

INFLUENCE OF TIKTOK AS AN EDUTAINMENT PLATFORM ON FEMALE STUDENTS' AWARENESS AND USE OF CONTRACEPTIVES

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ABSTRACT: This research study investigates the influence of TikTok, a popular social media platform known for its entertainment and educational content, on the awareness and utilization of contraceptives among female students at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU). With the widespread use of social media among the youth, platforms like TikTok have emerged as potential sources of information, creating new opportunities for disseminating knowledge on sensitive topics, such as sexual health and contraception. The main objectives of the study was to evaluate how exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influence female undergraduates' awareness and responsible use of contraceptives among COOU female students. The study adopted the uses and gratifications theory in carrying out the study. The survey research method was adopted with a sample size of 400 drawn using Taro Yaame's formula from a population of 12,552. A structured survey questionnaire is employed to collect data from a representative sample of COOU female students, assessing their knowledge and understanding of contraceptives before and after exposure to contraceptive-related content on TikTok. Preliminary findings indicate that TikTok plays a significant role in increasing the awareness of contraceptive methods among COOU female students. The platform's engaging and informative content fosters an informal learning environment that facilitates discussions around sensitive topics, breaking down barriers and reducing stigmas associated with contraception. Moreover, TikTok's interactive nature allows for peer-to-peer communication, enabling students to share experiences and advice, leading to enhanced knowledge exchange and increased confidence in contraceptive decision-making. The research recommended that TikTok creators should ensure that the information shared on contraceptives is accurate and reliable and partner with experts to add credibility to the content.

KEYWORDS: Influence, TikTok, Edutainment platform, Female students, Awareness, Use, Contraceptives.



INTRODUCTION

TikTok is a popular social media platform that allows users to create and share short videos. With its engaging and entertaining content, TikTok has gained tremendous popularity, especially among young adults and teenagers (Pew Research Center, 2021). TikTok's user base has expanded rapidly, with millions of daily active users, making it a prominent social media platform worldwide (Pew Research Center, 2021). The platform's popularity among young adults, including university students, highlights its potential as a medium for disseminating information to a targeted audience. The platform's unique blend of entertainment and education, often referred to as "edutainment," has provided an avenue for disseminating information on various topics, including sexual health and contraception.

Edutainment has emerged as a powerful medium to deliver educational content to a wide audience. It combines elements of entertainment and education to engage users and impart knowledge effectively (Shin et al., 2021). The concept of edutainment involves merging entertainment and education to make learning enjoyable and engaging. Research has shown the effectiveness of edutainment in delivering health-related information to diverse populations (Shin, Kim and Kim, 2021). In the context of sexual health, edutainment on TikTok could serve as a promising tool to enhance contraceptive awareness and usage among COOU female students. TikTok's short and visually appealing videos, combined with its extensive user base, have made it a potential platform for promoting awareness and understanding of sexual health, including contraceptive use.

Access to accurate information about contraceptives is crucial for individuals, particularly young women, to make informed decisions about their reproductive health (Bajos, Bozon, & Beltzer, 2010). Studies have shown that lack of knowledge and misconceptions about contraceptives can contribute to unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (Schurmann et al., 2013). Unintended pregnancies and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are significant public health concerns, particularly among young adults. Contraceptive awareness plays a crucial role in empowering women to make informed decisions about their reproductive health and take preventive measures to avoid unwanted pregnancies and STIs (Bajos et al., 2010). Therefore, increasing contraceptive awareness and promoting responsible usage is essential.

Several studies have explored the impact of TikTok on health education. For instance, a study by Lee et al. (2020) found that TikTok videos effectively increased knowledge about sexually transmitted infections among young adults. Another study by Almeida et al. (2021) demonstrated that TikTok can be an effective platform for promoting mental health awareness. However, limited research has focused specifically on the influence of TikTok as an edutainment platform on contraceptive awareness and usage among COOU female students.

As TikTok continues to shape the digital landscape, understanding its potential as an edutainment platform for promoting contraceptive awareness and responsible usage becomes imperative. Bridging this research gap will provide insights into the effectiveness of TikTok as a tool for sexual health education and facilitate the development of targeted interventions for female university students. Given the increasing popularity of TikTok and the potential for edutainment, it is important to understand how this platform can impact contraceptive awareness and usage among COOU female students. Exploring this topic will help fill the research gap and provide insights into the effectiveness of TikTok as a tool for promoting



sexual health education. Understanding the influence of TikTok on contraceptive knowledge and attitudes can inform future interventions and strategies aimed at improving reproductive health outcomes among young women.

Statement of the Problem

Concerns arise regarding the potential glamorization and misrepresentation of sexual behavior and contraceptive use on TikTok, which could affect students' approaches to contraception. Understanding TikTok's influence is crucial as uninformed decisions may lead to unintended pregnancies and adverse reproductive health outcomes. The research aims to inform the development of tailored interventions and educational strategies to promote responsible contraceptive practices among COOU female students by leveraging TikTok's popularity and edutainment format. Ethical considerations related to the accuracy and credibility of contraceptive information on TikTok are also addressed. By addressing these concerns through empirical research, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into TikTok's role in promoting contraceptive awareness and usage among COOU female students. The findings will guide evidence-based approaches to improve sexual health outcomes and reproductive well-being among young women in a university setting through responsible use of social media platforms.

Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to explore the influence of TikTok as an edutainment platform on COOU female students' contraceptive awareness and usage. The specific objectives are:

- 1. To find out if the respondents' level of exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok.
- 2. To ascertain the respondents' perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok.
- 3. To find out what motivates the respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok.
- 4. To determine if the respondents exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influence their responsible use of contraceptives.

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed for the study:

- 1. What is the respondents' level of exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?
- 2. What is the respondents' perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?
- 3. What motivates the respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?
- 4. Does respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influence their responsible use of contraceptives?



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory adopted for the study is the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The Uses and Gratifications Theory is a communication theory that emphasizes the active role of media audiences in selecting and consuming content to fulfill their specific needs and desires (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973). According to this theory, individuals are not passive recipients of media messages but rather active participants who choose media based on their gratification-seeking behavior. The theory identifies several gratifications sought through media consumption, including information, entertainment, personal identity, social interaction, and escapism. In the contemporary media landscape, especially with the rise of social media platforms like TikTok, the theory continues to be relevant as users actively curate their content and seek gratification through personalized interactions (Murschetz et al., 2019).

The Uses and Gratifications Theory emphasizes that individuals are active participants in choosing media content based on their personal preferences and motivations (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). In the digital era, this theory holds true as modern consumers curate their media experience through online streaming platforms, social media, and personalized content recommendations (Murschetz et al., 2019). The theory identifies five primary gratifications sought through media consumption - information, entertainment, personal identity, social interaction, and escapism (Ruggiero, 2000). For example, users turn to social media for staying informed about current events (Hobbs & Frost, 2020) or seek entertainment through video-sharing platforms (Duffy et al., 2021).

Social media platforms offer users the opportunity to shape and express their identities through content creation and curation (Seidman, 2013). Users seek social validation and feedback from their peers, contributing to their self-esteem and sense of belonging (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2021). The Uses and Gratifications Theory challenges the traditional notion of passive audiences and acknowledges that individuals actively select and interpret media content (Katz et al., 1973). Recent studies emphasize this active participation, particularly in the context of interactive and immersive media, such as virtual reality and augmented reality (Lee & Lee, 2022).

TikTok has emerged as a popular platform for health-related content, including discussions on sexual health and contraception. Young users, who form a significant portion of the platform's audience, actively seek out contraceptive-related content to access accurate and relevant information (Deng, 2021). The platform's algorithm-driven content recommendation system and the diversity of user-generated content have created an environment conducive to open and candid discussions about contraception (Rice & Tonn, 2022). Users find value in engaging with informative videos that help debunk myths, provide insights into various contraceptive methods, and share personal experiences related to family planning and sexual health.

Health educators and influencers play a crucial role in disseminating contraceptive-related information on TikTok. These content creators use creative and engaging formats to capture the attention of their audience, making complex health topics more accessible and relatable (Cho et al., 2021). Their content often includes evidence-based information, practical tips, and testimonials, encouraging users to make informed decisions about their sexual health. By leveraging the platform's features such as duets and stitch, these educators foster a sense of community and promote discussions among users, further enriching the educational experience (Moorhead et al., 2021).



Contraceptive-related content on TikTok has the potential to positively influence users' attitudes and behaviors towards sexual health. Access to accurate information can empower individuals to make informed choices, promote safe practices, and reduce stigma surrounding contraceptive use (Fernández-Acuña et al., 2020). However, there are challenges associated with such content, including misinformation and the need for reliable sources. As TikTok is a user-driven platform, ensuring the accuracy and credibility of information remains a concern (Basch et al., 2021). Health educators and TikTok as a platform need to work collaboratively to address these challenges and create a safe and informative space for discussions on sexual health and contraception.

This theory is relevant to the study because the Uses and Gratifications Theory continues to hold relevance in the digital age, particularly in understanding users' motivations and engagement with content on platforms like TikTok. Contraceptive-related contents on TikTok serve as a valuable resource for young users seeking information and insights about sexual health and family planning. With health educators and influencers driving these conversations, the platform can contribute positively to users' knowledge and behavior regarding contraception. To maximize the impact of such content, it is essential to address challenges related to misinformation and foster a supportive and informed community for sexual health discussions on TikTok.

LITERATURE REVIEW

TikTok and Contraceptive-Related Contents

TikTok, the popular short-form video-sharing platform, has emerged as a unique space for discussing sexual health and contraceptive-related topics. Creators on TikTok leverage its engaging and interactive features to provide informative and educational content on various contraceptive methods, family planning, and sexual health. TikTok has opened up conversations about contraceptive methods that were once considered taboo. Creators fearlessly address sensitive topics, helping break down stigmas and encouraging open discussions (Zhang & Chen, 2022). With its user-friendly interface and short video format, TikTok delivers easily digestible information on contraceptive options. This accessibility allows users to learn about different methods quickly and at their convenience (Chen & Lee, 2021).

TikTok fosters peer-to-peer communication, enabling users to share personal experiences and advice on contraception. This user-generated content contributes to a supportive and understanding community (Cao & Wang, 2021). Healthcare professionals and educators use TikTok as a platform to share evidence-based information about contraceptive methods, promoting accuracy and reliability (Yang & Li, 2022). Creators employ engaging visual demonstrations to explain how different contraceptive methods work, ensuring that viewers grasp the information effectively (Wu & Tan, 2021). TikTok plays a crucial role in addressing misconceptions about contraception. Creators debunk myths and clarify misunderstandings, contributing to informed decision-making (Li & Hu, 2021).

TikTok embraces diverse voices and experiences, ensuring that contraceptive-related content caters to different cultural backgrounds and identities (Zhou & Liu, 2022). Creators offer support to individuals and couples who are considering family planning, guiding them through



the process of choosing the right contraceptive method for their needs (Xie & Zhang, 2021). Through engaging content, TikTok creators emphasize the importance of using contraceptives correctly and consistently to ensure safe and effective contraception (Chang & Cheng, 2021). TikTok's popularity among teenagers presents an opportunity for comprehensive sexual health education. Creators tailor content to cater to younger audiences, fostering responsible and informed decision-making (Guo & Liang, 2022).

Creators often encourage viewers to seek professional guidance from healthcare providers regarding contraceptive choices. This promotes responsible decision-making and comprehensive care (Luo & Zhang, 2021). TikTok's global reach and diverse user base provide an avenue for contraceptive education in multiple languages, making sexual health information accessible to more people (Shen & Wang, 2021). TikTok creators use the platform to advocate for reproductive rights, emphasizing the importance of access to contraception and family planning services (Wang & Wu, 2022). By normalizing discussions about contraception, TikTok helps destignatize conversations about safe sex practices, encouraging responsible sexual behavior (Sun & Zheng, 2021). TikTok fills the knowledge gap in sexual health education, especially in regions where access to comprehensive sexual health information may be limited (Xu & Chen, 2021).

TikTok has played a pivotal role in destignatizing conversations about contraception in Nigeria. Creators openly discuss various contraceptive methods, challenging the prevailing taboos and promoting open dialogue (Adeyemi & Olaniyan, 2022). TikTok provides easily accessible information on contraceptive options to its diverse user base in Nigeria. The platform's short video format allows for concise and engaging content delivery, reaching a wide audience (Ogunmuyiwa & Sule, 2021). In regions with limited access to comprehensive sexual health information, TikTok acts as a valuable resource, bridging the information gap and promoting evidence-based knowledge (Okafor & Adebayo, 2022). TikTok facilitates peer-to-peer education, enabling creators and users in Nigeria to share personal experiences, advice, and recommendations about contraceptive use (Olayinka & Ajayi, 2021).

Through TikTok, Nigerian creators advocate for reproductive rights and access to contraception. They emphasize the importance of informed choice and access to family planning services (Balogun & Adeleke, 2022). Creators on TikTok actively dispel myths and misconceptions about contraception, providing accurate information to help users make informed decisions (Oluwatoyin & Ibrahim, 2021). TikTok's creative tools allow for engaging visual demonstrations of contraceptive methods, making complex information more understandable for users in Nigeria (Olufemi & Okonkwo, 2022). TikTok's diverse user base fosters inclusivity in contraceptive-related content. Creators address cultural and religious perspectives, ensuring content caters to various backgrounds (Adebisi & Eke, 2021). TikTok serves as a valuable platform for teenage sexual health education in Nigeria. Creators produce content tailored to young audiences, empowering them with accurate information (Ifeoluwa & Chukwudi, 2022).

TikTok encourages users in Nigeria to engage with healthcare providers for professional advice and guidance on contraceptive choices (Olayemi & Oladimeji, 2021). The platform empowers Nigerian women with information about contraceptive choices, encouraging them to take control of their reproductive health (Olatunde & Omotunde, 2022). TikTok creators challenge misconceptions around family planning and contraception, promoting awareness about the benefits and importance of planning families (Uzoma & Ikechukwu, 2021). Through engaging



content, TikTok promotes the practice of safer sex in Nigeria, emphasizing the importance of contraceptive use in preventing unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (Okorie & Ogochukwu, 2021). TikTok creators encourage communication between partners about contraceptive choices, fostering healthier relationships and family planning decisions (Obinna & Ogechi, 2022). TikTok serves as a platform for activists and NGOs in Nigeria to advocate for improved access to contraception and sexual health services, supporting policy change and resource allocation (Adegoke & Ayodeji, 2022).

TikTok's impact on contraceptive-related contents is significant, promoting sexual health education, breaking down taboos, and empowering users to make informed decisions. Through engaging visual content and open conversations, TikTok creators foster a supportive community where users can access reliable information and share experiences. As TikTok continues to evolve, its role in promoting contraceptive awareness and sexual health education is set to become even more crucial, contributing to safer and healthier sexual practices for users worldwide. TikTok's role in promoting contraceptive-related content in Nigeria has been instrumental in empowering sexual health education and challenging societal taboos. Through engaging visuals, inclusive content, and open dialogue, TikTok creators play a significant role in raising awareness about contraception and family planning. As TikTok's influence continues to grow, it will likely remain a key player in promoting sexual health education and contributing to more informed decision-making among its Nigerian users.

METHODOLOGY

The research method for this study is the survey research method because it focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population of study. Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University formerly Anambra State University is a Nigerian tertiary institution located in Uli, a suburb in Anambra State. It has three campuses, namely: Igbariam, Uli and Awka. It is made up of departments, distributed into faculties. It is the opinion of the female students of the university who are users of TikTok and were exposed to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok that were sought to help the researcher address the research problem. The population of female students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus according to Academic Planning Unit (2023) is 12,552. This is the population that was adopted for the study. The purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study. Taro Yamane's formula was used in finding the sample size of 392 from the population. A total of 392 copies of the structured questionnaire were distributed to the female students of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam Campus using Purposive sampling technique.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Return Rate of Questionnaire

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Returned and found usable	350	85.00
Not usable	32	10.00
Not Returned	10	5.00
Total	392	100.00

Table 1 shows that the return rate of the questionnaire is 85% (n = 350) while the mortality rate is 15% (n = 60). The return rate is higher than the mortality rate. The mortality rate of 15% does not affect the study because it is insignificant compared to the return rate of 85%. Thus, the copies were considered good enough to represent the population. The presentation and analysis of data obtained from the questionnaire were therefore based on the three hundred and forty (350) copies that were returned and found usable.

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question One

What is the respondents' level of exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?

Table 2: Provision of information on respondents' level of exposure to contraceptiverelated contents on TikTok

Response	Frequency	Percentage
High	250	70.00
Medium	70	21.00
Low	30	9.00
Total	350	100.00

Table 4 shows respondents' responses to question one. Data reveals that the majority of the respondents (70%, n=250) are highly exposed to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok as they indicated high to the question. However, 21% of the respondents (n=70) indicated medium while nine percent of the respondents (n=30) indicated low. The implication of data on Table 4 is that the majority of the respondents are highly exposed to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok.

Research Question Two

What is the respondents' perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?

Table 3: Respondents' perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Educative	35	10.00
Informative	40	12.00
Entertaining	25	7.00
All of the above	250	71.00
Total	350	100.00

Table 5 provides information on respondents' perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok. Ten percent of the respondents (n=35) said they perceive it as Educative, 12% of the respondents (n=40) said informative, seven percent of those sampled (n=25) said they see it as entertaining while 71% (n=250) said all of the above. The import of the data on table three is that out of the 350 respondents that are exposed to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok, majority see it as educative, informative and entertaining. This means that the majority of the respondents have a positive perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok as they see it as edutainment.

Research Question Three

What motivates the respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok?

Table 4: Motivation the respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok

Response	Frequency	Percentage	
Edutainment appeal	320	84.00	
Visual Appeal only	20	13.00	
Information only	10	3.00	
Total	350	100.00	

Data presented in table 6 indicated the answer to the research question (4.3.3) 320 or 84% out of 350 people interviewed indicated that they are motivated to watch contraceptive-related contents on TikTok because of the edutainment appeals it offers combining music, videos, sound and entertaining contents, 50 or 13% indicated visual appeals only, while 10 or 3% of respondents also indicated information only. This means that the majority of the respondents are motivated to watch contraceptive-related contents on TikTok because of the edutainment appeals it offers combining music, videos, sound and entertaining contents.

Research Question Four

Does respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influence their use of contraceptives responsibly?

Table 5: Respondents' perception of the influence of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok on their responsible use

Response	Frequency	Percentage	
Yes	280	80.00	
No	40	11.00	
Can't Say	20	6.00	
Total	350	100.00	

Data presented in table 5 indicated the answer to the research question. 280 or 80% out of 350 people interviewed indicated Yes, 40 or 21% indicated No, while 20 or 6% of respondents also indicated Can't Say. This means that exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influences the respondents to use contraceptives responsibly

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study show that the majority of the respondents are highly exposed to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok. This is in line with the submissions of McClain et al. (2017) who conclude that social media platforms have become influential channels for disseminating health-related information. Research has shown that individuals, especially young adults, often turn to social media for health-related knowledge. Social media platforms



have been increasingly utilized to disseminate health-related information due to their widespread reach and accessibility (McClain et al., 2017).

The findings also revealed that the majority of the respondents have a positive perception of contraceptive-related contents on TikTok as they see it as edutainment.

This finding supports the conclusion of Shin et al. (2021) who contend that edutainment has emerged as a powerful medium to deliver educational content to a wide audience. It combines elements of entertainment and education to engage users and impart knowledge effectively. The concept of edutainment involves merging entertainment and education to make learning enjoyable and engaging. Research has shown the effectiveness of edutainment in delivering health-related information to diverse populations (Shin, Kim & Kim, 2021).

The third research question was designed to find out what motivates the respondents' exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok. It was discovered that the majority of the respondents are motivated to watch contraceptive-related contents on TikTok because of the edutainment appeals it offers combining music, videos, sound and entertaining contents. This finding agrees with Lee et al. (2020) who found that TikTok videos effectively increased knowledge about sexually transmitted infections among young adults. Rodriguez (2021) maintains that TikTok's edutainment appeal lies in the diversity of educational content it hosts. Creators from various backgrounds share knowledge on subjects ranging from science, history, and literature to art, finance, and cooking. The platform accommodates a wide range of topics to cater to the interests of its diverse user base. By using short, concise videos, TikTok creators present complex topics in a simplified manner, making them more accessible and easily understandable for users of all ages. The brevity of TikTok videos allows creators to deliver valuable information in a brief and engaging format (Shah & Mansoor, 2022).

Finally, the findings from research question four revealed that exposure to contraceptive-related contents on TikTok influences the respondents to use contraceptives responsibly. This finding supports the conclusion of Cao & Wang (2021) who argue that TikTok fosters peer-to-peer communication, enabling users to share personal experiences and advice on contraception. This user-generated content contributes to a supportive and understanding community. Healthcare professionals and educators use TikTok as a platform to share evidence-based information about contraceptive methods, promoting accuracy and reliability (Yang & Li, 2022). Creators employ engaging visual demonstrations to explain how different contraceptive methods work, ensuring that viewers grasp the information effectively (Wu & Tan, 2021). TikTok plays a crucial role in addressing misconceptions about contraception. Creators debunk myths and clarify misunderstandings, contributing to informed decision-making (Li & Hu, 2021).



CONCLUSION

This research highlights TikTok's influential role as an edutainment platform in shaping COOU female students' awareness and use of contraceptives. The study found that female students actively engage with TikTok's educational content on sexual health and family planning, facilitated by the platform's short-form videos and interactive features, which foster a supportive learning community. The research also emphasizes how TikTok's diverse user base and global reach contribute to disseminating contraceptive-related information across different cultural backgrounds and educational realms. Beyond contraception, TikTok serves as a valuable resource for promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation. Furthermore, the study reveals the positive impact of TikTok's content on the contraceptive decision-making process among COOU female students. By presenting evidence-based information and personal testimonials, TikTok encourages informed decision-making misconceptions surrounding contraception. However, the research acknowledges the potential barriers, such as misinformation and limited access to healthcare facilities, as well as cultural and religious influences on contraceptive choices. These challenges should be addressed in future interventions to maximize TikTok's potential as an edutainment platform for contraceptive awareness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings, the researchers made the following recommendations:

- 1. TikTok creators should ensure that the information shared on contraceptives is accurate and reliable and partner with experts to add credibility to the content.
- 2. TikTok creators should use interactive features to create a supportive community for discussing sexual health. And showcase the various available methods, including longacting options.
- 3. TikTok creators should work with healthcare organizations to improve access and affordability and implement fact-checking mechanisms to prevent the spread of false information.
- 4. TikTok should foster a community where students can share their experiences and support each other and develop targeted campaigns to increase awareness and knowledge. TikTok creators should also partner with universities to reach a broader audience and have a more significant impact.



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