

The Positive and Negative Impacts of TikTok Dancing on Children in the School Environment

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ABSTRACT

TikTok is a social media platform that allows its users to create and share short videos with a duration of several seconds to several minutes. This makes understanding its impact on children's learning and social emotional development very important. The purpose of this study was to describe the positive and negative effects of TikTok dance content on the social emotional, motor, and character development of early childhood in schools. The research method was carried out using a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection was carried out through interviews with teachers and parents, documentation of children's involvement in TikTok dance, and participatory observation of dance activities. The results of the study showed that TikTok dance activities had positive and negative impacts on each child in terms of academics, social skills, and character.

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1. INTRODUCTION

As the world continues to evolve in this era of revolution, marked by the rapid advancement of digital technology, everyone is using their gadgets to communicate, seek information, and find entertainment through their favorite apps. One of the most widely used apps is TikTok. TikTok is an online video-based social media app with engaging effects designed to capture the interest of all demographics, particularly children.

However, there is a significant amount of TikTok content that is inappropriate for certain groups, particularly children aged between 5 and 10 years old. Children in this age group are highly vulnerable to negative influences. This can also stem from the activities observed within the TikTok app. (Maria Ulfa Batoebara, 2020). The TikTok app has become a global trend in recent years, with over 1 billion active users worldwide each month (Rosdita Indah Yuniawati, 2024). TikTok is one of the most popular apps, having been downloaded 45.8 million times. This figure shows that TikTok outperforms other popular apps such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Messenger. In Indonesia, there are approximately 10 million active TikTok users every month. This is due to the wide variety of content offered on the platform, including DJ TikTok full, Duet TikTok parah, remix DJ TikTok, hot videos for

TikTok, and others. The app is also very easy to access through the Google Play Store (Siti Dewanti, Muslimin, 2023).

The use of TikTok among young children raises the need to study its impact on children's development at school. Research on social media and child development shows that exposure to digital platforms can affect their cognitive, social, and emotional development. For example, intensive use of social media can increase the risk of bullying and reduce face-to-face social interaction, which can affect children's anxiety and depression levels. On the other hand, dancing is recognized as a form of exercise that can enhance children's motor skills.

Children participating in educational dance programs experience significant improvements in motor skills, including balance and fine motor skills. Therefore, dancing on TikTok has the potential to train children's motor coordination and creativity. However, TikTok content also has negative impacts that need to be considered. (Intania, Hyunanda, Muttakin, 2022) states that children's character development is influenced by the TikTok app. Children become dishonest, both in creating videos and in behavior, disrespectful toward others, such as mocking friends, and behave inappropriately, such as dancing alone. Social media has a greater impact on psychological health than physical health, as evidenced by 98% of parents being more concerned about negative images affecting their children, with aspects of children's character and morality also being influenced (Safrudiningsih, Gurning, 2023). Another study reported a decline in polite behavior and an increase in tantrum-like behavior among children frequently exposed to TikTok content. Considering these various impacts (social-emotional, motor, and character), it is important for the school environment to understand and evaluate the dual effects of the TikTok dance phenomenon on young children (Izza and Suprayitno, 2022).

Based on this background, this study focuses on the positive influence of TikTok dance content on the social-emotional, motor, and character development of young children in school, as well as its positive and negative influences. The purpose of this study was to describe the positive and negative effects of TikTok dance content on the social emotional, motor, and character development of early childhood in schools. This study comprehensively describes the positive and negative impacts of TikTok dance content on the social-emotional, motor, and character aspects of young children in the school environment.

2. METHODS

This research method applies a descriptive qualitative methodology. This method was chosen because it can explore social phenomena (such as the use of dance content on TikTok) in the context of everyday life. Data collection was carried out using non-numerical techniques appropriate for addressing the questions in this study. Research Subjects: The research participants consisted of young children (aged 5 to 6 years old, kindergarten class) in several schools in the city of Lhokseumawe. As additional sources, the researchers involved classroom teachers and parents. The subjects were selected using purposive sampling, which involved selecting children who were known to be exposed to dance content on TikTok at the school.

The research subjects are similar to previous studies involving children aged 5 to 6 years and parents in a school environment, so the age range was considered in the selection of subjects. In terms of data sources, data collection can use two sources: primary and secondary data (Sugiyono, 2019). Data was collected through several main methods: Participatory observation: The researcher directly observed the children's activities at school, particularly when they were following TikTok dance moves or watching the content. Observations were conducted in various situations (such as during breaks or learning activities) to observe the children's reactions and social interactions. Semi-structured interviews: Conducted with classroom teachers and parents to understand their perspectives on children's use of TikTok, as well as changes in children's social-emotional, motor, and

character behaviors. Questions were designed to be open-ended to allow informants to share their experiences in detail. Documentation: This documentation was used to supplement data from observations and interviews.

The collected data is analyzed qualitatively using descriptive procedures. The analysis process follows the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, namely: data reduction (selecting and filtering relevant data), data presentation (organizing findings into descriptive narratives and simple tables or graphs), and conclusion drawing/verification (confirming findings using data triangulation). The analysis focused on patterns emerging in the data related to the positive and negative impacts of TikTok dance content. The analysis results were presented in the form of descriptions according to research categories (social-emotional, motor, character) to answer the research questions (Thomas Santoso, 2022).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

TikTok is one of the most popular apps on social media platforms. It has become the go-to app worldwide for creating short videos on mobile phones in Asia, America, and other parts of the world. (Misder, Julianto, 2023) The TikTok app has a significant impact on children's character development, starting with children losing their integrity in both speech and actions when creating content on TikTok, as well as those who lack respect for others, such as frequently mocking friends and behaving rudely (Nurviantika, Umam, 2023). Children also often violate rules by dancing without supervision or control. (Adawiyah, 2020) It cannot be denied that the TikTok app has both beneficial and harmful effects (Cervi & Marín-Lladó, 2021). Parents today believe that we are in the digital age, where the use of social media is considered normal, so they give their children direct access to smartphones and allow them to play with smartphones without parental supervision or guidance, as they view it as a form of entertainment for children. (Siti Dewanti, Muslimin, 2023) Therefore, it is crucial to recognize how TikTok has a significant influence on life. Parents must understand the activities and content accessed by their children on this platform (Misder, Julianto, 2023).

Various trends on social media, especially on platforms like TikTok, have become an important element in the daily lives of many children and teenagers. One of the most well-known trends on TikTok is the dance trend, which often spreads quickly and attracts the attention of many users. However, with the rise in popularity, concerns have emerged among parents regarding the potential negative impact of TikTok dances on children's development. This article will discuss the pros and cons of this phenomenon.

Behind the popularity of the TikTok app in Indonesia lies a significant potential for misuse of the app. Like other social media apps, TikTok also has a high likelihood of displaying content related to pornography and other inappropriate behavior. There are various ongoing discussions about the positive and negative impacts of using this app. In addition to influencing social and cultural aspects, TikTok also has a significant impact on national integration (Laila, Yesa, Malau, Yunita, 2024). Many TikTok videos are uploaded to YouTube or other sites, where there is a lot of content with themes of pornography, sex, or other inappropriate behavior, including overly vulgar dances that children imitate. Additionally, it cannot be denied that the users of this app are not only adults but also many children, and this can influence the development of these children.

Overall, early childhood is a very important stage in a person's life. This is the time when many of the foundations of individual development are laid, forming a strong foundation for their growth and development in the future. Therefore, proper attention and care are crucial in supporting the optimal development of young children (Nurlina, Ferdian Utama, Sri Ayu Laali, Chaterina Yeni Susilaningsih, Yunita, Risnajayanti, Nurul Idhayani, Sudiarti, Nini Sri Wahyuni, Eva Yulina, 2024).

Based on observations and hypothetical literature analysis, dancing on TikTok among kindergarten children in Lhokseumawe has diverse effects. On one hand, dancing on TikTok has been proven to enhance children's creativity and imagination. The variety of dance video content encourages children to imitate complex movements and even create their own, thereby fostering the development of creative thinking. Children who participate in dance challenges on TikTok become more creative and “ready to adapt to technology” because they are actively creating new movements. Additionally, educational dancing on TikTok is also beneficial for children's physical health.

Experimental research shows an improvement in gross motor skills (such as jumping, bending, and twisting the body) in children aged 5–6 years who were encouraged to practice through structured TikTok videos. TikTok also gives children confidence and opportunities to interact: they dare to create video content and become more skilled in foreign languages. For example, Bakistuta and Abduh (2023) reported that elementary school students exposed to TikTok became more fluent in English and Arabic.

However, TikTok dances also have negative effects. Excessive use can easily distract children and make it difficult for them to concentrate while studying. Young children who have free access to TikTok are often “easily distracted” and lose focus due to being accustomed to short attention spans while watching videos. Children will exhibit dance moves that they cannot control. When children are aged 1–5 years, information obtained from TikTok or other social media platforms is quickly absorbed by them. Children may imitate the way of speaking, dancing, dressing, or other negative behaviors seen on the TikTok app (Intania, Hyunanda, Muttaqin, 2022). This condition is exacerbated by screen addiction, reduced learning concentration, and disrupted sleep quality. Additionally, some dance content on TikTok occasionally contains inappropriate expressions.

The interview results showed that some children imitated the casual or rude language used in viral videos, thereby reducing the level of politeness in the school environment. In addition, children who watched TikTok dance challenges too often also experienced a decline in discipline and religious values. In summary, while dancing on TikTok supports creativity and physical movement, its negative aspect is its influence on children's behavior and attention, which requires strict supervision from teachers and parents.

Based on the data collected, some children have both positive and negative effects, as outlined in the table below:

Table 1. Table showing the positive and negative effects of TikTok dancing on children

No	Child's Name	Positive	Negative
1.	Child A	-Increases self-confidence and public speaking skills. -Provides a means of relaxation or light entertainment.	-Leads to digital addiction and excessive repetition of certain movements. -Makes it easier for other children to be distracted by the movements and difficult to focus.
2.	Child B	Ability to develop communication and English language skills.	Ability to develop communication and English language skills.
3.	Child C	-Improving gross motor skills (jumping, bending). -Being more active than other peers. -Creating new movements/creativity during exercise.	

4. Child D	-Encouraging friends to follow their movements (vulgar movements). -Seeking out friends who can only dance to TikTok dances. -Prefers to play with adults. -Decreased focus on learning.
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From the table 1 above, it can be concluded that Child A experienced positive effects, such as increased self-confidence and the ability to perform in public, as well as relaxation and light entertainment. The negative effects were the development of digital addiction and excessive movement, which made other children more easily distracted by their movements and difficult to focus. Child B positive impact is seen in the ability to develop communication and English language skills. The negative impact is the emergence of imitative behavior. Child C positive impact is seen in improved gross motor skills (jumping, bending), being more active than peers, and creating new movements/creativity during exercise. There are no negative impacts. Child D showed no positive effects. The negative effects include encouraging peers to follow their movements (vulgar movements), seeking friends who can only dance TikTok, preferring to play with adults, and decreased focus on learning.

From the table, it can be concluded that there are both positive and negative effects from TikTok dancing. Not all children experience positive effects, and not all children experience negative effects. All of this occurs due to parental supervision at home. If a child accesses TikTok without parental supervision, their content is unfiltered, leading them to absorb everything they see. Conversely, if TikTok is accessed under parental supervision, the content is filtered, resulting in positive effects on the child.

Teachers play a crucial role in addressing the symptoms and behaviors of children affected by TikTok dance. As educators, teachers play a very important role in responding to the symptoms and behaviors of students who are influenced by dance trends on TikTok. This is especially important for character building and behavior supervision in schools. As educators, supervisors, and facilitators, teachers must be able to filter the influence of social media in students' lives. Character education aims to instill social values in students. The importance of instilling social values in students is so that they have a foundation for socializing and interacting with their peers and teachers (Zubaedi, 2011;39). They also need to help students develop a critical understanding of digital content.

Teachers are not only limited to teaching material, but also have a moral responsibility to guide children's personality development. In this case, it is important for teachers to design flexible and communicative teaching strategies to understand changes in student behavior, such as the tendency to imitate dance moves that are not in line with school norms or local values.

The popularity of TikTok among elementary and middle school students can have a positive impact in terms of self-expression. However, there are also negative risks, such as excessive behavior in showing off the body, lack of self-control, and decreased attention in learning. Therefore, good communication between teachers, students, and parents needs to be established to create a common understanding of healthy social media use. Implementing extracurricular activities and character education based on Pancasila values can be an effective approach to help teachers reduce the negative impact of TikTok and direct students' creativity in a more positive direction.

Dealing with young children who exhibit behaviors and symptoms influenced by TikTok dances requires a careful and educational approach from educators. Here are some important things teachers need to do: 1) Closely observe changes in the child's behavior, such as imitating TikTok dance moves inappropriate for their age, obsession with gadgets, or decreased focus during learning. Note the timing and frequency of the child imitating dances and how this affects their social interactions and

academic performance. 2) Ask questions in a non-judgmental manner, for example: "You like that move, don't you? It's interesting, isn't it! But do you know there's a right time to dance?" 3) Redirect children's interest in dancing toward more structured activities, such as holding fun singing and moving sessions, and instilling moral values and ethics through stories or role-playing games. 4) Provide information to parents about their child's habits at school and the importance of monitoring digital content at home, recommend screen time limits and content types, and encourage parents to provide age-appropriate alternative viewing options (Dwijayanti, Nuryanto, 2021). 5) Introduce basic concepts about media, such as distinguishing between entertainment and reality and the importance of choosing appropriate content. Explain that not everything on the internet is worth imitating and should be discussed with adults (Fitriyah, 2020).

In addition to teachers, parents play an important role in supporting and teaching children about dance trends on TikTok using digital parenting methods. This includes setting content and usage limits, providing direct guidance, and maintaining open communication. In this way, children can gain positive creative benefits while avoiding harmful content and unhealthy habits (Corpuz et al., 2022 and Salsabila & Pahmiah, 2025).

There are several components that parents should implement with their children when addressing these symptoms and behaviors: 1) Limiting screen time and establishing usage rules; Research shows that parents need to set screen time limits and establish agreements from the start to prevent children from being influenced by excessive content. Implementing a restrictive yet consistent parenting style is crucial (restrictive mediation), such as determining the duration of use, redirecting attention to other activities, and establishing gadget usage rules together with the child. 2) Active supervision and open dialogue (digital parenting); By actively mediating, involving parents when children use TikTok, watching together, and discussing, parents not only act as supervisors but also set an example of healthy technology use. This approach is highly effective in guiding children to derive creative benefits without getting caught up in inappropriate content. 3) Creative collaboration; Collaboration between parents and children in creating creative content on TikTok not only strengthens relationships and boosts children's self-confidence but also builds their digital literacy and creativity, all under parental supervision.

4. CONCLUSION

The use of TikTok dances in schools has two types of impact. On the one hand, there are positive effects, where TikTok dances stimulate children's creativity and expression and boost their confidence when performing in public. Dancing through TikTok also serves as an enjoyable way to have fun and relax, which can contribute to students' psychological well-being. Additionally, this activity involves physical movements that can strengthen children's gross motor skills and encourage them to be more physically active. However, on the other hand, there are negative impacts that require attention. Excessive use of TikTok dances can lead to addiction and disrupt children's concentration while studying. Children who spend a lot of time watching or imitating TikTok videos are at risk of copying inappropriate dances or content from social media. Furthermore, adult or vulgar language and movements in some TikTok videos can undermine moral values, including discipline and ethics in children.

In conclusion, active support from teachers and parents is crucial in regulating students' use of TikTok. Education and supervision of social media use must be implemented so that children can use TikTok dances creatively while staying within reasonable limits. With proper guidance, it is hoped that the positive benefits of TikTok dances can be maximized and the potential negative impacts minimized in children's development.

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