



THE INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK CONTENT CONSUMPTION ON THE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OF GRADE II STUDENTS AT SD MUHAMMADIYAH KRANGGAN

Naufal Kurnia Abdi, Rachmat Imam Muslim

naufalkurniaabdi13@gmail.com, rachmatimam.spd@gmail.com

Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendal Batang, Central Java, Indonesia.

ARTICLE INFO:

Article history:

Received: 15 July 2026

Accepted: 21 August 2026

Published: 15 Sept 2026

Keywords:

*TikTok, Social Behavior,
Elementary School
Students, Social Media,
Digital Literacy, Parental
Supervision, Teacher
Supervision.*

ABSTRACT:

This study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok content consumption on the social behavior of second-grade elementary school students. The research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design conducted at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan. The participants consisted of 14 second grade students, supported by the classroom teacher and parents as additional informants. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using descriptive qualitative techniques to identify patterns of students' social behavior associated with TikTok use. The findings indicate that most students actively use TikTok, with two students participating not only as viewers but also as content creators. TikTok consumption contributes to both positive and negative changes in students' social behavior. Positive impacts include increased self-confidence, improved communication skills, creativity, and the ability to interact with peers. Conversely, excessive and unsupervised exposure to TikTok content encourages imitation of inappropriate behaviors, the use of impolite language, reduced respect for teachers, and the adoption of viral trends that are inconsistent with social norms. These findings suggest that the influence of TikTok on children's social behavior is dual in nature and is strongly affected by the intensity of media use and the quality of parental and teacher supervision. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy education and increasing guidance from parents and schools are essential to maximize the educational benefits of TikTok while minimizing its potential negative effects on elementary school students.

INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the present era is very rapid. The COVID-19 pandemic became a major driving force because digital technology helped maintain the continuity of education during school and university closures (Wang et al., 2024). Among the various technological developments today, social media is one of the platforms most favored and widely used by society. There are many social media applications developing in Indonesia, one of which is TikTok. TikTok is a short-video platform that uses personalization algorithms to create, watch, and share content (Schellewald, 2023). The ease of access and downloading through mobile phones has also led to rapid growth in its user base. According to research findings, the COVID-19 pandemic marked the beginning of a surge in social media use, with an increase of 12 million users in just one year (Junawan & Laugu, 2020).

Social media is an online-based technology that uses the internet to access it (Asfuri et al., 2023). Meanwhile, social media, particularly TikTok, is now consumed not only by adolescents and adults but has also reached children aged 7–8 years, equivalent to Grade II elementary school students. TikTok is a short-video-based social media platform designed with a highly adaptive *For You Page (FYP)* algorithm that can continuously present content according to users' preferences. TikTok is currently a widely popular application among Indonesians. The majority of studies in this corpus support the statement that TikTok is increasingly popular among Indonesians, supported by data on users, duration of use, and its utilization for entertainment, promotion, learning, and business (Noviani & Ratih Intania Nabella, 2024).

The phenomenon of TikTok use among elementary school-aged children raises various concerns, considering that children aged 7–8 years are still in a crucial stage of cognitive development, which according to Jean Piaget is the Concrete Operational stage. During the Concrete Operational stage (7–12 years), children are mature enough to use logical thinking or operations, but only with physical objects that are present at the time (Maharendra & Fathoni, 2025). The FYP algorithm, designed to maintain users' attention for as long as possible, has the potential to shape passive and repetitive content consumption patterns. Recent studies show that the use of mobile screen devices is negatively associated with self-regulation in early childhood (Choe et al., 2022). On the other hand, it cannot be denied that TikTok also offers potential educational benefits. Evidence generally indicates that TikTok can support learning, motivation, and student engagement when used for short, visual, and interactive content, although nearly all studies also emphasize limitations in content structure, depth, and accuracy (López et al., 2025). Nevertheless, limited parental supervision in content selection and device-use duration is an important factor in determining whether exposure to social media has a positive or negative impact on children's growth, development, and learning processes.

As a matter of policy, TikTok itself sets a minimum age requirement of 13 years for its users, in line with similar provisions on most global social media platforms. "TikTok has taken down 4.1 million accounts as of June. YouTube reported approximately 600 thousand accounts in May. We want other platforms to follow," said Minister of Communication and Digital Affairs Meutya Hafid during her visit to the Antara Photojournalism Exhibition themed *Perisai Tunas* at the Antara Heritage Center, Central Jakarta, on Thursday (25/06/2026).

Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 17 Tahun 2025, In Indonesia, this provision is also supported by a clear legal framework, such as Government Regulation Number 17 of 2025, which prohibits children from using or accessing social media before reaching the age of 18. A total of 4.7 million child accounts have been deactivated by digital platforms as part of the implementation of Government Regulation Number 17 of 2025 concerning the Governance of Electronic System Operations for Child Protection (PP TUNAS). In addition, several

derivative policies from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Affairs, as well as recommendations from the education sector, encourage restrictions on children's use of devices and social media, including calls for digital literacy in schools.

Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 17 Tahun 2025 However, the reality in the field is different. The age limit of 18 years stipulated in Government Regulation Number 17 of 2025 is, in practice, very easy to bypass because age verification during account registration generally only involves entering a date of birth without an adequate verification mechanism. Children aged 7–8 years can easily create their own accounts or use accounts belonging to parents or other family members without significant obstacles. Registration simulation studies on major platforms have found loopholes that allow underage users to easily bypass age restrictions, including through disposable email addresses and simple browser refreshes (Chelsea Jarvie, 2024). Other policy reviews and analyses have also concluded that age checks in social applications are often based only on self-declaration, are very limited, and can easily be bypassed by children (Liliana Pasquale, Paola Zippo, 2020).

Parental supervision, which should be the first line of defense in protecting children from exposure to inappropriate social media content, often does not function optimally. Research evidence shows that parental supervision frequently fails to adequately protect children from inappropriate social media content, particularly because supervision is inconsistent, parents' digital literacy is limited, and platform-related threats evolve faster than families' capacity to monitor them (Allison & Dawson, 2025). Meutya emphasized that the successful implementation of PP TUNAS depends not only on government regulations but also on support from the public, media, parents, and the commitment of digital platforms to continuously improve child protection. The use of social media and the internet is already widespread among children and adolescents; most young people worldwide own smartphones and browse social networking sites for at least 21 hours per week (James & Nepomnyaschy, 2025).

Several previous studies have examined the impact of social media use, particularly TikTok. One example is the article "Analysis of the Impact of the TikTok Application on the Social Behavior of Grade IV Students at SD Negeri 018 Sorek Satu, Pelalawan Regency" (Medri & Ramadan, 2024), which consistently emphasizes that TikTok has dual effects on the social behavior of elementary school children. It can be beneficial as a medium for education and creative expression, but it also risks causing negative behaviors (aggressiveness, reduced real-life social interaction, and exposure to inappropriate content) when adequate supervision is absent.

In line with this information, this study aims to identify and analyze the influence of TikTok content consumption on the social behavior of Grade II elementary school students. This research is necessary because it can identify forms of behavioral change among Grade II elementary school students that may be caused by consumption of negative TikTok content without adequate self-control. The data obtained are expected to serve as a reference for teachers and parents in mitigating the negative effects of TikTok on children's social behavior.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, particularly when the boundaries between the object of study and its context are not clearly evident (Ebneyamini et al., 2018). The qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand in depth the phenomenon of changes in students' social behavior, which is complex, contextual, and cannot be measured solely through numerical data.

This research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan, which was purposively selected because the school is located in a semi-urban environment. A semi-urban area is a settlement with characteristics of both rural and urban environments, where access to devices and the internet is relatively high among elementary school-aged students, while digital literacy programs at the school level are still under development. The main subjects of this study were 14 Grade II students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan, consisting of 7 boys and 7 girls. In addition to the students, supporting informants included the Grade II homeroom teacher and parents at home to obtain in-depth information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Based on the results of the research conducted, Grade II students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan tend to be active in using social media, particularly TikTok.

Observations of 14 Grade II students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan (7 boys and 7 girls) during the internship period showed considerable variation in social behavior within the classroom environment.

The following is the TikTok consumption index data for Grade II students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan:

Table 1.1 TikTok Use Index of Grade II Students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan

Index	Description
1	Not Using
2	Rarely Using
3	Frequently Using
4	Very Frequently Using

Table 1.2 TikTok Use Tendency Data of Grade II Students at SD Muhammadiyah Kranggan

No	Inisial	Indeks
1	MGA	2
2	MGW	4
3	MAA	4
4	FHNR	2
5	FAAPW	3
6	FKN	3
7	MFI	3
8	AAP	4
9	MZA	4
10	ZC	3
11	ANM	3
12	DMA	2
13	RKW	3
14	KEF	4

A notable finding was the identification of two students who actively created their own TikTok content rather than merely being passive viewers. Brief interviews concerning the duration of gaming and TikTok scrolling activities further reinforced the picture that students' access to and engagement with the platform were already relatively high. In addition, interviews with the Grade II homeroom teacher revealed several student behaviors that were considered unusual, which were suspected to result from exposure to TikTok content that was not strictly supervised by parents at home.

The observations showed that most students were familiar with various viral contents, such as popular memes and “anomaly” trends circulating on the platform. The researcher also found that some students imitated TikTok trends originating from popular multiplayer games in Indonesia, namely Free Fire and Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, in the form of expressions, movements, and distinctive gaming terms brought into the classroom environment.

Based on observations of 14 students, 6 students demonstrated active and sociable behavior, characterized by active participation in learning activities and the ability to establish good social interactions with peers. This finding is consistent with several studies showing that through social media, students can build broader networks, making them accustomed to social interaction (Allison & Dawson, 2025; Jahangeer & Bano, 2025; Yohanna, 2020). However, other studies indicate that excessive social media use tends to reduce face-to-face interaction and the quality of interaction with the real world (Jahangeer & Bano, 2025; Kolhar et al., 2021). Furthermore, 3 students were categorized as passive and less focused, meaning that they tended to participate less in learning activities and easily lost concentration. In addition, 2 students were categorized as active but less focused, showing active participation in classroom activities but inconsistent attention to learning materials.

Meanwhile, the other 3 students were categorized as passive but sociable, meaning that although they were less active in the learning process, they were still able to maintain good social relationships with their peers.

Several observations revealed various student behaviors. Most students were active in participating in learning activities, confident in expressing their opinions, and had good social skills, in line with Social Learning Theory. Social Learning Theory is an approach in psychology that proposes that individuals learn through observation and interaction with others in a social environment (Sisin Warini, Yasnita Nurul Hidayat, 2023). In the context of digital technological development, online games and social media, particularly TikTok, can serve as virtual social environments that provide students with opportunities to observe various forms of behavior, communication styles, and ways of interacting with others.

The negative aspect experienced by the Grade II students was uncontrolled and poorly filtered content consumption, resulting in many negative behaviors that were inconsistent with societal norms, such as showing less respect for teachers, engaging in inappropriate communication across age groups, and doing many things outside accepted social norms. The TikTok application can have a significant impact on character through the use of vocabulary frequently appearing on TikTok and the frequent singing of songs or music found on TikTok (Fauziyah et al., 2021).

The above findings are consistent with the theoretical framework described in the introduction. At the concrete operational stage, according to Piaget, children aged 7–8 years tend to think logically using real objects (Cerovac & Keane, 2025; Rabindran & Madanagopal, 2020). Therefore, students tend to imitate and process information based on what they concretely see and experience, making repetitive and easily imitated TikTok content, such as trends from Free Fire and Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, easy to absorb and reproduce in everyday classroom interactions. This pattern reinforces the view that the For You Page algorithm, which is designed to maintain users' attention, also shapes imitative behavior in children, as also found in other studies on the impact of TikTok on elementary school students (Medri & Ramadan, 2024). The identification of two students who actively produced TikTok content shows that social media consumption among some students has shifted from merely watching to active participation, consistent with the educational and creative potential of TikTok when used purposefully. Several studies classify TikTok users into two groups: passive and active users (Chen et al., 2026; Kodweis et al., 2025). However, the homeroom teacher's report of unusual behavior indicates that such exposure also carries risks, particularly because of limited parental supervision of the duration and types of content accessed by children at home. This condition reinforces the finding that TikTok has dual effects on the social behavior of elementary school children: on the one hand, it encourages creativity and confidence in self-expression, but on the other hand, it may lead to inappropriate behavior if not accompanied by adequate guidance.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize the important role of teachers and parents in assisting elementary school-aged children in consuming TikTok content. Findings regarding the imitation of online game trends and students' independent content production can serve as a reference for teachers to integrate digital literacy into classroom learning, while reports of unusual behavior can serve as an early warning for parents to pay greater attention to the duration and types of content accessed by children at home.

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