the field, future research must embrace theoretical integration, methodological triangulation, and global inclusivity. Particularly, there is a need for cross-cultural comparative analyses, deeper exploration of algorithmic influence on identity construction, and more robust investigations into marginalized or counter-hegemonic communicative practices on TikTok. Researchers should also consider applied implications for public health, civic engagement, education, and strategic branding in digital environments. This review contributes a cohesive framework for understanding the evolving nexus of communication, engagement, and platform design on TikTok. It invites scholars to move beyond descriptive analyses toward a more critical, theory-informed, and future-oriented examination of how short-form video ecosystems are transforming digital interaction, influence, and communication scholarship.

## Acknowledgments

I acknowledge the inputs of Umm Al-Qura University, Mecca, for offering their database and recourses to ensuring that this project is a success.

## Author contributions

Not applicable.

## Funding

Not applicable.

## Competing interests

The author declares no funding and no conflict of interests.

## Informed consent

Obtained.

## Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

## Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

## Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

## Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

## Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

## References

- Bao, W., Liu, H., Zheng, K., Zhang, C., Zhang, S., Yu, E., ... & Song, Y. (2024). Beyond Relevance: Improving User Engagement by Personalization for Short-Video Search. arXiv preprint arXiv:2409.11281
- Battocchio, A. F., Wells, C., Vraga, E., Thorson, K., Edgerly, S., & Bode, L. (2023). Gen Z's civic engagement: News use, politics, and cultural engagement. In *Handbook of Digital Politics* (pp. 168-195). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800377585.00020>
- Bossetta, M. (2023). Social media digital architectures: a platform-first approach to political communication and participation. In *Handbook of digital politics* (pp. 226-270). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800377585.00025>
- Bouillon, L., Schouten, D., & Campos, F. (2023, July). Designing the User Experience to Achieve Better Engagement and Feedback on TikTok Accounts. In *International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 503-515). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-35699-5\\_36](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-35699-5_36)
- Burns-Stanning, K. (2020). Identity in communities and networks TikTok social networking site empowering youth civic engagement. In *The 11th debating communities and networks conference* (Vol. 27, pp. 1-11).
- Cheng, Z., & Li, Y. (2024). Like, comment, and share on TikTok: Exploring the effect of sentiment and second-person view on the user engagement with TikTok news videos. *Social Science Computer Review*, 42(1), 201-223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393231178603>
- Chu, S. C., Deng, T., & Mundel, J. (2024). The impact of personalization on viral behavior intentions on TikTok: The role of perceived creativity, authenticity, and need for uniqueness. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 30(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2022.2098364>

- Corso, F., Pierri, F., & De Francisci Morales, G. (2024, May). What we can learn from TikTok through its Research API. In *Companion Publication of the 16th ACM Web Science Conference* (pp. 110-114). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3630744.3663611>
- Dai, J., Hajiyeve, N., Wani, S., & Booth, K. (2025). Taming TikTok: how BIPOC individuals perceive and interact with algorithmically generated content. *Information Research an international electronic journal*, 30(iConf), 1084-1094. <https://doi.org/10.47989/ir30iConf47089>
- Dvir-Gvirsman, S., Sude, D., & Raisman, G. (2024). Unpacking news engagement through the perceived affordances of social media: A cross-platform, cross-country approach. *New Media & Society*, 26(11), 6487-6509. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448231154432>
- Fadhilah, S., & Nurjanah, S. (2024). Strategy for Optimizing Effa Design's Tiktok Content to Increase Engagement Rate. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Entrepreneurship (IConEnt)* (Vol. 4, pp. 461-472).
- Frenette, A., Millette, M., & Desbiens, C. (2024). Out with the hero: How TikTok everyday stories are re-writing the Arctic. *Social Media+ Society*, 10(3), 20563051241283426. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051241283426>
- Gallagher, K., & Balt, C. (2024). Youth and Play: World-Making in the Real and the Imagined. In *Handbook of Children and Youth Studies* (pp. 755-771). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-8606-4\\_92](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-8606-4_92)
- Garcia-Ortega, A., & Garcia-Aviles, J. A. (2023). Innovation in narrative formats redefines the boundaries of journalistic storytelling: Instagram stories, TikTok and comic journalism. In *Blurring Boundaries of Journalism in Digital Media: New Actors, Models and Practices* (pp. 185-197). Cham: Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-43926-1\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-43926-1_13)
- Githaiga, J., Ndavula, J. O., & Ndeti, W. (2024). The Use of Tiktok for Consumer Engagement by Select Beverage Companies in Nairobi. <https://doi.org/10.71064/spu.amjr.1.1.260>
- Hastrup, H. K. (2023). Having fun saving the climate: The climate influencer, emotional labour, and storytelling as counter-narrative on tiktok. *Persona Studies*, 9(1), 36-51. <https://doi.org/10.21153/psj2023vol9no1art1884>
- Habibi, S. A., & Salim, L. (2021). Static vs. dynamic methods of delivery for science communication: A critical analysis of user engagement with science on social media. *PLoS one*, 16(3), e0248507. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0248507>
- Hase, V., Boczek, K., & Scharkow, M. (2023). Adapting to affordances and audiences? A cross-platform, multi-modal analysis of the platformization of news on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. *Digital Journalism*, 11(8), 1499-1520. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2022.2128389>
- Hu, T. (2024). Optimization Strategy for Short Video Content Generation on the Tik Tok Platform. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 207, p. 02017). EDP Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202420702017>
- Huttayavilaiphan, R. (2024). From local flavor to global fandom: an exploration of the cultural presentation and attitudes towards using English by Thai content creators on the TikTok platform. *Frontiers in Communication*, 9, 1453316. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1453316>
- Islam, M. M., Ahmed, F., Kabir, M. A., & Ahmed, M. R. (2025). The Impact Of Short Video Content And Social Media Influencers On Digital Marketing Success: A Systematic Literature Review Of Smartphone Usage. *Frontiers in Applied Engineering and Technology*, 2(01), 01-17. <https://doi.org/10.70937/faet.v1i02.46>
- Jannah, R., & Zamziba, M. N. F. (2025). The Power of Social Media: A Narrative Analysis of Rohingya Refugee Rejection on TikTok Content. *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi*, 19(1), 47-58. <https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v19i1.13119>
- Jia, H. (2024, August). Analysis of TikTok's Popular Videos from a Semiotic Perspective. In *2024 International Conference on Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Industry Development (HACID 2024)* (pp. 125-131). Atlantis Press. [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-281-1\\_16](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-281-1_16)
- Klug, D., & Autenrieth, U. (2022). Struggle for strategy. Presence, practices, and communicative strategies of legacy news providers on TikTok. <https://doi.org/10.33767/osf.io/m3ztq>
- Koc, B. (2023). *The role of user interactions in social media on recommendation algorithms: Evaluation of Tiktok's personalization practices from user's perspective*. Istanbul University.
- Liang, J., Wang, L., Song, S., Dong, M., Xu, Y., Zuo, X., ... & Li, P. (2022). Quality and audience engagement of Takotsubo syndrome-related videos on TikTok: content analysis. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 24(9), e39360.

<https://doi.org/10.2196/39360>

- Ma, R., Gui, X., & Kou, Y. (2023, April). Multi-platform content creation: the configuration of creator ecology through platform prioritization, content synchronization, and audience management. In *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-19). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3544548.3581106>
- Mahalakshmi, S., Bharath, H., & Kautish, S. (2025). The Social Media Playbook: Strategies for Building Brand Loyalty and Engagement. In *Strategy Analytics for Business Resilience Theories and Practices* (pp. 181-200). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82369-5\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82369-5_11)
- Marino, S. (2024). Refugees' storytelling strategies on digital media platforms: How the Russia-Ukraine war unfolded on TikTok. *Social Media+ Society*, 10(3), 20563051241279248. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051241279248>
- Mastantuono, E. (2024). *A Study of the Relationship Between the TikTok Algorithm and Content Creators: The Effects of the Digital Machine and Human Interactions* (Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University).
- Mueller, M. E., & Rajaram, D. (2022). *Social media storytelling*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003275251>
- Navarro, M. (2024). *Current Youth Culture Effects on Juvenile Delinquency: Social Media Trends and Delinquency* [undergraduate project]. California State University. <https://scholarworks.calstate.edu/concern/projects/jh344072c>
- Norbury, A., Liu, S. H., Campana-Montes, J. J., Romero-Medrano, L., Barrigon, M. L., Smith, E., ... & Perez-Rodriguez, M. M. (2021). Social media and smartphone app use predicts maintenance of physical activity during Covid-19 enforced isolation in psychiatric outpatients. *Molecular Psychiatry*, 26(8), 3920-3930. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41380-020-00963-5>
- Normann, V. C. (2024). *Strategic Communication on TikTok: Formal and Informal Practices with Platform Vernacular Deciding the Dos and Don'ts* (Master's thesis, NTNU).
- Oh, J., Jin, E., & Zhuo, S. (2024). How Perceived Humor Motivates and Demotivates Information Processing of TikTok Videos: The Moderating Role of TikTok Gratifications. *Health Communication*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2024.2389353>
- Ortiz, J. A. F., De Los M. Santos Corrada, M., Lopez, E., Dones, V., & Lugo, V. F. (2023). Don't make ads, make TikTok's: media and brand engagement through Gen Z's use of TikTok and its significance in purchase intent. *Journal of Brand Management*, 30(6), 535-549. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-023-00330-z>
- Pathmalingam, T., Moola, F. J., & Woodgate, R. L. (2023). Illness conversations: Self-disclosure among children and youth with chronic illnesses. *Chronic illness*, 19(3), 475-494. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17423953221110152>
- Pietarinen, A. (2023). *Perceived authenticity in influencer marketing* (Master's thesis, A. Pietarinen).
- Pinto, G., Bickham, C., Salkar, T., Luceri, L., & Ferrara, E. (2024). Tracking the 2024 US Presidential Election Chatter on Tiktok: A Public Multimodal Dataset. arXiv preprint arXiv:2407.01471. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4883401>
- Ramadhani, K. R., & Faridah, F. (2023). Analysis of the Content of Communication Messages by Tiktok Video Content on Vina Muliana's Account in Entering the World of Work. *Jurnal Pamator: Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Trunojoyo*, 16(2), 297-311. <https://doi.org/10.21107/pamator.v16i2.19648>
- Roberts, J. A., & David, M. E. (2025). Technology Affordances, Social Media Engagement, and Social Media Addiction: An Investigation of TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2024.0338>
- Saadya, A., & El-Tantawy, T. (2025). Social Media Growth Blueprint for Plastic Surgeons: Insights and Considerations From Personal Experience. *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery-Global Open*, 13(1), e6459. <https://doi.org/10.1097/GOX.00000000000006459>
- Scharlach, R., & Hallinan, B. (2023). The value affordances of social media engagement features. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 28(6), zmad040. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmad040>
- Schurmann, N. M., & Krip, E. (2024). *From Scroll to Heart-Exploring Consumer Engagement on TikTok through Brand Personification Strategies* [Master's thesis, lund university]. <https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/search/publication/9162626>
- Sidorenko Bautista, P., Alonso-Lopez, N., & Giacomelli, F. (2021). Fact-checking in TikTok. Communication and narrative forms to combat misinformation. *Revista latina de comunicacion social*, (79), 87-113. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2021-1522>
- Suhardi, S., Ichsan, N., Priyandaru, H., & Ihsan, F. I. (2024). Comprehensive Analysis of Ethical Marketing Strategies and Customer Engagement in TikTok Business. *Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Engineering Applications*

- (JAIEA), 3(3), 760-765. <https://doi.org/10.59934/jaiea.v3i3.509>
- Terradillos, J. O., Ureta, A. L., & Gras, J. M. (2025). TikTok and political communication: interaction patterns and engagement rate of candidates and parties in an election campaign. *Revista Latina de Comunicacion Social*, (83), 1-23.
- Thathiah, N. (2024). *Analyzing Indigenous Representation and Engagement on TikTok* [Master's thesis, University of Alberta]. <https://ualberta.scholaris.ca/items/f7068052-eea6-4f28-98df-2830875dfe18>
- Triwidyati, E., & Pangastuti, R. L. (2021). Storytelling through the Tik Tok Application Affects Followers' Behaviour Changes. *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis Jagaditha*, 8(2), 127-135. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jj.8.2.2021.127-135>
- Vombatkere, K., Mousavi, S., Zannettou, S., Roesner, F., & Gummadi, K. P. (2024, May). Tiktok and the art of personalization: Investigating exploration and exploitation on social media feeds. In *Proceedings of the ACM Web Conference 2024* (pp. 3789-3797). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3589334.3645600>
- Waechter, N. (2021). Glocalised Digital Youth Cultures. In *Youth Cultures in a Globalized World: Developments, Analyses and Perspectives* (pp. 227-243). Cham: Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65177-0\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-65177-0_14)
- Walsh, D., Kliamenakis, A., Laroche, M., & Jabado, S. (2024). Authenticity in TikTok: How content creator popularity and brand size influence consumer engagement with sponsored user-generated content. *Psychology & Marketing*, 41(11), 2645-2656. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.22075>
- Widodo, T. (2023). The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Brand Engagement (Adidas Study on Tiktok Application in Bandung City). *Quantitative Economics and Management Studies*, 4(6), 1169-1182. <https://doi.org/10.35877/454RI.qems2095>
- Winiker, A. (2022). *Better get vaccinated: A frame analysis of the Swiss government's COVID-19 vaccine campaign on TikTok* (Master's thesis, Malmö University). <https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:mau:diva-52741>
- Wu, J. (2023). *Messaging for change: investigating effective communication strategies to promote youth vaping cessation on social media* (Doctoral dissertation, Boston University).
- Wu, J., Fetterman, J. L., Cornacchione Ross, J., & Hong, T. (2024). Quitting on TikTok: Effects of Message Themes, Frames, and Sources on Engagement with Vaping Cessation Videos. *Journal of Health Communication*, 29(9), 590-601. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2024.2394774>
- Wu, J., Fetterman, J. L., Ross, J. C., & Hong, T. (2025). Effects of Message Frames and Sources in TikTok Videos for Youth Vaping Cessation: Emotions and Perceived Message Effectiveness as Mediating Mechanisms. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 76(1), 122-130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2024.08.013>
- Yang, C. (2022). Bias in short-video recommender systems: user-centric evaluation on TikTok. <https://doi.org/10.17615/ttth-sg62>
- Zannettou, S., Nemes-Nemeth, O., Ayalon, O., Goetzen, A., Gummadi, K. P., Redmiles, E. M., & Roesner, F. (2024, May). Analyzing User Engagement with TikTok's Short Format Video Recommendations using Data Donations. In *Proceedings of the 2024 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-16). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3613904.3642433>
- Zeng, J., & Yan, X. (2024). Understanding climate-related visual storytelling on TikTok: A cross-national multimodal analysis. *Journal of Digital Social Research*, 6(2), 66-84. <https://doi.org/10.33621/jdsr.v6i2.212>
- Zhu, M., & Che, S. (2024). Communicating Nutritional Knowledge to the Chinese Public: Examining Predictive Factors of User Engagement on TikTok in China. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(3), 201. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14030201>