
EDUCATIONAL CONTENT ON TIKTOK: ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

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Abstract

TikTok has evolved not only as an entertainment platform, but also as medium for disseminating educational content supporting digital marketing communication strategies. However, research on educational content on TikTok remains limited, especially content characteristics and audience engagement patterns. This study aims to analyze the characteristics of educational content on TikTok and the resulting engagement pattern. The research uses descriptive qualitative methods using content analysis. Data were collected from non-participative observation on ten highly engaging educational contents on TikTok published between June and December 2025. The result shows that educational content is prominently presented in a talking-head or solo podcast style supported by on-screen text or closed caption (CC). In addition, content is delivered in a casual and easily understandable style, and provides concrete examples and applicable steps. The engagement pattern indicates that audience engagement is not only reflected in likes, but also saves, shares, and comments as more highly valuable forms of interaction. Practical and applicable content tends to generate higher numbers of saves and shares, while reflective content, especially on mental health topics generates more audience comments. These findings emphasize that educational content on TikTok serves as an effective digital marketing communication strategy in building audience engagement and closeness.

Keywords: Educational Content; TikTok; Digital Marketing; Audience Engagement; Content Analysis

PENDAHULUAN

The development of informational technology and communication has fundamentally changed the way businesses interact with their customers. In the last decade, digital marketing has thrived fast and become the key strategy for building sustainable relationships with customers. This strategy includes several internet-based channels such as website, search engine, email, social media, and mobile application, to reach, influence, and retain the customers (da Silva et al., 2023; Wiryany et al., 2023). Digital marketing not only functions as a medium for promotion of certain products and services, but also creates positive customer experience and strengthens their loyalty to a brand (Drumond et al., 2022).

The rise of competition in the digital market has encouraged businesses to shift from conventional media to digital advertising and social media marketing (Antczak, 2024). This shift occurred due to social media which is more adaptive, interactive, and able to facilitate real-time, two-way communication. Gündüzyeli (2025) states that digital marketing becomes a vital element in maintaining business sustainability in this dynamic market. Furthermore, Aziz and Abdulqadir (2023) highlight the use of digital channels like social media, search engine, and mobile applications strengthens the role of digital marketing as a primary trend in contemporary business (da Silva Wegner et al., 2023).

Along with the rapid development of social media, it has become one of the dominant channels in digital marketing. These platforms enable many businesses to interact directly with their customers, build brand image, and create active user communities. Ahmad and Rosly (2023) explain that most of the big companies have integrated social media into their marketing strategies to expand communication reach. Several platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have millions of monthly active users worldwide, especially among teenagers and adults (Maksi et al., 2024). This phenomenon reflects a fundamental shift in people's information consumption patterns and media preferences, that currently rely more on digital content which is visual and interactive.

TikTok has emerged as one of fastest-growing social media platforms in the world that encourages its users to create and share short videos (Zulli & Zulli, 2020). The platform has approximately two billion active users globally, with Indonesia ranking second rank regarding active users, reaching around 109.9 millions active users in 2023 (Purwaningrum & Pramono, 2024). The average usage time in Indonesia reaches 23.1 hours per month, higher than the global average of 19.6 hours (Hidayatullah et al., 2023). This duration shows its strong abilities to maintain users' attention and engagement.

At first, TikTok was known as a music video-based entertainment platform. Today, it has evolved to a social commerce platform through the TikTok Shop feature, which enables users to promote and sell products (Nur et al., 2023). TikTok is associated as well with the concept of content marketing because its algorithm operates based on users preferences and interactions with certain contents. Engaging content, namely content that is watched until the end, replayed, or shared, gains wider reach through the platform's recommendation system (Harina & Pahlevi,

2023). For You Page or FYP system uses artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies to analyse users' behaviour and show real-time, and relevant contents (Al Mubarak, 2025). The personalization feature allows TikTok to effectively generate a high level of engagement among its users, especially the younger generation (Cahyani & Muntazah, 2025).

In the field of digital marketing, content has a central role as the main driver of brand communication. One of the most popular types of content is educational content, which is not only entertaining but also provides knowledge and insight to audiences (Vidyana & Atnan, 2022). Today, TikTok does not only function as entertainment media, but also as an effective educational platform, offering a wide range of categories such as lifestyle, beauty, business, culinary, and education (Hasanah et al., 2022). Putri and Sulistyanto (2022) state that educational content is designed to convey a message that enhances knowledge and consciously influences individual behaviour.

In terms of digital marketing, educational content serves to provide additional value to the audiences by building understanding, trust, and emotional connection with a brand. Suharyanto (2021) confirms that educational content can enhance credibility and loyalty among customers. Furthermore, Sakti and Deslia (2024) state that a brand which consistently publishes educational content tends to gain greater brand trust and higher engagement. Therefore, educational content plays an important role in value-based communication strategies, where education functions as a tool to strengthen the relationship between brands and customers.

Nevertheless, previous research related to digital marketing through TikTok still mainly focused on *purchase intention*, *brand awareness*, or the effectiveness of promotional activities (Ratu & Tulung, 2022; Miftahudin & Wahyudi, 2025; Setiawan, 2025). Studies that

specifically examine the relationship between educational content and user engagement remain limited. Instead, in this highly competitive social media landscape, engagement becomes a key indicator of a successful marketing communication strategy.

The increasing trend in the consumption of educational contents on social media reflects a shift in consumer behaviour, where users seek not only entertainment, but also knowledge through digital interaction. Therefore, the research focuses on analysing educational content on TikTok as a part of digital marketing communication strategy and its role in enhancing user engagement. The study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of content-based digital marketing literature, as well as offer a new perspective on the educational value that strengthens brand relationships on social media.

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is a form of modern marketing which utilizes digital technology and the internet to achieve communication and sales goals. Christina et al. (2019) state that digital marketing is a tool used to reach target markets through the digital technology implementation such as computer, mobile phone, and other online platforms. Purnomo (2025) also explains that digital marketing strategies aim to reach audiences effectively, increase engagements, and generate beneficial conversions for businesses.

Supriyatin dan Wisesha (2022) states that digital marketing is an interactive and integrated approach which enables customers to have direct engagement with businesses. The approach is not only related to technology, but also to human behaviour, as it analyses how businesses understand consumer behaviour and utilize technology to build long-term relationships. Another advantage of digital marketing compared to conventional marketing

lies in the ability to reach a broader market at lower costs while enabling real-time, two-way communication (Olazo, 2022).

The implementation of digital marketing involves various techniques and channels, such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, content marketing, affiliate marketing, and email marketing (Mohammad, 2022; Desai & Vidyapeeth, 2019). In the context of social media, these strategies play an important role in creating engagement and fostering relationships between brands and audiences (Piranda et al., 2022), making digital marketing the main foundation for building effective communication in the digital era.

Social Media as a Tool of Digital Marketing

Social media has become one of the most important main elements in modern digital marketing strategies. Rachmad (2022) states that social media serves as a marketing communication tool which facilitates a relationship between businesses and customers through symbols, signs, and visual messages designed to attract attention and influence decision-making. The role of social media is not only as a medium of information, but also as a tool to build brand awareness and maintain sustainable relationships with the customers. Along with the development of technology and new media systems, social media has become more complex and dynamic in supporting digital marketing activities.

According to Ali et al. (2025), Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) are marketing practices implemented on social media platforms and designed for a brand to influence consumer behaviour. The strategy includes the business efforts to encourage customers engagement through activities such as consuming, contributing, and creating content. Zeqiri et al. (2025) add that marketing campaigns on social media generate positive effects, such as increasing brand awareness, brand equity, purchase intention, and the emotional relationship between customers and brands.

Wulandari and Rauf (2022) identify some main indicators of marketing through social media, such as relationship building, brand building, publicity, promotion, and consumer behaviour-based market research. Meanwhile, Sudirjo et al. (2023) highlight four important characteristics of social media marketing, namely context, collaboration, connection, and participation which make social media a dynamic and interactive space between users and brand managers. The entertainment aspect also plays a role in generating enjoyable experiences, which eventually increase engagement with the platform and brand (Fetais et al., 2023).

In a global context, Antczak (2024) emphasizes that brands have become increasingly reliant on digital and social media marketing to reach target audiences and influence their purchase behaviour. Social media has evolved into a strategic tool which is not only cost-effective, but also strengthens two-way communication between brands and customers through participative, collaborative, and emotional communication. Therefore, social media marketing has become a core component in digital communication strategies oriented toward relationship and building sustainable engagement.

TikTok as Digital Marketing Platform

TikTok has become one of the fastest-growing social media platforms in the world, utilized as a strategic tool for digital marketing. Through features such as TikTok Shop, Live Streaming, and Influencer Endorsement, users and creators can promote and sell products directly to the audiences in real time (Salwanisa & Wikartika, 2023; Annisa et al., 2024). TikTok is not only an entertainment medium, but also an effective promotional tool due to its short video format that attracts users' attention and influences its product perception (Fuaddah et al., 2022; Nur et al., 2023).

Globally, TikTok ranked number one as the most downloaded application in 2022, and

in Indonesia, its users reached around 109.9 million, placing the country second in the world (Statista, 2023; Krisdanu & Sumantri, 2023). The advantage of TikTok is the algorithm which is content-graph based, showing contents according to the users' interest and behaviour, rather than based on social relationships like other platforms (Erfiati & Helfi, 2023). The For You Page (FYP) recommendation system utilizes artificial intelligence to sort videos based on user interactions such as view duration, likes, and comments (Cheng & Li, 2024; Fitri & Ananta, 2025).

Strongly personalized content makes TikTok effective in building engagement between brands and audiences. Features such as hashtag challenges, likes, and followers help businesses expand their reach and strengthen relationships with customers (Suparna & Sari, 2024; Wiryawan et al., 2025). Therefore, TikTok is not only an entertainment platform, but also a digital marketing communication medium that increases brand awareness and creates participative interactions.

Educational Content as Digital Communication Strategy

Educational content is a form of digital communication aimed at providing knowledge value and building meaningful relationships with customers. Putri and Sulistyanto (2022) state that educational content is information designed to increase knowledge and change individual behaviour through self-awareness. Fitriani (2021) adds that social media such as TikTok is now used as a medium to deliver digital educational content that helps users get new insights and understand learning material interactively.

In practice, educational content not only focuses on information delivery but also motivates audiences to actively participate. Fiallos et al. (2021) state that effective educational content can encourage audiences to take ownership of their own learning process through engaging narratives and visuals. Along

with that, the term edutainment has emerged, combining education and entertainment, which creates fun learning experiences and increases audience engagement (Shin et al., 2021; Nwafor & Nnaemeka, 2023; Zein et al., 2024; Prindle et al., 2024).

In the digital marketing context, educational content has a strategic role as a meaningful communication medium to strengthen brand trust and credibility. Knihová (2021) states that marketing messages containing educational content provide added value because they help customers understand products and gain knowledge-based benefits. The trend of educational content has developed rapidly, where the platform was initially known only for entertainment, but is now widely used to share learning and motivational content (Rahimullah et al., 2022). Moreover, TikTok officially launched campaign #EduTok to encourage creators to generate educational and inspirational contents in the platform (O'Donnell et al., 2023). Therefore, educational content not only becomes an informational medium, but also a form of value creation which unifies elements such as entertainment, education, and interactive, participative digital marketing communication strategies.

Engagement Concept in Social Media

Engagement has become one of the most important indicators of digital marketing communication because it reflects active involvement and users' emotional responses towards content. According to Mahfud and Manalu (2025), customer engagement is an emotional and cognitive involvement in interacting with a brand that generates loyalty, advocacy, and active participation. On social media, engagement emerges through actions such as likes, shares, and saves. Widodo (2023) states that social media engagement enables customers to actively interact with a brand, provide feedback, and strengthen two-way relationships. The main aspects of engagement include interaction, participation, relationship

building, and emotional connection between customers and brands.

On TikTok, engagement is affected by a recommendation system called the For You Page (FYP) which encourages content relevance and audience participation (Cheng & Li, 2024). Research by Trianasari et al. (2023) shows that the level of engagement in TikTok is 44% higher than on other platforms which makes it an effective medium for building brand awareness. The strategies to increase engagement include creative and relevant content creation, and participation in hashtag challenges (Gisha & Malinda, 2023). Therefore, engagement is not only measured by the number of user responses but also serves as a reflection of successful two-way communication, which strengthens relationships and trust between brands and audiences on digital platforms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to depict and understand the phenomenon of educational content usage on TikTok platform in digital marketing communication strategies. This approach is used to analyze the meanings, communication patterns, and various forms of user engagements in depth without hypothesis testing or statistical analysis. Data analyzed in this research include words, visual, and digital content making qualitative methods suitable for examining communication phenomena on social media.

The research object is educational content published on the TikTok platform, produced by an individual creator or account generating valuable knowledge-based information. The focus of the research is the characteristics of educational content which gains a high engagement rate, as indicated by several indicators such as likes, comments, shares, and views. The analysis not only highlights the number of user interactions, but also examines the way messages and narration are conveyed,

as well as visual elements used in educational content.

This study uses secondary data as the primary data source. The data were collected from TikTok content documentation through observation and a literature review of scientific journals, books, and other relevant sources. The data collection techniques were conducted through non-participative observation, in which the researcher acts as an observer without direct involvement in the observed activities, as well as documentation in the form of content screenshots and engagement data records.

The data analysis technique used in this research is qualitative descriptive analysis with a content analysis approach. The analysis was conducted by identifying educational content published on TikTok from June 2025 to December 2026 which fulfill the research criteria, categorizing the content based on theme and presentation characteristics, analyzing engagement indicators, and linking with empirical findings with the concepts of educational content and users engagements in digital marketing communication. The results of the analysis used to draw conclusions regarding the role of educational content in building audiences' engagement on TikTok.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The objects of the research are educational content published on TikTok platform. The analyzed content consists of 10 videos from public accounts, selected based on educational content criteria with high user engagement. The content was collected from June to December 2025 to represent educational content trends that are currently developing on social media.

The educational content analyzed includes several topics, such as business education (3 contents), financial education (3 contents), health education (2 contents), and general education (2 contents) which exclude previously mentioned topics, such as how to create engaging content, or digital marketing

education. The topic classification was conducted to give a more comprehensive and clear description of the variety of educational content on TikTok.

The indicators of user engagement analyzed in this research are views, likes, comments, and shares. The data are used as the basis for identifying user engagement patterns towards educational content. In this phase, the analysis focuses on a general description of the research objects, while an in-depth discussion of content characteristics and engagement patterns is presented in the next subchapter.

Based on the results of the observation of ten educational contents on TikTok analysed within the research period, it was found that several general characteristics depict how educational content is presented and communicated to audiences. These characteristics include topic variety, delivery format, communication style, and other supporting elements which strengthen the educational message.

Educational content analyzed includes several main topics, such as business, finance, health and general education related to self-development and content creation. Business and financial education content mostly focus on practical tips, mindset formation, and relevant decision-making related to the business world and personal financial management. Meanwhile, health education content emphasizes increased awareness of healthy lifestyles, both physical and mental. General education content plays a role as a creative guideline which helps audiences develop ideas, skills, and content strategies on social media.

The topic variety shows that educational content on TikTok is not limited to one specific area, but also addresses broader and contextual needs of audiences. This phenomenon is in line with the development of TikTok where it no longer functions solely as an entertainment platform, but also as a medium to deliver educational content in many areas which is

presented concisely and easily understood by the audience (Evince & Andriana, 2026).

In terms of format, the majority of the educational content is presented in a solo podcast or talking-head style, where the creator delivers the information directly to the audience. Several contents include visual illustrations or supporting examples that function to clarify the message, even though they do not always represent the literal core message.

Most of the contents use on-screen text or closed caption (CC) to emphasize the important messages. Besides, it also helps the audience understand the content more easily, especially when it is viewed with no sound or audio. The simple delivery format yet still focusing on the substance of the message, becomes a dominant characteristic of the analyzed educational content.

Educational content on TikTok tends to use an informal style, communicative that resembles daily conversation. Creators often position themselves as if they are talking to the audiences, therefore the educational message feels closer and less patronizing. The language generally used is simple and easily understood, even though the topics discussed are complex such as business, finance, and health.

In addition to communication style, the credibility of a creator is also important in shaping audience understanding of the delivered messages. A creator who is perceived as skilled and trustworthy tends to be more effective in persuading audience attitudes and enhancing understanding. The emotional attachment between the audience and the creator also increases audience openness to receive and internalize the educational information delivered (Soenardi & Prabayanti, 2026). In some contents, reflective and storytelling approaches are applied to strengthen emotional closeness, especially in mental health and self-development content.

The supporting elements, such as visual illustrations and step-by-step instructions,

become important in strengthening the educational value of the content. These elements help audiences understand and implement delivered information in everyday life. Call to action (CTA) commonly found in educational content is generally participative and educative, such as invitations and encouragement for the audience to save the content, share it with other people, write their opinions in the comment section, or do self-reflection. The promotional CTAs emerge as limited and do not become the main focus in delivering the message, therefore it does not affect the core educational value of the content.

The educational content analyzed was found using the relevant keywords which match the audience information needs, such as business, finance, health, and self-development topics. The use of these keywords reflects contextual issues searched by the TikTok audiences and becomes part of the research content curation process. Therefore, a keyword not only functions as a search tool, but represents audience interests and needs on the platform.

Based on the results of the observation of analysed educational content, it was found that engagement becomes an important indicator for assessing and evaluating how far the content can actively engage the audiences. Engagement in educational content on TikTok is not only reflected in the number of views, but also user interactions such as likes, comments, saves, and shares. These interactions show the audience response to the value of the educational content delivered.

The engagement patterns emerging in educational content indicate various forms of audience interactions. One interaction is “like”, which generally represents the user's initial interest in the content. Meanwhile, “comment” refers to a more active engagement, where the audience not only receives the information, but also cognitively and emotionally responds to the delivered message.

Moreover, the high number of “saves” in several educational contents indicate that the content is considered to have practical and relevant value, making it worth saving and rewatching in the future. A “share” suggests that the content is considered worth sharing to other people due to its helpful, inspirational, and socially relevant message.

A high number of engagements in educational content reflects a positive relationship between audience and the delivered message. This engagement is not passive, it demonstrates a psychological connection which encourages the audience to actively participate. In this context, engagement functions as an indicator of audience transformation from a viewer to an individual engaged in the process of communication, through personal reflection, interaction, and the spread of the message to others (Siregar et al., 2026). Therefore, educational content which is able to build engagement not only delivers information, but also creates a space for dialogue and engagement which strengthens the relationship between the audience and the content.

The result of the observation indicates that the characteristics of educational content are related to the emerged engagement pattern. A content presented in a practical and applicable way, such as step-by-step explanations or tips that can be directly applied, tends to encourage the audience to save and share the content. Furthermore, content with a reflective and emotional approach, especially in health and self-development topics, is likely to stimulate responses such as comments and audience engagement in discussion. To clarify the relationship between the forms of educational contents and the engagement observed, the audience engagement patterns are summarized in the following table.

Table 4.1 Audience Engagement Patterns in Educational TikTok Content

Types of Educational Content	Forms of Dominant Engagements	Content Characteristics	Engagement Meanings
Business Education	Likes, Saves, Shares	Practical tips and strategic insight	Content is considered very valuable and worth saving and sharing
Finance Education	Saves, Likes	Guidelines for personal financial management	Contents function as a long-term reference
Health Education	Shares, Comments	Preventive information and health awareness	Audiences are encouraged to spread the information
Mental Health Education	Comments, Likes	Reflective and emotional approach	Emotional engagement among audiences

			emerge s
General Education/ Creative	Saves, Shares	Inspiratio nal and applicabl e	Content is utilized as a source of ideas

Based on Table 4.1, each educational content tends to generate different forms of engagement. Practical and applicable content tends to generate saves and shares, while reflective content tends to stimulate comments and emotional engagements. These findings reflect that engagement does not only reflect content popularity, but also implies function and meaning for the audience. In addition, content delivered by a creator who is considered as credible and skilled shows a tendency toward higher engagement. This suggests that the credibility of the creator and emotional connection contribute in increasing audience acceptance and engagement with educational messages.

Call to action (CTA) is used in educational content as a trigger for audience engagement. Educational and participative CTAs, such as invitations to reflect personal experiences, save the content, or share information with other people, tend to generate more valuable engagement responses compared to promotional CTAs. However, the findings also reveal that content with strong educational value can still generate a significant amount of engagement even without an explicit CTA. It illustrates that the quality and relevance of the content play a major role in encouraging audience engagement, while CTA functions as a supporting factor in strengthening the interaction.

The patterns of engagement found in the research suggest that educational content can be an effective digital marketing communication strategy when it provides additional value to the audience. Creativity in content delivery, an

understanding of audience needs, and appropriate format selection that matches platform characteristics become important factors in leveraging the engagement. Amid the dense flow of information, relevant and meaningful educational content has the potential to build trust and strengthen long-term relationships between the audience and the message delivered (Harendra & Fiyul, 2026).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The research aims to analyze the characteristics of educational content on TikTok as well as engagement patterns in the context of digital marketing communication strategy. Based on the analysis of ten educational contents with high amount of engagement, it can be concluded that educational content on TikTok is presented in several topics, such as business, finance, health, and personal development, with a dominant format such as direct communication or talking-head style supported by on-screen text or closed caption (CC).

Effective educational content tends to be delivered in a casual and communicative way, thereby making relatively complex topics more accessible to audiences with diverse needs. Moreover, the use of concrete examples, practical explanation and reflective approach in certain topics strengthens educational value and increases content relevance to the audience. In terms of engagement, the study finds that audience engagement is not only reflected in likes, but also in saves, comments, and shares that indicates deeper level engagement. The different engagement patterns appear in every type of educational content, indicating that engagement does not only serve as a quantitative indicator, but also reflects functions, meanings, and benefits for the audience. Therefore, educational content plays an important role in building audience engagement as part of digital marketing communication strategy on TikTok.

Moreover, understanding engagement characteristics can help practitioners determine appropriate content formats, communication styles, and interaction approaches. Content that encourages audiences to save, share, and participate in discussions demonstrates higher potential to build long-term relationships and strengthen the value of delivered messages.

Academically, this research contributes to studies in digital marketing and content marketing by highlighting the role of educational content in building engagement on social media, particularly TikTok. Future research can develop these findings by expanding the number of samples, extending the observation period, and combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to obtain a broader and more comprehensive understanding of educational content effectiveness in digital marketing communication strategies.

Practically, this research gives implications for a brand, creator, and digital marketing practitioner in planning marketing communication strategies on TikTok. Educational content which is delivered in a practical, relevant, and applicable way is proven to increase engagement meaningfully. Therefore, digital marketing strategy does not only focus on product promotion, but also on value creation through education that matches audience needs and interest.

Moreover, understanding engagement characteristics can help a practitioner determine the appropriate content format, communication style, and interactional approach. Content which encourages audiences to save, share, and participate in discussions demonstrates higher potential to build long-term long-term relationships and strengthen the value of delivered messages.

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