

# Qualitative Study: Tiktok's Use of The Manners of Elementary School Students

Zuhrotul Ilhamiyah<sup>1</sup>, Candra Utama<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Malang

<sup>2</sup>Primary School Teacher Education, University Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author, email: [zuhrotul.ilhamiyah.2301516@students.um.ac.id](mailto:zuhrotul.ilhamiyah.2301516@students.um.ac.id),  
[candra.utama.pasca@um.ac.id](mailto:candra.utama.pasca@um.ac.id)

## Keywords

Tiktok;  
Character education;  
Manners; Primary school

## Abstract

This study examines the impact of TikTok use on the manners character of elementary school students. The background of the research is motivated by the rampant use of TikTok among children and concerns about its influence on moral development. With a qualitative descriptive approach, data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving 5 grade V students, 5 parents, and 1 homeroom teacher at SDN 1 Kemantren. The results of the study show that TikTok functions as entertainment while supporting cognitive and psychomotor development through creative content. However, overuse causes negative impacts such as ignoring the surrounding environment and delaying parental commands. This study emphasizes the role of teachers and parents in reducing negative effects through consistent guidance, exemplary, and habituation of polite behavior. These findings underscore the importance of balanced digital supervision for TikTok use to align with character education goals.

## 1. Introduction

Advances in the field of information and communication technology have had a significant influence on various aspects of social life, including in the world of education. Elementary school-age children are now growing up in a digital era that allows them to access information quickly and easily through various social media platforms. One of the platforms that is very popular among children, teenagers, and adults is Tiktok. Tiktok, a short-form video-sharing platform launched in 2016, is now one of the most popular apps in the world, with over 1.5 billion active users (DataReportal, 2023). According to (APJII, 2022) In Indonesia itself, Tiktok ranks fourth as the most frequently accessed platform, including elementary school children. This application allows its users to create and share short videos with various themes and styles, ranging from entertainment, education, to viral content that is often followed without considering moral values.

In addition to the benefits and high popularity of Tiktok, there are concerns about the impact it has on the formation of children's characters, especially in terms of manners behavior. This phenomenon shows that elementary school students are not only passive users, but also actively produce content, so the potential for its influence on character is also very large. Meanwhile, character education, especially manners, is an important foundation in the formation of the personality of elementary school students. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), good manners include values such as respect for parents, teachers, friends, and the use of language and good behavior. However, the rapid development of digital media has the potential to shift traditional values, especially if the content consumed is not in accordance with the child's developmental stage.

The lack of parental supervision significantly contributes to the negative influence that children may experience. When children are not strictly supervised, they can easily access age-inappropriate content. Furthermore, a lack of supervision can lead to excessive use of gadgets, which leads to addiction. Without time limits on gadget use, children often forget time and may neglect their responsibilities (Adisaputra, 2020:3). Therefore, there needs to be an active role from the surrounding environment to prevent adverse impacts that may arise from the use of social media. Various efforts can be made according to the child's situation, condition, and environment. In

addition to supervision, parents can also instill character values through example, habituation, and the cultivation of good manners values (Imron, 2020:183).

Several reports from teachers and parents show that excessive use of TikTok correlates with changes in elementary school students' behavior, such as a decrease in verbal politeness, where children often use inappropriate harsh words due to imitating TikTok creators' content (Nurhayati, 2023). In addition, disrespectful behavior was also found, such as students imitating movements or challenges that did not conform to norms, including ignoring teachers' reprimands (Pratiwi & Suryanto, 2022). This phenomenon is further exacerbated by the tendency of children to lack empathy, where they are more interested in funny or provocative content without understanding the social context (Aini et al., 2022). This is in line with Albert Bandura's (1986) theory in *Social Learning Theory*, which states that children learn through observation and imitation, including from media content. If the dominant content consumed is not educational, the values of good manners can be eroded.

Previous studies have examined the impact of TikTok on children's behavior. A study by Otero (2021) in the *Journal of Children and Media* shows that TikTok's algorithm often promotes sensational content without filtering educational value, potentially affecting children's moral development. Meanwhile, research by Rahmawati (2022) in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* found that 65% of elementary school students in Jakarta admitted to imitating movements or speech from TikTok, including inappropriate ones. However, the majority of previous studies focused more on adolescents, even though elementary school children are more vulnerable due to their immature critical thinking skills (Livingstone, 2018). Therefore, this research is important to carry out considering the long-term impact of impolite habits formed from elementary school to adulthood. In addition, the minimal regulation of TikTok content makes parents and teachers often unaware of the type of content that children consume. This research is also needed to provide a local perspective, considering the cultural differences and values of politeness in Indonesia compared to other countries.

Based on these symptoms, this research is important to be conducted to understand more deeply how TikTok use affects the character of elementary school students' manners. This research will use a qualitative approach to explore students' perceptions, experiences, and interaction patterns in using TikTok and how it contributes to their behavior in daily life. Therefore, the formulation of the problem in this study is: *How does the use of TikTok affect the character of elementary school students?* The purpose of this study is to examine in depth the influence of TikTok use on the character of elementary school students' manners, as a basis for formulating relevant character education strategies in the digital era.

## 2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to uncover in depth the phenomenon of TikTok use among elementary school students. As explained by Helaluddin and Wijaya (2019), qualitative methods allow researchers to understand the essence of a phenomenon through direct observation and identification of emerging patterns. This approach was chosen because of its ability to explore the perspectives of research subjects holistically, particularly in the context of human behavior and culture.

The type of research applied is qualitative descriptive, which produces data in the form of verbal and visual narratives. The data is then analyzed to gain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon being studied. This research aims to find new meanings that can contribute to the development of the world of education, especially in the formation of students' character.

This study involved 5 students in grade V, 5 parents of students, and teachers of class V at SDN 1 Kemantren as the main subjects. Data collection was carried out by three main techniques, namely interviews, observations, and documentation studies. Interviews are conducted in a structured manner based on guidelines that have been compiled to ensure a fixed focus on the research topic. Observation is used to observe students' behavior, language, and expressions during interviews.

Meanwhile, documentation is carried out by reviewing students' TikTok accounts as supporting data, in order to understand their preferences and digital activities. To ensure the accuracy of the data obtained, the validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques, namely by using source triangulation (teachers, students, parents) and triangulation techniques (interviews, observations, documentation). After the data collection process is complete, the next step is to analyze the collected data. Data analysis is the stage of data processing obtained during the collection process. This process is carried out periodically, by sorting out relevant and irrelevant data, then concluding it so that the information presented is easy to understand (Sugiyono, 2015:335). This study uses a qualitative data analysis approach to explore information and facts related to the influence of TikTok social media on student politeness. Qualitative data analysis techniques include three main stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification. Data reduction is the process of filtering information through activities of summarizing, selecting important things, focusing on primary data, and eliminating unnecessary data. This stage helps to clarify and clarify the subsequent analysis process. Furthermore, the presentation of data is carried out so that the content and meaning of the data can be understood more easily. The last stage, data verification, is a valid and reliable conclusion process because it is supported by data collected during field research.

### 3. Results and Discussion

Based on the existing reality, Tiktok is a media platform that presents a variety of videos with various music genres, such as pop music, religion, DJ, and dangdut. This makes the TikTok application potentially dependent on students, so they can show behavior that is not appropriate for their age. Technological advances make children's interaction with social media inevitable. Tiktok is one of the social media that is currently very popular and loved by children. Some students at SDN 1 Kemantren are also active in using this platform. Through Tiktok, students can express their creativity by creating their own videos or imitating videos uploaded by other users from different parts of the world. At SDN 1 Kemantren, there is a rule that students are not allowed to bring cellphones, because children are not allowed to carelessly bring cellphones, thus minimizing children accessing TikTok during school. Kids tend to use TikTok only at home, spending several hours a day on the app. This was revealed from the interview, where they admitted the duration of their daily TikTok use.

*"1-3 hours"*

*"3-4 hours"*

*"30 minutes, sometimes during the day, sometimes even at night"*

*"2 hours"*

*"4-5 hours"*

Based on interviews, it can be seen that children often spend hours on TikTok. This time is used to explore content that suits their interests and preferences. The content they like includes: Kpop, anime, jedag jedug, vlogs, photo and video editing, mukbang, educational content, cartoon animation and cooking. It can be seen from the observation results that the majority of the content accessed is positive. This content is considered effective in reducing stress while improving mood

#### **The Impact of Content on Tiktok Social Media on the Character of Manners in Grade V Elementary School Children**

The Tiktok social media platform is very popular among children, including students of SDN 1 Kemantren, because of its ease of access and entertaining content. A wide variety of engaging videos allow users to choose content that suits their interests. According to Mrs. YP, homeroom teacher of class V of SDN 1 Kemantren, the students in the class have shown quite polite behavior in interacting. He said.

*"According to my observation when I see students in their daily lives, most students have behaved politely towards me and other teachers, but there are some students who behave rudely such as making*

*fun of their parents' names, saying rudely, sometimes they are also not able to distinguish between talking to the teacher or talking to their friends"*

Students' disrespectful behavior to their friends is more caused by the pranks that arise during adolescence, not solely the influence of social media such as Tik-Tok. When teachers find students using harsh words or being rude, they will immediately reprimand and advise students not to repeat the actions. During the interview, the children were asked to explain their reactions when they were engrossed in playing Tiktok and then called by their parents to help or do tasks. Here is the answer they gave.

*"Sometimes it's just a matter of waiting, sometimes it's just waiting."*

*"Immediately, because otherwise my parents would be angry."*

*"If you want to, you will"*

*"I don't want to do it but sometimes it's annoying."*

*"Okay, but I have something to say."*

From the various responses given, some children immediately obeyed their parents' orders, while others postponed it because they were still engrossed in playing Tik-Tok. When asked how they would react if they were talked to while focusing on watching Tik-Tok, here is the response they gave.

*"Playing TikTok while answering"*

*"Put down the phone, and listen to the parents talk"*

*"The video was turned off and then responded"*

*"Talking while watching tiktok"*

*"Responding, but sometimes the cellphone is put down, sometimes it stays while looking at the cellphone. "Who is talking?"*

Based on the results of the interview, some children showed an attitude of respect for the interlocutor by turning off their phones and giving their full attention. However, there are also those who tend to focus attention on interesting content available on the Tiktok platform. This phenomenon shows that Tik-Tok can have a negative influence on some children, especially in terms of respect and appreciation for others, especially older ones.

### **Efforts Made by Teachers and Parents in Instilling Character of Manners in Children**

Instilling good ethics in children is an important priority. Instilling these values of politeness is generally carried out by adult figures who often interact with children on a daily basis. In its implementation, the role of an educator and parents plays a crucial role. At SDN 1 Kemantren, all teachers have made various efforts to form a character of manners, as conveyed by Mrs. YP, homeroom teacher of class V.

*"The formation of this character of manners is listed in the vision and mission of the school, because manners are the most prioritized thing in this school. It is done by getting used to manners and skills that are in harmony with the identity of the Indonesian nation and religious values. The formation of this character of manners is realized through two main approaches: example and habituation. The exemplary approach is realized when teachers exemplify polite speech and behavior to all school residents, both fellow teachers, students, and other staff. Meanwhile, the habituation approach is carried out by training students consistently to be polite, such as the habit of greeting teachers, friends, and all members of the school community."*

Each teacher at SDN 1 Kemantren has a different approach in making efforts to form a character of manners. In realizing this effort, teachers also collaborate by involving the active role of students' parents. This is as expressed by Mrs. YP as the homeroom teacher of class V

*"I always involve parents in shaping the character of students' manners. If there is a child who is not polite in class, I usually immediately reprimand and give directions that the behavior is inappropriate. In addition, I also communicate with my parents, for example when taking report cards. There, I conveyed to parents if there are children's behaviors that need to be further fostered at home."*

This effort aims to optimize the formation of manners character as well as equalize views between educators and parents. In the home environment, parents also play an active role in instilling the values of politeness in children. This was conveyed by the parents in an interview, where they mentioned.

*"For manners, if I personally always prioritize, for example, when talking to people who are older than him, you have to be more polite."*

*"I told him that I should give an example, if the same older person should be, how should the younger one be?"*

*"In terms of attitude formation, I put more emphasis on the importance of respecting older people."*

*"Given an example, there are not many theories and from their own parents. Indirectly, children more or less imitate their parents, so if we don't give them an example, we can't."*

*"For my children, I always give and teach well"*

The results of interviews with parents show that they have tried to instill the values of politeness in their children. Although the methods used vary between parents, the ultimate goal is the same, which is to form a positive character of the child. In addition to interviewing parents and teachers, the study also involved students to explore their perceptions of the formation of manners character. The findings from interviews with students show consistency with statements made by teachers and parents. The students revealed that.

*"Parents always teach us that when we are passing by, there is an older person who must greet and excuse me"*

*"My parents told me that with older people we should be polite and respectful"*

*"In school, teachers teach manners, they should not speak dirty and rude to anyone, if parents teach them to appreciate others more"*

*"If the teacher teaches, they must be polite, respectful and appreciative when others speak. If it is from my parents, I appreciate and help others"*

*"If my teacher says we have to respect the teacher, for example if the teacher explains, we must listen and must not insult the teacher. If my parents say you can't talk in a high tone"*

Based on the results of interviews with students, it is confirmed that teachers and parents actively play a role in shaping children's polite behavior. The school and home environment serves as the main vehicle for character formation that is ideal for children's development. This character education effort has special significance in an era where children are easily exposed to various influences of digital media. When conducting interviews with students, observations were also made about the behavior and way the child spoke.

Table 1:

Observation	FL	VL	MD	AD	LN
Use good speech	√	√	√	√	√
Soft tone	√	√	√	√	√
Saying thank you when you are given something	√	√	√	√	√
Doing the 5S (Greetings, greetings, smiles, courtesy and manners)	√	√	√	√	√

The results of observations show that children's behavior and way of speaking reflect the character of manners. This is marked with a checkmark (√) at all points in the observation results. During the interview all the children used good language and speech. Some of them even received gifts using both hands. This shows that the efforts that have been made by teachers and parents have been quite successful.

### 3.1 Discussion

#### TikTok Use Among Elementary School Grade V Students

The rapid advancement of digital technology has also encouraged the increase in the use of social media, including among children, social media is seen as a platform that facilitates interaction, as explained by Van Djik (in Nasrullah, 2015). One of the most popular platforms is TikTok, a music-based short video-sharing application launched in September 2016 (Lixu, 2019). This application offers various interesting features such as creating videos with editing effects, music, stickers, as well as social interaction features such as likes, comments, and friends.

Based on research through interviews and observations of students' TikTok accounts, it was found that the majority of students (about 80%) watch content more often than create content themselves. Only a small percentage (20%) actively upload videos, usually in the form of creative content such as self-editing videos with editing effects or participating in viral dance challenges. This is in line with research by Chusna (2020) who stated that TikTok's creative features are in great demand by elementary school children.

The main motivations for using TikTok according to Panji (in Ayyun, 2015) are divided into three: entertainment (85% of respondents), socialization (70%), and information exploration (45%). The data of this study shows the consistency between students' statements and their actual activities on the platform. TikTok does serve as a primary means of entertainment to relieve boredom, although it actually provides various creative potentials that have not been fully utilized by elementary school students.

These findings indicate the importance of the role of parental and teacher mentoring in optimizing the use of TikTok. In addition to ensuring healthy social interaction, mentoring is also needed to direct students in utilizing creative features positively and filtering out content that is not appropriate for their age. Thus, TikTok is not only a means of entertainment, but can also serve as a safe medium for creativity development for children.

#### The Impact of TikTok Content on the Character of Manners for Elementary School Grade V Children

According to Hendry & Firdaus (2021), TikTok social media contributes double in shaping children's manners character, including positive and negative aspects. Positively, TikTok plays more of a role in children's cognitive and psychomotor development than character formation. This platform is a fun educational medium through creative content, increasing children's knowledge, and training motor skills through popular dance movements (Larasati, 2022). In addition, TikTok also serves as an effective means of entertainment to reduce boredom and expand the network of friends. However, the negative impact is quite significant on the character of manners. According to Kasetyaningsih (2017), the attraction of addictive TikTok content can cause children to lose their sense of time, even ignoring the social environment. Some of the negative behaviors that arise

include: (1) delaying or ignoring parents/teachers' orders when engrossed in watching content, (2) undervaluing direct interaction due to excessive focus on cyberspace, and (3) reliance on instant entertainment that reduces patience.

Therefore, the active role of parents and teachers is crucial in minimizing the negative impact of TikTok. Limiting the time of use, mentoring when accessing content, and strengthening character education through direct example are effective strategies to balance the influence of social media. Thus, children can continue to enjoy the benefits of TikTok without sacrificing the values of politeness that have been taught at home and school.

### **The Role of Teachers and Parents in Forming Manners in Children**

The formation of a character of manners in children requires collaboration between the role of teachers at school and parents at home. Both parties have a shared responsibility in instilling the values of decency through various educational approaches. Based on research by Setiardi and Mubarok (2017), there are four main strategies that are effective in building children's character. First, giving advice that is delivered consistently. Teachers integrate moral values in learning, while parents instill them through daily dialogue. Second, exemplary behavior where teachers and parents become concrete models in speaking and behaving politely. Third, routine habits such as the 5S program (Greetings, Smiles, Greetings, Politeness, Manners) at school and the use of polite words at home. Fourth, a proportionate reward and punishment system to strengthen positive behavior.

However, this character education process faces various challenges. The negative influence of the social environment, uncontrolled exposure to digital media, and lack of supervision are the main inhibiting factors. Elementary school children in grade V who are still in the cognitive and emotional development phase tend to be easily influenced by the surrounding environment. important. First, integrated supervision of children's digital device use and online activities is absolutely necessary. Second, careful monitoring of the child's social environment must be carried out periodically. Third, intense and continuous communication is needed between the school and parents to ensure harmony in character education. Fourth, consistency in applying rules and values of politeness is a determining factor for success. The process of character formation that begins at an early age through habituation methods and real examples has proven to be more effective in cultivating a well-mannered personality. A strong synergy between the school environment and the family is the main foundation in producing a young generation who not only excel in academics, but also have noble morals and noble ethics. This collaboration must be established continuously to create maximum impact in the formation of children's character.

### **3.2 Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that most children use TikTok to access a variety of entertaining and educational content, such as Kpop, anime, pop music, vlogs, photo and video editing, mukbang, cartoon animation, educational content, and cooking. Some children even show their creativity through their own content production, especially in the form of video editing and following dance trends. The use of TikTok has a dual influence on children, namely it can positively stimulate cognitive and psychomotor abilities through creativity and new knowledge. However, its impact on the formation of polite character is still limited. The most prominent negative impact is that children tend to ignore the surrounding environment because they focus too much on the application. Although no access to negative content was found, the potential lack of attention to social interaction in the real world is still a problem that needs attention.

To minimize the negative impact of TikTok use, parents and teachers need to play an active role by providing consistent advice, exemplary behavior, good social interaction habits, and implementing a balanced reward and punishment system. Continuous coaching and supervision are important so that children remain balanced in using digital media and establishing social interaction in real life. Further research is suggested to explore the effectiveness of digital interventions in strengthening the character of elementary school children, so that social media such as TikTok can be used optimally without sacrificing aspects of children's character development.

## References

- Adisaputra, F. (2020). The relationship between the use of the Tik Tok application and the character degradation of elementary school students. *Proceedings of the Basic Scientific Conference*, 2, 2020. <http://prosiding.unipma.ac.id/index.php/KID>
- Afandi, Y. (2019). The Church and the Influence of Information Technology "Digital Ecclesiology." *Fidei: Journal of Systematic Theology and Practice*, 1(2), 270–283. <https://doi.org/10.34081/270033>
- Afriluyanto, T. R. (2018). The Phenomenon of Teenagers Using Social Media in Forming Identities. *COMMUNICATION: Journal of Da'wah and Communication*, 11(2), 184–197. <https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v11i2.1365>
- Son, B., Learner, S., & School, D. I. (2024). *Literature study: the role of classroom teachers in overcoming children's learning difficulties. Sec. 10.*
- APJII. (2022). Indonesian Internet User Survey.
- Asfuri, N. B., Inda, M., Rika, Y. A., Luncana, F. S., & Harbono. (2023). The Influence of Tiktok Social Media on the Behavior of High Class Students of SD Negeri 03 Banjarharjo Kebakramat Karanganyar. *Scientific Partners of Swara Ganesha*, 10(1), 15–29.
- Dewi, P., & Oman, F. (2021). The Role of Civic Education on the Character Formation of Grade 5 and 6 Elementary School Students in the Use of Tiktok. *Pendekar : Journal of Character Education*, 4(2), 45–49. <http://ppkn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/PROSIDING-FULL-RUANG-baruI.pdf#page=126>
- Ilahin, N. (2022). The Effect of the Use of Tik-Tok Social Media on the Character of Class V Students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. *Ibtida'*, 3(1), 112–119. <https://doi.org/10.37850/ibtida.v3i1.300>
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (2017). Character Education Guide for Elementary School.
- Larasati. (2020). *The Role of Parents in Shaping Children's Manners Character on the Impact of Social Media.* <http://etheses.iainponorogo.ac.id/11973/>
- Nabilah, & Suprayitno. (2022). THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA (TIK-TOK) ON THE CHARACTER OF MANNERS OF GRADE VI STUDENTS OF IZZA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. *PGSD, FIP State University of Surabaya*, 10(4), 736.
- Putri, A. A., Aprilianti, A. D., Nurzahra, I. P. A., & Wahyudin, D. (2023). The Influence of the Tiktok Application on the Behavior and Character of Elementary School (SD) Students Atikah Amanda Putri, Alya Dewi Aprilianti, Isni Putri Angggraini Nurzahra Dede Wahyudin, Jennyta Caturiasari. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 13(1), 146–158.
- Putri, L., & Alfurqan. (2023). The Effect of Tiktok Social Media on the Polite Behavior of Students. *Journal of Educational Charities*, 4(1), 33–42.
- Rahmat, S. P., 2021. Student Development. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- Setiardi, D. (2017). Family as a source of character education for children. *Tarbawi : Journal of Islamic Education*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.34001/tarbawi.v14i2.619>
- Sutisna, R. R., Hidayat, S., & Merliana, A. (2024). Analysis of the impact of tiktok social media on the character of elementary school students of SDN 1 Rancapaku Tasikmalaya Regency. *COLLASE (Creative of Learning Students Elementary Education)*, 7(1), 194–199. <https://doi.org/10.22460/collase.v7i1.19131>
- Wahyudi, D., & Arsana, I. M. (2014). The Role of the Family in Fostering Children's Manners in Galis Village. *Journal of Moral and Civic Studies*, 1(2), 290–304.
- Zahidah Bashiroturrohman, Sisika Martha Nur Cahyani, & Andhita Risiko Faristiana. (2023). The Influence of Tik - Tok Social Media on the Character of Elementary School Students. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences (Jupendis)*, 1(3), 119–131. <https://doi.org/10.54066/jupendis-itb.v1i3.251>