

TIKTOK: EXPLORING THE IMPACT ON SOCIETAL WELL-BEING

TikTok has become a global sensation, attracting millions of users who create and share an array of short-form videos after its release in 2016. This popularity has also given rise to a new genre of online celebrity known as influencers, who leverage the platform to showcase their talents, personalities, and lifestyles.

Social media has become an integral part of modern life, with TikTok emerging as a major player in the field. The platform's short-form videos, catchy music, and innovative challenges have captured the attention of millions of users worldwide, making it a powerful influencer in shaping societal norms and values. However, beneath the surface of fun and entertainment lies a complex social landscape that is heavily influenced by curated depictions of life. This report delves into the impact of TikTok on societal well-being, with a particular focus on the phenomena of anxiety and jealousy induced by influencers' curated lives. The report draws upon a multidisciplinary approach, integrating sociological theories on social media usage. The analysis is based on, media reports, and qualitative data gathered from online surveys.

To investigate the impact of TikTok on society, I conducted a survey of 103 respondents. 83.5 % of them used TikTok, while 16.5 % did not. The majority of respondents (92.2 %) were from Generation Z (born between 1997-2012), with only 7.8 % from the Millennial generation (born between 1981–1996).



Fig. 1. How often is TikTok used

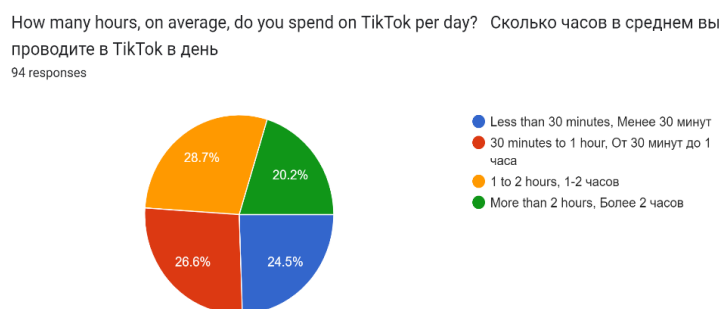


Fig. 2. Average time on TikTok

The survey revealed that most respondents (69.1 %) use TikTok every day, while others reported using it rarely (16 %) or a few times a week (12.8 %).

The average time the respondents watch TikTok varies while 26.6 % sit on TikTok from 30 minutes to an hour and 28.7 % watch for 1 to 2 hours a day and 20.2 % watch for more than 2 hours and there are some respondents who sit for less than 30 minutes.

Do you believe the content on TikTok is authentic? Ты считаешь, что контент в TikTok является достоверным?
94 responses

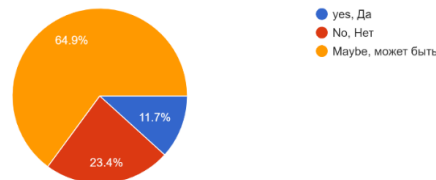


Fig. 3. Authenticity

Have you ever felt disillusioned or mistrustful of influencers after using TikTok? Ты когда-либо чувствовал разочарование или недоверие к блогерам после использования TikTok?
94 responses

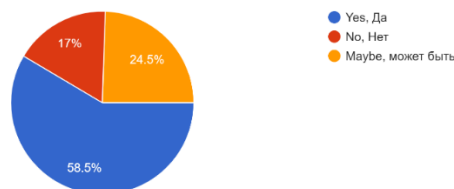


Fig. 4. Feeling disillusioned

Regarding the authenticity of the content on TikTok, the survey revealed that 64.99 % of respondents were not sure if it was authentic, 23.4 % believed it was not authentic, and only 11.7 % believed it was authentic. Additionally, 58.5 % of respondents reported feeling disillusioned and mistrustful of influencers after using TikTok.

Moreover, the curated nature of TikTok content blurs the boundary between reality and fantasy, challenging viewers' ability to discern authentic experiences from staged performances. Influencers craft carefully constructed narratives, often portraying an embellished version of their lives that may not reflect the complexities of reality. Consequently, users may experience disillusionment and mistrust, exacerbating feelings of anxiety and inadequacy.

Have you ever felt inadequate or self-conscious while using TikTok? Ты когда-нибудь чувствовал себя неполноценным или неуверенным, используя TikTok?
94 responses

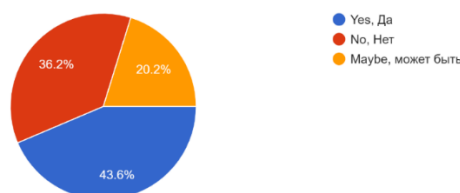


Fig. 5. Self-consciousness

In figure 5, 43.6 % of respondents have felt inadequate or self-conscious while using TikTok and seeing the curated content, Another notable impact is on users' self-esteem and body image. Continuous exposure to idealized lifestyles and beauty standards on TikTok can erode users' self-esteem and body image. Influencers set unrealistic benchmarks for appearance and success, leading viewers to internalize unattainable ideals. As individuals compare themselves unfavorably to curated personas, feelings of inferiority and self-doubt become prevalent, contributing to heightened levels of anxiety and self-consciousness [1].

Do you feel that TikTok's beauty standards are unrealistic? Ты считаешь, что стандарты красоты в TikTok нереалистичны?
94 responses

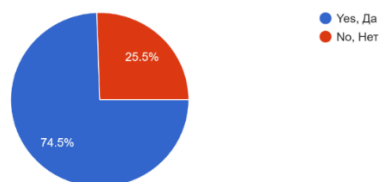


Fig. 6. Beauty standards

74.5 % of respondents Believe that TikToks beauty standards are unrealistic.

TikTok amplifies social comparison tendencies, as users evaluate their lives against the curated content of influencers and peers. This perpetual comparison fosters feelings of jealousy and envy, particularly when users perceive themselves as falling short of the ideals presented on the platform. Additionally, the fear of missing out (FOMO) drives compulsive engagement with TikTok, exacerbating anxiety and reinforcing feelings of inadequacy.

Have you ever compared yourself unfavorably to others on TikTok? Ты когда-либо сравнивал себя неблагоприятно с другими в TikTok?
94 responses

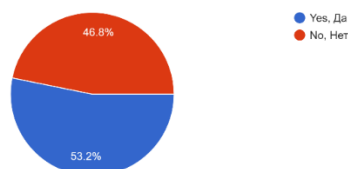


Fig. 7. Comparison to others

53.2 % respondents have compared themselves unfavorably to others on TikTok while 46.8 % have not.

What do you think TikTok has the most negative effect on? На что, по твоему мнению, TikTok оказывает наиболее отрицательное влияние?
94 responses

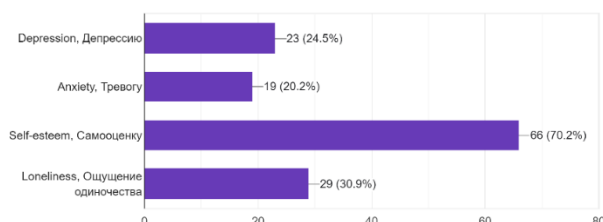


Fig. 8. Negative effects

Respondents were asked where Tik Tok has the most negative effect on 70.2 % of respondents said that TikTok has the most negative effect on their self-esteem and 24.5 % said Depression and 29 % said loneliness and 20.2 % believe on anxiety.

Do you think TikTok has a positive or negative impact on your mental health? Ты считаешь, что у TikTok положительное или отрицательное влияние на твоё психическое здоровье?
94 responses

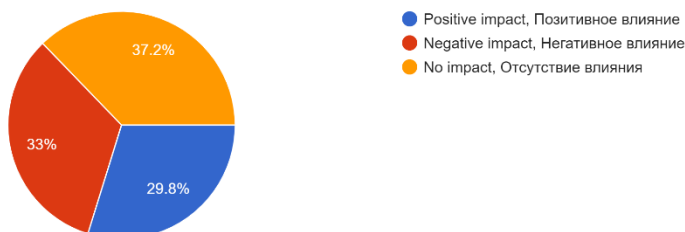


Fig. 9. Impact

Excessive use of TikTok and exposure to curated content can have detrimental effects on mental health and overall well-being. To mitigate the negative impacts, it is essential to promote digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and self-awareness among users. Educating individuals about the curated nature of social media content and fostering a culture of authenticity and acceptance are crucial steps toward creating a healthier online environment.

In conclusion, the influence of TikTok on societal well-being, particularly regarding self-esteem and jealousy, underscores the need for comprehensive strategies to address the negative impacts of curated content. By promoting media literacy, self-awareness, and resilience, we can empower individuals to navigate social media platforms responsibly and cultivate healthier relationships with technology. This Survey may not be entirely accurate as you have to take account different factors that's influence it too example gender, age and even location.

References

1. Shukla A. The Dark Side of Influence: Distorted Aspirations in the Age of Social Media and its Perils [Electronic resource] / A. Suklla. – Mode of access: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/dark-side-influence-distorted-aspirations-age-social-media-shukla-mxouf/> . – Date of access: 15.4.2024.