



Exploring Mental Health Content in TikTok on University Students in Malaysia

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EXPLORING MENTAL HEALTH CONTENT IN TIKTOK ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explores mental health content in TikTok on university students in Malaysia using a phenomenologically based qualitative research design. In this research, six undergraduate students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through surveys, semi-structured interviews, and journal reflections, and analysed thematically. Findings revealed a variety of engagement patterns, including following content creators, liking, saving, and revisiting videos. Relatable content, self-help and knowledge seeking were among the reasons given by respondents for engaging with TikTok's mental health content. Although respondents discovered that the mental health content helped them feel understood, gain awareness and knowledge, and make positive life adjustments, concerns were raised about misinformation, self-comparisons, and self-diagnosis. This research is underpinned by the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to explain students' motivations behind engagement with mental health content and psychological responses. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of digital mental health content among university students and highlight the dual roles that TikTok can play as a supportive and potentially harmful space for mental health discussions.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted to find out about mental health content in TikTok application on university students. In chapter 1, the researcher will discuss several things, namely the background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, conceptual framework, theoretical framework, importance of the study, definition of terms and limitations in the study. Chapter 1 allows the researcher to explain this theme in more detail in relation to the important components of the study and understand what is emphasized through the chosen research title.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

In recent years, with the development of time, social media has gradually become more diversified, and different social medias have their unique characteristics. As information technology has advanced, short videos have grown in importance in people's free time. With approximately 1.6 billion monthly active users, TikTok ranks fifth worldwide in terms of monthly active users, after Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Instagram (Statista, 2024). According to Turuba et al (2023), TikTok began as an entertainment app with music that featured lip-syncing and dancing. These days, TikTok has developed into a platform for sharing knowledge on diverse topics, ranging from news and politics to social justice and public health.

TikTok has become a dominant social media platform, particularly among adolescents and young adults. With its highly personalized, algorithm-driven "For You" page, TikTok provides users with an unending feed of short videos tailored to their interests. According to Schaadhardt et al (2023), instead of requiring users to look for artists or hashtags associated with their interests, which they are still able to do, the For You Page can direct users into communities by continuing to show them content they appreciate.

Research indicates that TikTok can promote a feeling of community by giving young people a way to interact with those suffering from comparable mental health issues and by giving them access to mental health resources. The site provides a forum for self-expression and support among users, which may lessen feelings of loneliness and provide beneficial mental health information (University of Minnesota, 2022).

However, videos may mislead or portray facts in a way that persuades viewers of particular viewpoints or mental health conditions. When people believe the knowledge to be accurate, they might start using it for themselves. This link makes sense since users need to believe the information is trustworthy enough for them to self-diagnose using TikTok (Mouldar, 2024). This has led to a concerning rise in teens misidentifying with various disorders, such as ADHD or autism, based solely on the content they consume (Bhanweg & Omar ,2023).

Given these dynamics, understanding the dual nature of mental health content in TikTok is crucial. While platforms can promote mental health awareness and social support, it also risk fostering negative mental health outcomes. This study seeks to explore the extent and nature of this impact, providing insight into how mental health content in TikTok affects university student users given that there are still limited studies on this subject.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to Tiktok (2024), through promoting resiliency, eliminating stigma, and showcasing real stories, TikTok is committed to establishing a secure environment where all users may openly talk about their journey towards wellbeing and have access to reliable services. People can talk about their experiences and challenges on these platforms, frequently in an effort to share their story, increase awareness, and lessen the stigma associated with mental health. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and TikTok collaborate to combat misinformation and provide trustworthy material through the Fides network, a varied collection of respectable healthcare professionals and content creators. When creators on TikTok use the platform to raise awareness about mental health content, it helps reduce stigma.

However, many mental health professionals say that teens and young people are increasingly diagnosing themselves with mental illnesses, particularly rare disorders, after getting more information about them online. Research conducted in March looked at 100 TikTok videos with the hashtag #mentalhealth that had received over 1 billion views. It was discovered that teens frequently turn to TikTok for support, and that user comments have a significant impact on the majority of the advice offered there. This information can sometimes help people obtain the help they need, but it can also lead to mislabel themselves, delaying a professional evaluation, and using inappropriate or inefficient treatments (Caron, 2022). According to Turuba et al. (2023), young people also brought up the romanticisation of various mental health conditions and the simplifying of their symptoms. As a result, youth may pathologise "normal" human experiences and make false self-diagnosis.

According to Basch et al. (2022), there is a significant gap in the published research literature on TikTok's mental health content. Although TikTok has shown potential as a platform for learning purposes in healthcare, little is known about how it addresses mental health topics or its impact on its users. This lack of understanding highlights a critical issue: the impact of TikTok's mental health-related content remains underexplored, and its influence on users is still not fully understood. This gap in research calls for further investigation to better understand about mental health content in TikTok.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- 1.3.1 To explore how mental health content is consumed by university students.
- 1.3.2 To explore why university students engaged with mental health content in TikTok.
- 1.3.3 To explore the impact of mental health content in TikTok on university students.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1.4.1 How do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?
- 1.4.2 Why do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?
- 1.4.3 What are the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok?
- 1.4.4 What are the drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok?

1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

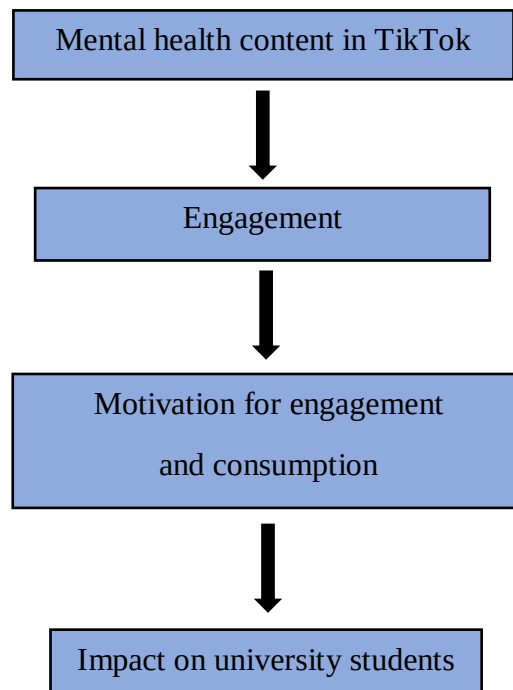


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

This framework is to understand the relationship between mental health content on TikTok and its impact on university students starting with the presentation of mental health content. TikTok offers a platform where users can share a wide variety of mental health content, including inspirational messages, personal stories and educational information. When users consume and engage with this content, they are actually driven by many factors. In turn, the effect of this involvement can lead to positive and negative results. The outcome of these interactions may lead to better mental health practices or potential negative effects.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

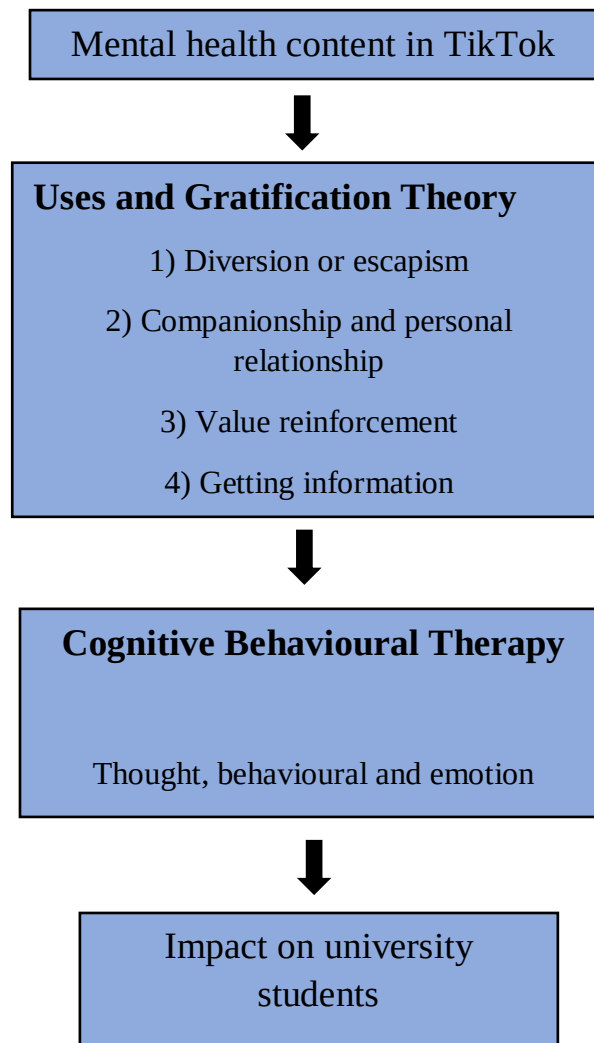


Figure 1.2: Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework is to understand the relationship between mental health content on TikTok and its impact on university students integrates Use and Gratification Theory and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Theory. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is a psychological and communication theory that explores why individuals actively seek out specific media and what they hope to gain from it. Unlike other theories that view audiences as passive recipients of media, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) sees media

consumers as active participants who consciously select media sources based on their personal needs and desires. According to Blumler and Katz's (1974) uses and gratification theory, media users actively choose and use media. Users participate actively in the communication process and use media to achieve specific goals. Blumer has developed four categories to know why people use media. 1. Diversion or escapism. 2. Companionship and development of personal relationship. 3. Value reinforcement and exploring personal identity and surveillance or getting information about the world. While Katz, came up with a slightly different list regarding motives for media use which is cognitive needs, affective needs and social integrative needs.

When users engage with mental health content, this involvement can be both positive and negative. CBT Theory suggests that interaction to something can lead to cognitive restructuring by challenging negative thoughts or reinforcing positive thoughts (Cherry, 2024). Uses and Gratifications Theory helps to understand the "why" behind university students' engagement with mental health content in TikTok while CBT Theory explains the "how" of the potential influence of mental health content. It focuses on how mental health content may provide cognitive and behavioral tools that can help university students or how this mental health content has the opposite effect on cognitive, behavioral and emotions of university students.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Tiktok

Conceptual Definition

According to Rumapea (2023), Tiktok is an application where users can share videos, music, with a short duration. In addition to the name tiktok, it is also known as Douyin, a short vibrato video.

Operational Defintion

TikTok is a vibrant social networking site that focuses mostly on short-form video production, sharing, and discovery. It's extremely interactive user interface, which allows users to connect with material by liking, commenting, sharing, and using hashtags, is what makes it so popular. With tools like filters, effects, music, and sound bites, TikTok promotes artistic expression. Its content covers a wide range of topics, including comedy, dancing, lifestyle, education, and entertainment.

1.7.2 TikTok content

Conceptual Definition

TikTok content refers to short-form, user-generated videos designed for entertainment, education, or social interaction.

Operational Defintion

Short-form videos, 15 seconds to 3 minutes long, created and shared on TikTok using platform tools like filters, music, and editing. It includes trends, challenges, or tutorials and is evaluated through metrics such as views, likes, shares, and audience engagement analytics.

1.7.3 Mental health

Conceptual Definition

According to The World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Operational definition

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

1.7.3 Student

Conceptual Definition

According to Cambridge Dictionary, student is a person who is learning at a college or university or at school.

Operational definition

In this study, student are defined as those studying at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak.

1.7.4 Engagement

Conceptual Definition

According to Kontentino, engagement is the level of interaction between users and content on social media platforms. It goes beyond just views. It's about how actively people respond, react, and interact with posts through likes, comments, shares, clicks, saves, and even DMs.

Operational Definition

Engagement in this study refers to the level of interaction and engagement of university students with mental health-related content on TikTok. It is operationally defined by measurable user behaviors such as following mental health content creators, liking videos, saving videos for future reference, and revisiting previously viewed content.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The study of mental health content on TikTok is highly significant, as it addresses a growing concern about the platform's influence on university students. This research aims to shed light on how exposure to mental health-related videos impacts students, offering valuable insights into the role digital content plays in shaping their mental health.

The findings will be particularly valuable for parents, educators, counsellors, and mental health specialists, helping them recognize and address the unique stressors students encounter. Counsellors, for instance, can use this research to tailor therapy strategies that consider the effects of consuming mental health content on TikTok. Additionally, this study has the potential to inform best practices for managing students' social media use in ways that promote mental well-being.

Ultimately, this research could serve as a springboard for further exploration into the broader impact of digital media on mental health. It might inspire additional studies to understand how various social media platforms influence the mental health of students across different age groups and cultural contexts, enriching the growing body of knowledge on the intersection of technology and mental well-being.

1.9 LIMITATION OF STUDY

The stigma associated with mental health in Malaysia is one of the limitations of the study, as it may affect students' willingness to participate. Mental health issues are often seen as taboo, with students reluctant to engage in research or speak openly about their experiences. Due to this stigma, there may be fewer responses, which will reduce the representativeness of the sample and may bias the conclusions of the study. Furthermore, individuals may hide or not report their mental health issues due to social norms and expectations, which may affect the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Addressing this issue requires cultural sensitivity, which presents another difficulty. The way people in Malaysia understand and communicate mental health issues is influenced by cultural norms and values, which can lead to bias in survey or interview responses. The study must prioritize anonymity and confidentiality to reduce these barriers and guarantee that participants feel comfortable sharing their stories. Culturally sensitive language and methods should also be used in the research design, along with assurances that participation will not result in any personal or academic consequences. This tactic aims to reduce the impact of stigma and increase the caliber of information collected.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The researcher examined the study background and problem statements in Chapter 1 to ensure that readers are aware of mental health content in TikTok on university students. The researcher was also given study objectives to help the reader understand the main topics that the researcher wishes to convey. Aside from that, the researcher offered the research questions, which were an essential component of the study. The researcher further highlighted those terms were classified into two types which are operational and conceptual definitions. The Theory of Uses and Gratifications and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) are used in this study. The researcher also gives a relevant study to help the reader comprehend the significance of conducting this investigation

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, TikTok is used by people of different ages. Additionally, it has emerged as one of the most popular venues for interaction and dialogue. As a result, this chapter examined the research's reliance on previous research to support it. It will include theories relating to the study issue as well as a review of previous literature on it.

2.1 TikTok

TikTok is without a doubt one of the most popular social networking sites, with over 1 billion monthly active users. App users can create, share and view short films on various topics, such as dancing, singing, recipes and home renovation. "Pages For You" on TikTok suggests relevant content based on an algorithm that tracks content viewed and engaged with by users (Bhanweg & Omar, 2023). According to Schaadhardt et al (2023), "Your Page" or FYP, which is the main feed of TikTok users, not only but mostly features posts made or shared by users they follow. Instead, it displays user posts that TikTok's algorithm believes users will find interesting based on the user's past actions (such as liking or commenting on videos, completing videos, etc.).

Pages For You can guide users into the community by displaying posts they like, and they don't have to struggle to find authors or hashtags related to their interests, although they still can. While algorithms are used by many social networking apps, TikTok takes a slightly different tack. Here, an algorithm is a collection of coding guidelines that modify the program's calculations to identify material most likely to sustain user interest. (Ellis & Foster, 2024 as cited in Zafarani et al 2014). TikTok collects these algorithmically selected videos and presents them to users on a "Page For You", continuously learning and delivering what's interesting to each individual (Ellis & Foster, 2024).

New users who want to have an account are required to enter their date of birth when they sign up for TikTok. Accurate age data helps community members have the right and age-appropriate experience by limiting access to specific features and tailoring the ads people see. The TikTok Community Guidelines provide guidelines for a friendly, safe and fun experience. TikTok has a special section on youth safety and well-being that details the measures used to keep children safe and the types of content that have been age-restricted. Teens under the age of eighteen have a different experience on TikTok than adults. For example, all accounts for children under the age of eighteen are initially private. If you've linked your accounts, you can use Family Pairing to amend your teen's decision to make their account open and only accounts for those 18 and over can go LIVE (TikTok, 2024).

There are several types of content on tiktok. Among them is a dance video. Both regular TikTok users and professional dancers can perform many popular dances on the app. TikTok has been responsible for numerous viral dance challenges since the platform's inception. Second, the lip sync video. Although they are easy to make, lip sync videos can be made in many different ways. There are different types of lip-sync videos, starting from choosing the right song to incorporating transitions. Next, video art. Many artists have decided to post their work on TikTok. TikTok often features art videos, whether it's drawing or painting. One can make various art videos. Someone might, for example, simply discuss their favorite piece of art or record a lesson on how to create it. The latter has become quite popular among TikTok content producers. Watching videos on TikTok showing snippets of the creation process may be entertaining and soothing (Kobe, 2022).

Moreover, TikTok is the most affordable and entertaining platform to produce top-notch digital marketing materials. Without wasting money, it can advertise and display product activity in various digital marketing campaigns (Yosep et al., 2021). The platform was developed not only to advertise various types of products but also to help all users to connect with others, which is important for customers and marketers. So, people can use tools like direct messages and comments to interact and chat (Rangaswamy et al., 2020). TikTok offers useful features including videos that are open to all users to watch, like, and comment on, which are used by marketers or influencers to promote or sell goods or services (Anderson, 2020).

TikTok is primarily known for its entertainment value, but it has recently come to light as a valuable educational tool, particularly when it comes to engaging with a younger, tech-savvy audience. TikTok offers a distinctive way to satisfy the needs of Gen Z students by offering a relevant and captivating means to deliver educational content in a variety of subjects, including speech language pathology, special education, and management, according to studies on its educational potential (Sajonia, 2024).

2.2 TikTok Usage Among Students

A study entitled “#Eduwow: Tiktok App as An Educational Creative Platform” by Kethelle I. Sajonia found that the educational content on TikTok greatly improves accessibility and engagement by skillfully combining humor, storytelling, and visual aids to enthrall and instruct users. One of the respondents in the study stated that there are topics they actually talk about at school, but videos are more fun and direct. Respondents get the meaning quickly without having to dig through textbooks. In addition, there were also respondents who stated that *“watching a video that visually explains the statistical concepts we discussed in class helped a lot. I can see the distribution curve moving, which makes it clearer than a static image from a lecture slide”*. TikTok also fosters collaborative learning that is crucial for educational development. One of the respondents in the study states that he asked a question about a math problem in the comments, and not only did the creator respond, but other students responded as well. It felt like they were all thinking about it together.

In addition, students use TikTok to improve their communication skills. TikTok helps improve language learners' spoken communication abilities. By enabling students to produce and distribute short videos, the platform encourages the development of their speaking skills (Yang, 2020). Students can learn English more confidently and be able to speak fluently by watching short videos made by speakers, which will increase their awareness of how the language is used by native speakers. (Xiuwen & Razali, 2021).

Other than that, students use TikTok to read different types of reading materials. TikTok can be used to increase students' interest in reading, especially in reading classes. The majority of students enjoy reading on the TikTok app, according to observational data. The data shows that the average student has a TikTok account and has read the app before. Four out of six students use the TikTok app for reading every day, which makes sense given how often they use it (Amin, 2023).

2.3 Ways Mental Health Content being Presented in TikTok

A study conducted by Zhang et al., in 2023 entitled “#Pragmatic or #Clinical: Analyzing TikTok Mental Health Videos” found that there are three types of content exist in TikTok mental health communities which is clinical, pragmatic and general. Clinical content focuses on professional and medical aspects, including diagnostic measures, treatment, symptoms and therapy. It aims to provide factual medical information about mental illness, helping users understand clinical interventions and how they relate to specific disorders.

Pragmatic content addresses the impact of mental health on everyday life, offering tools, tips and life experiences to manage symptoms. It provides awareness and support, although not directly linked to clinical aspects. General content includes videos that may not be explicitly about mental illness, such as jokes using mental health terms, general wellness tips, or unrelated content tagged with the mental health hashtag. This type is broader and often less focused on providing mental health insights.

In addition, according to a study conducted by Hooper (2022) entitled “TikTok and Mental Health Videos: Content Analysis and Interview-Based Study” found 60% of the 50 videos analyzed on #mentalhealthuk were about people’s personal experiences with mental health problems. This ‘openness’ mental health experiences can be said to be related to that level of anonymity social media allows. The second biggest mental health topic at 18% shows that people share their experiences with mental health services. Starting from the way they are treated by mental health practitioners to their prescribed medication, this video showed a high level of dissatisfaction with the services available to them. However, the direct insight into people’s experiences that this content may offer can also help mental health services see problems and make improvements without relying entirely on conventional data collection techniques.

The study also noted specific features of TikTok content, including the use of text effects to convey meaning, visual effects that combine TikTok Tools with creative user input, and dance as a form of self-expression. Additionally, the role of lip syncing in conveying meaning through music and sound, and whether users are addressing a live audience or engaging in performance content and self-contained online personas.

Of the TikTok videos examined, 84% used popular music or sound effects to express mental health experiences, while only 24% used the producer's own voice. People may find it harder to communicate their issues openly because of the stigma associated with mental health in Western culture, which may be reflected in this indirect method of communication. Using music or lip syncing can make you feel less vulnerable and safer than speaking directly. In 88% of the videos examined, the image was accompanied by text. Simple descriptive words that clearly place video content in context are used in text to express more personal ideas. It is important to remember that using text, especially when it is designed into a hashtag, is another tactic calculated to guarantee that the video is seen by more people. Plus, 84% of the videos conveyed a message through music or sound effects. Adding a musical track to a video is one of TikTok's primary features, which accounts for a significant portion of this. (Hopper, 2022).

TikTok also encourages the creation of mental health content by offering clear guidelines to ensure a supportive and safe environment. Creators are advised to use relevant hashtags such as #MentalHealthAwareness to reach the right audience and share their stories authentically while encouraging professional help. Transparency about credentials is emphasized and creators are encouraged to work with trusted sources if they are not experts. They are also guided to avoid stigmatizing language, medical advice or content that could lead to self-diagnosis. For live videos, TikTok provides audience control and allows creators to appoint moderators to maintain a safe and friendly space (TikTok, 2024).

2.4 Ways to Engage with Mental Health Content in TikTok

According to a study by Stillwell (2024), entitled “The Formation of TikTok’s Influencer-Led Mental Health Community: A Content Analysis of Social Penetration Theory” says that TikTok fosters participation and engagement through interactive features such as commenting, liking, sharing and liking videos. Users can follow each other, become friends and personalize their profiles with usernames and hashtags to create a unique online persona and link their content to specific terms. Comments allow users to interact with creators and other viewers via text speech, while creators can reply or disable comments if they choose not to receive feedback.

Next, users also can make textual comments on videos through commenting, which enables responses from both authors and other viewers. If creators would rather not be contacted, they can opt to disable comments. To express gratitude, click the heart-shaped icon next to a video. The total number of likes is shown on the video. While favouriting entails utilising the bookmark symbol to store films to one’s profile for later access, sharing enables users to share videos to others for viewing. Users can interact with content and customise their platform experience with the aid of these tools.

TikTok following happens when users bookmark their favourite content creators’ profiles to see their content regularly in their feed. Users can follow someone without being followed back, meaning the person they follow doesn’t have to see their content. Users become “friends” when they both choose to follow each other (Stillwell, 2024) This means that users can engage with various types of content in TikTok that are not only mental health content through these methods.

2.5 Reasons People Engage with Mental Health Content in TikTok

Turuba et al. conducted a study in 2023 to understand how youth using TikTok during the Covid- 19 pandemic to learn about mental health and mental health support. The finding suggests that TikTok has become an easy platform to access mental health information, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many youths initially join TikTok for entertainment but find increasing mental health content on their For You page. As the pandemic exacerbates mental health challenges, they are turning to TikTok for guidance, with one youth noting that the platform provides a valuable resource as people try to make sense of their struggles at this time. One of the participants in the study stated *“I think I’m starting to see [mental health information] and TikTok finally has it a lot during the pandemic because I think a lot of people are starting to find what they do maybe when the epidemic worsens their problems.”*

In addition, TikTok is seen as a place where young people can interact with mental health information without fear of judgement. Youth can feel less alone, more validated and more optimistic about overcoming their obstacles when they watch videos of artists discussing their experiences, including symptoms, coping mechanisms and treatment. Peers, adults, celebrities and professionals are just some of the many voices on the platform that contribute to these conversations and create a sense of community. Participants in the study said that the variety of people and mental health topics on TikTok can help recognize how mental health affects individuals differently. This diversity allows to identify areas where they can work on their mental health and better understand their own experiences. There were also respondents who said they appreciated TikTok creators talking about topics that are rarely discussed, such as psychiatric hospitalization. This video helps reduce the stigma about going to a psychiatric hospital and makes it less scary for people to seek help by sharing that experience and care.

Mental health content on TikTok encourages youth to be more mindful of their mental health and address challenges in real time. Many use the platform to learn coping strategies for stress, anxiety, anger, procrastination and negative self-talk, including techniques such as meditation, breathing exercises, grounding, inner child work, journaling and connecting with friends. While not every strategy works for everyone, youth appreciate the opportunity to explore and try different approaches (Turuba et al., 2019) Other than that, when users search

for mental health content on TikTok, algorithms find and display relevant videos in their feed. This means users can either find mental health content serendipitously through algorithms or choose to actively seek it out and personalize what they see (Swart, 2021).

2.6 Perceived Benefits of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok

Students are under pressure, but they have been fighting it inwardly and keeping it hidden forever. In order to reduce the amount of agony and escape from pressures caused by outside circumstances, they decide to interact on TikTok. TikTok provides youth, who are primarily students, with a platform to start addressing mental health concerns when they may be unsure or uneasy about where to begin (E. Gajo et al, 2022).

According to Rathy (2023), unlike other social media sites, TikTok has rapidly developed into a secure forum for fruitful discussions about mental health. TikTok has made self-care and mental health awareness “cool,” or at the very least, one of the most widely used platforms has made these previously unapproachable ideas far more accessible. Mental health professionals are beginning to leverage TikTok’s vast popularity to raise awareness, share positive messages, and encourage self-care tips with a younger, wider audience (Blum, 2021).

Based on a study by Ramsden et al (2023) entitled “The Role of TikTok in Students’ Health and Wellbeing”, majority of participants emphasised the influence of TikTok’s mental health material. A wealth of information, including personal accounts of mental health recovery, was thought to be particularly helpful in promoting awareness and combating societal perceptions of people with mental illnesses as inferior, inept, insane, or even violent. Most participants found exposure to previously unseen mental health situations to be especially helpful, as it helped them understand others going through similar struggles and make them feel less alone. Participants then felt more comfortable handling and discussing their own issues, and some even started self-management techniques to maintain their mental health, such as deliberately posting more upbeat material on TikTok.

In addition, TikTok’s mental health content helps youth become more aware of available resources and how to find support tailored to their needs. For example, one participant shared that before learning from TikTok, they only needed to find a general counsellor, but now they understand the importance of finding someone who specializes in areas such as autism or adolescent mental health. TikTok also makes it easier for youth to see therapy as a normal and acceptable option, helping to reduce any discomfort when seeking help. One

participant shared that watching others talk about going to therapy encouraged them to try it and made the experience less scary (Barbic et al., 2019).

According to Lupton (2021), youth who were managing cultural or religious sensitivities or had restricted access to health care particularly valued the internet as a private source of knowledge. Those who prefer self-reliance may find that online help-seeking meets their needs or serves as a springboard for additional help-seeking. Users dealing with mental health issues also seem to benefit from comments on TikTok videos related to mental health. These comments can include personal experiences, praise or agreement with the creator (Gallagher, 2022). Appreciating someone for their work is important, especially for those with mental illness, as it has been linked to increased motivation to take on difficult tasks (Droe, 2012).

TikTok also has a huge influence on material about contraception because it breaks taboos, promotes sexual health education, and gives people the power to make educated decisions. Through interactive visuals and candid discussions, TikTok producers cultivate a helpful community where users can exchange stories and obtain trustworthy information (G.U. & F.O., 2023)

Digital media that have not been created expressly for this purpose can promote the mental health and wellbeing of young people, and young people frequently actively participate in the creation, curation, and dissemination of material for these services. According to Chan et al (2016), students at Australian universities stated that they valued online services for mental health information and assistance, especially because they were easily accessible and provided anonymity and a way to avoid stigma.

2.7 Drawbacks of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok

According to Basch et al (2022), other studies have observed the expression of mental ill-health within online social media platforms and expressed concern about potentially traumatic and “triggering” TikTok videos as being detrimental to some viewers. A study by Milton et al (2023) found that people frequently turn to social media in search of knowledge and other individuals experiencing same circumstances. Some participants expressed how beneficial this information was for mental health. However, the feed will eventually just keep showing you more and more of the same stuff due to the way it operates. At that point, it may stop being beneficial and start to become upsetting and triggering.

In a study conducted by Schluchter in 2024 entitled “Investigating User Perceptions of Mental Health Content on TikTok: A Comprehensive Exploration” found that TikTok can go too far at times. Users are aware that sudden changes in content can trigger negative reactions, especially for those with fragile mental health. One of the respondent in this study state that, those who are more vulnerable may fall into a bad place more quickly. This suggests that those who struggle to manage emotional or psychological problems may be more affected which can make them feel worse more quickly.

Participants reported that the FYP significantly influences how users interact with TikTok communities and mental health content. Users perceived that the algorithm was evolving rapidly and that they had little control over the communities or information they saw, leading to what is known as a “runaway train” in terms of mental health. These results imply that although TikTok is fostering an environment that supports mental health groups, there are serious worries regarding how the algorithm may affect how people view community and wellbeing (Milton et al, 2023). According to Moulder (2024), because of TikTok’s algorithm for short-form consumption, people are too preoccupied with watching the next video to pay attention to what they are seeing. Videos may mislead or portray facts in a way that persuades viewers of particular viewpoints or mental health conditions.

Concerns regarding TikTok’s mental health material and its effects on users’ wellbeing are, nevertheless, becoming more widespread. According to research and news stories, people use TikTok to self-diagnose mental illnesses based on these brief videos, with differing

opinions regarding the usefulness and veracity of these assessments. Young people turn to the platform to supplant clinical diagnosis for ADHD (Caron, 2022). Furthermore, further research showed that COVID-19 information on YouTube and TikTok is inaccurate or unhelpful (Basch et al., 2020).

Another study by Milton et al (2023) entitled “I See Me Here: Mental Health Content, Community, and Algorithmic Curation on TikTok” found that TikTok may not be the best place to get information. TikTok can sometimes be confusing due to its overly general content. For example, respondent in the study highlights an ADHD video whose creator says things like, “Did you do this?” followed by something very broad, like struggling to keep track of time. They note that this can be confusing because many people have such challenges, which does not necessarily mean they have a serious mental disorder such as ADHD. Not just that, one of the respondents in the study witness a friend struggled with self-diagnosis through TikTok. With a family history of bipolar disorder, she assumed she had it after watching a video listing the symptoms. This shows how easily people can go from casually watching content to fully trusting and identifying with it.

2.8 USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY (UGT)

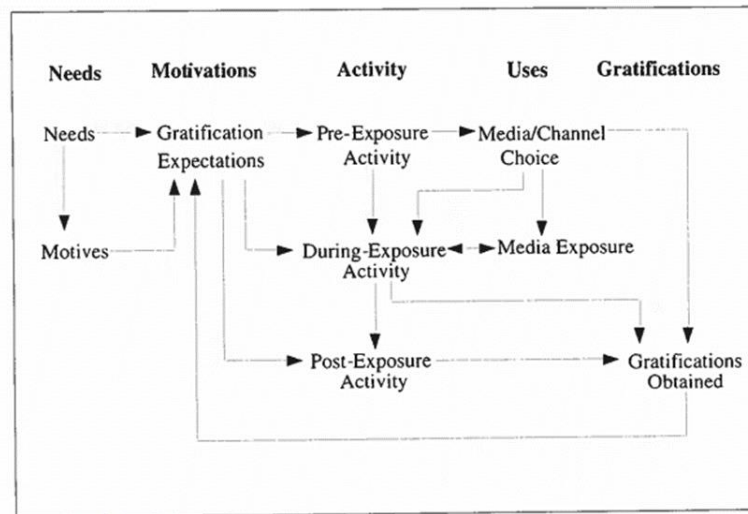


Figure 1.3: Uses and Gratification Theory

According to the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), people actively select and consume media content in order to satisfy particular wants and desires (G.U. & F.O., 2023). Users actively engage in communication and use media to accomplish particular objectives. Theorists contend that a media consumer looks for the media source that best suits their need. It is assumed by uses and gratifications that the user has alternative means of obtaining what they require.

Motives. This concept reflects the desires created by the types of demands that require greater drive-reduction to be met. Motives can span some or all of the following aspects since they differ among people from various sociodemographic backgrounds. 1) entertainment, 2) surveillance, 3) information, 4) diversion, 5) escape, 6) social interaction, 7), parasocial interaction, 8) identity, 9) pass time, 10), companionship (Lin,1999).

Motivations. This concept explains the kinds of advantages or incentives that people believe can motivate them to act and use media. Two aspects of media use motivations are 1) cognitive dimension, or thinking about the kinds of rewards one anticipates or seeks from starting a media use activity, and 2) an affective dimension or having an emotional inclination towards the kinds of rewards one anticipates or seeks from starting such an activity.

Activity. Starting and carrying out a media usage activity involves this kind of cognitive, affective, and behavioural process. There are three stages, starting with the pre-exposure activity. It describes how a person gets ready for media use activities. Secondly, while engaging in exposure activities. It shows the level of audience engagement with both the media and its content. Post-exposure activity comes last. It explains both immediate and long-term impacts on the experience of media exposure.

Uses. This element deals with specific media/channel and gratifications is the degree to which an individual is satisfied with the gratifications obtained from the media use (Lin, 1999).

Two principles underpin the Uses and Gratifications Theory: 1. Media users actively choose the media they use, and 2. They are aware of the factors that influence their decisions. As the name "Utility and Gratification Theory" implies, the first principle is the origin of "utility", and the second principle is the origin of "gratification". According to this idea, using the media is an action with desire and purpose rather than being passive when seen from the point of view of principle. When an individual realizes their exact goals and motivations when using media, they can choose the type that best suits their needs (Potter, 2012).

According to Gyimah (2024), in the case of social media platforms such as TikTok, users may turn to the platform to satisfy a variety of needs, such as information searching, entertainment, self-expression, and social engagement.

TikTok's algorithm makes it one of the easiest applications to gain fame therefore, one of its satisfactions is status. According to research, TikTok content has increased personal identification to one of the most important forms of satisfaction. TikTok's user-generated content, which allows users to produce any type of content they want, makes self-actualization, self-improvement, and self-expression ubiquitous. Another satisfaction from TikTok is entertainment. Users use the software to relax, have fun and escape from the outside world. Many individuals use TikTok to find information because of its current popularity and capacity to start new trends. Users can stay informed about social media trends and happenings by using the app. Another reason to be on TikTok is to socialize. Socializing is made easy and clear with various interactive elements, including commenting, liking, sharing, duets, merging and live videos (Mackey, 2021).

2.9 Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT Therapy)

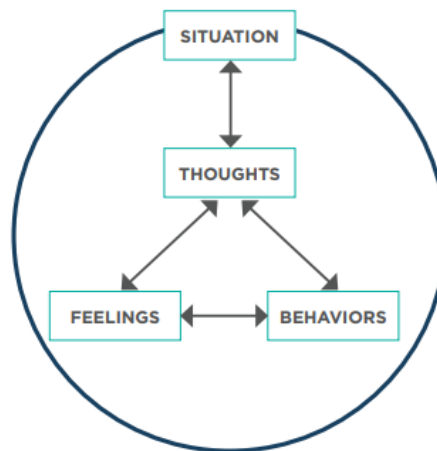


Figure 1.4: Cognitive Model

Aaron T. Beck, a psychiatrist, created cognitive behavioural therapy in the early 1960s. CBT and REBT have a similar understanding of human nature, which holds that our emotions and behaviour are influenced by the way we think and perceive a situation. However, behaviour and emotions can have an impact on one's thought process. A person's thinking and behaviour are not entirely rational while they are dealing with emotional issues (Roose, 2014).

The cognitive model suggests that all psychological disorders share problematic thought patterns. People's emotional and behavioural states improve as they learn to assess their thoughts in a more practical and flexible manner (Beck, 2011). In its most basic version, the cognitive model "postulates that people's perceptions of events have an impact on their emotions and behaviours." The way that people interpret a situation is what defines their feelings, not the circumstance itself. To put it another way, people's feelings are influenced by their interpretations of events rather than by the events themselves (Fenn & Byrne, 2013).

According to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Los Angeles (2020), thoughts are the means by which we interpret events. In addition to non-verbal forms like mental imagery, thoughts can also be vocal forms like words, sentences, and explicit ideas. The constant commentary we hear in our heads throughout our lives is called a thought. Here, "feelings"

refers to the physiological alterations brought on by emotion rather than actual emotion. For example, we get the sensation of our face flushing when we are angry. The sensations of a racing heart and tense muscles are characteristics of anxiety. Emotion's hard-wired physical manifestation is called a feeling.

Simply said, behaviours are the actions we take. Crucially, behaviours also include the things we choose not to do. For example, if we have severe nervousness, we may decline to speak at a speech. However, if we feel secure instead, we might actively look for those kinds of interactions. A situation happens, and our thoughts about it create feelings. These feelings then lead to behaviours, which can affect the situation in a good or bad way. This cycle continues, showing how thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are all connected.

2.9 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 2, the researcher reviewed the literature that related to the topic of this study. There are few aspects that the researcher has covered which is about the TikTok application, TikTok usage among students, ways mental health content being presented in TikTok, ways to engage with mental health content in TikTok, reason people engage with mental health content in TikTok and perceived benefits and drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok. This chapter also covered about Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Cognitive Behavioural Theory (CBT).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The methodology used in this study will be discussed more in this chapter. It includes the research design, research location, research population, data gathering techniques, data collection method, data analysis procedures, and ethical issues in this study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is necessary to create a study framework that facilitates the clear understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship while taking into account a variety of variables. Research design, according to Inaam Akhtar (2016), is the methodological framework used to conduct research. The kind of evidence required to fairly answer the research question must be understood by researchers while planning their studies. To gather data, this study employed a qualitative method study design.

Creswell (2009) explains that a method for examining and understanding the importance that people or groups attach to a social human issue is qualitative research. Research requires developing questions and methods, collecting data in the participant's environment, analysing the data inductively to move from specific themes to broad themes, and the researcher interpreting the meaning of the data. To theorize, qualitative research must be conducted.

The quantity and variety of methodologies used in qualitative research has also become more apparent in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. For this study, the researcher used a phenomenological study. *“Phenomenological research is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants”* (Creswell, 2009). According to a study by Neubauer et al (2019), entitled how phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences from others, health professions education (HPE) researchers can benefit greatly from phenomenology's unique ability to assist them understand other people's experiences. Studying a person's actual experiences in the world is the main goal of phenomenology, a type of qualitative research.

3.2 RESEARCH SAMPLING

3.2.1 RESEARCH LOCATION

The research will be conducted at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), located in Kota Samarahan, Sarawak. The university serves as a central hub for selected participants, providing a focused and accessible environment for data collection. The study will involve six students who are currently following various programs at UNIMAS. These students, aged 19 and over, are actively engaged with TikTok and frequently interact with mental health-related content on the platform.

By selecting students from UNIMAS, the research benefits from a well-defined population within a single institution, enabling an in-depth exploration of their experiences and engagement with TikTok. This location also ensures convenience and consistency in the study, facilitating direct communication with participants while maintaining the contextual relevance of the findings to university students in a Malaysian setting.

3.2.2 RESEARCH POPULATION

The population selected for this research consists of 6 Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) students aged 19 and above. Morse (1994) recommends a minimum of 6 participants for a phenomenological study. Some participants can reflect on a topic and express themselves more effectively than others. They may have more time, experienced, or willing to share their experiences. When data from such participants are focused, clear, and rich in detail, fewer participants are needed to reach saturation (Morse, 2000). Although six participants may be sufficient, it is important to continue until data saturation is reached to ensure comprehensive and reliable findings

These students are active TikTok users, with often engagement on the platform. This study focuses specifically on those who interact with mental health-related content, such as videos that offer advice, coping strategies or share experiences related to mental well-being. University students are an ideal demographic to study engagement with mental health content on TikTok due to their high activity on the platform, with surveys showing that 75% of college

students use TikTok regularly, and nearly half engage daily (Intelligent.com, 2024). They are also increasingly open to discussing mental health and seeking resources online, making them more likely to engage with related content. Understanding this population's interaction with TikTok can provide valuable insights into how social media platforms influence mental health awareness and coping mechanisms, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on the digitization of mental health support.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

3.3.1 Survey (Google Form)

To collect data, a survey was first distributed via Google Forms to TikTok members in the Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) community. The survey responses will be used to help identify participants who meet the study requirements, including students who use TikTok extensively and interact with content about mental health at least several times per week.

Students who are active TikTok users, especially those who spend a lot of time on the platform, are the target audience for the selection criteria used in this study. Respondents were required to interact with TikTok content about mental health at least several times per week. This ensured that participants were exposed to enough TikTok conversations about mental health to gain a meaningful understanding of its effects. By focusing on this specific group, this study aims to gather data from individuals who actively interact with and may benefit from TikTok's mental health content, providing a clearer understanding of how the platform contributes to their emotional well-being. This technique of selecting respondents is called purposive sampling. Respondents were selected according to the criteria set to help this research better.

The survey link will be distributed among UNIMAS students who are actively using TikTok. Distribution will be facilitated through university-related social media groups, forums and online communities commonly used by students, such as WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages and Telegram channels. To ensure active participation, a brief introduction will be included with the survey link, explaining the purpose of the study and its importance in contributing to a better understanding of mental health conversations on TikTok. Students will

be informed that their input is valuable in elucidating how digital platforms influence mental health awareness and coping strategies among the university population.

To maintain confidentiality and encourage honest responses, participants will be assured that their data will remain anonymous and will be used solely for research purposes. The survey will be designed to be simple and user-friendly, ensuring that it takes no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. This approach ensures accessibility and convenience for participants, thus increasing the likelihood of robust participation

Sample question in Google Form:

- What is the daily average screen time you spent on TikTok? (You can look at your screen time for TikTok apps in your phone)
- Have you come across anything on TikTok about mental health?
How often do you interact with this stuff, if you do?

3.3.2 Interview

Semi-structured interviews will be the next phase in the data collection process after the survey has identified suitable respondents. Survey responses will be used to help identify participants who meet the study requirements, including students who use TikTok extensively and interact with content about mental health at least several times per week. The purpose of these interviews was to learn more about participants' personal stories, perspectives and experiences interacting with TikTok's mental health content.

The most popular interview format for qualitative research is the semi-structured in-depth interview, which can be conducted individually or in groups (Bloom & Crabtree, 2022). Gathering information from key informants who have direct knowledge of the subject matter is the main goal of semi-structured interviews. This method gives the researcher the opportunity to collect open data, investigate the opinions, sentiments, and beliefs of the participants on certain subjects, and delve into personal and sometimes sensitive issues (DeJonckheere & M Vaughn, 2019). This qualitative approach will provide rich and detailed data, offering a more nuanced understanding of TikTok's impact on mental health.

With participants' permission, audio recordings of each interview which is anticipated to run between forty-five minutes to sixty minutes will be made in order to guarantee correct transcription and analysis. Participants will get assurances regarding the confidentiality of their answers and a reminder that their opinions will be anonymised in the research report in order to foster a relaxed atmosphere and promote candid discussion.

Interview question:

1) How do university students engage with mental health content on TikTok?

- How often do you watch mental health-related videos on TikTok?
- Do you interact with mental health content by liking, commenting, or sharing? Why or why not?
- Have you ever followed specific creators or hashtags related to mental health? What drew you to them?
- Do you save or revisit mental health content? If yes, for what reasons?

2) Why do university students engage with mental health content on TikTok?

- What motivates you to watch or engage with mental health-related content on TikTok?
- Do you find the content relatable or helpful in your daily life? If so, in what ways?
- Are there particular challenges or issues in your life that make mental health content appealing to you?

3) What are the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content on TikTok?

- Have you learned anything valuable or helpful from mental health videos on TikTok? Can you give an example?
- Do these videos ever help you feel understood or less alone? If so, how?
- Have you made positive changes in your life because of what you've seen on TikTok?

4)What are the drawbacks of consuming mental health content on TikTok?

- Have you ever felt overwhelmed or anxious after watching mental health content? Why do you think that happened?
- Have you noticed any negative effects, like comparing yourself to others, after watching mental health content on TikTok?
- Do you think there are risks to getting mental health advice or information from TikTok? If so, what are they?

3.3.3 Journal Reflection

Respondents will be given a template to follow up and get more information after the researcher conducted interviews to learn about TikTok's mental health content. The template will ask them what motivates them to interact with mental health content on TikTok, what kind of content they see on a daily basis, what they learn and whether it affects them positively or negatively, and how they feel.

Journal reflection allows for deeper introspection, allowing respondent to express their experiences in a more thoughtful and detailed way than they might in an interview setting. Unlike a one-time response, journaling provides an opportunity respondent to revise their thoughts, potentially revealing new insights that may not be immediately apparent. When respondent take time to reflect and document their thoughts, they become more aware of their own experiences and emotions.

3.4 PROCEDURE OF ANALYZING DATA

The data collected from both the surveys and interviews will be analysed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method that identifies, organizes, and interprets patterns or themes within the data. This approach is particularly suitable for understanding participants' experiences, perceptions, and interactions with mental health content on TikTok.

The first step in the analysis will involve familiarization with the data, where the researcher reviews survey responses and transcribes interview recordings verbatim. This process helps immerse the researcher in the data, allowing for the identification of initial patterns or noteworthy observations. Notes and memos may be taken to document early impressions or recurring ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

In the second step of theme analysis, the researcher systematically reviewed the data to identify and mark important elements, which resulted in the creation of initial codes. Each code represented an important concept or pattern in the data. In order for the researcher to handle and analyse the data efficiently, this process entails grouping pertinent data segments. By categorising the data, the researcher prepared the ground for spotting broader themes and trends that would be determined in subsequent stages.

Following the coding process, the researcher will begin searching for themes by grouping related codes together. To do this, the data must be divided into meaningful pieces, typically using line-by-line tagging. Each significant segment is then assigned a code that corresponds to a specific notion, idea, or subject pertaining to mental health and TikTok usage.

Once the themes are identified, the next step is reviewing and refining the themes. This involves checking the themes against the original data to ensure they are coherent, distinct, and adequately supported by evidence. Any overlapping or vague themes will be revised, combined, or redefined. A clear thematic map will be developed to illustrate the relationships between themes and subthemes.

Finally, the themes will be defined and named to clearly articulate their scope and relevance. Each theme will be described in detail, supported by illustrative quotes from participants to ground the analysis in real-world experiences. The findings will then be

interpreted in the context of the research objectives, providing insights into how mental health content on TikTok influences undergraduates' students in UNIMAS.

Thematic analysis guarantees a thorough yet adaptable method of examining qualitative data, providing a deep and complex comprehension of how participants engaged with TikTok's mental health content. By systematically identifying themes, the research will provide meaningful contributions to the discourse on digital mental health resources and their impact on university students (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

First and foremost, informed consent will be obtained from all participants before they engage in the survey or interview. Participants will be provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. They will be informed that their participation is voluntary, and they have the right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. To ensure transparency, participants will also be made aware of how their data will be used, stored, and reported. Informed consent forms will be signed digitally for the survey participants and in person or electronically for interviewees.

To protect participants' privacy and confidentiality, all data will be kept anonymous. Personal identifying information will not be collected or stored alongside responses, ensuring that individual participants cannot be identified in the final research report. Additionally, data security measures will be implemented, including encrypted storage of digital data and restricted access to research materials, to prevent unauthorized use or breaches.

As this research involves sensitive topics such as mental health, special attention will be given to the mental well-being of participants. While the survey and interview questions will be designed to be respectful and non-intrusive, participants will be encouraged to disclose only what they are comfortable with.

The research will adhere to the principle of non-maleficence, meaning that the study will strive to minimize any potential harm to participants. Since the focus is on mental health, there is a possibility that certain discussions could be triggering for some individuals. As such,

the survey and interview questions will be framed with sensitivity to avoid causing harm. Additionally, participants will be given the opportunity to debrief after the interview, where they can ask questions or express any concerns they may have.

Lastly, the findings of the study will be reported in a fair and honest manner, with a commitment to ensuring that the conclusions drawn are based solely on the data. The research will aim to contribute positively to the understanding of mental health content on TikTok without misrepresenting or sensationalizing the experiences of participants. By adhering to these ethical principles, the study will uphold the dignity, rights, and welfare of all participants involved.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is established through four main criteria namely credibility, transferability, reliability and verification (Ahmed, 2023). Credibility ensures that the results of the study accurately represent the experiences of the participants. Triangulation, which compares information from pre-screening, interviews and journal reflections to find recurring themes, can help achieve this. Furthermore, peer review allows participants to check and validate their answers, guaranteeing that their experiences are appropriately represented. By using various data sources and verification techniques, this study strengthens its credibility.

Next, transferability. Two key ways in transferability is thick descriptions and sampling strategies. Transferability can be achieved by provide detailed and rich contextual information about this research. This includes giving clear, in-depth explanations about the study's context such as the university setting in Sarawak, the respondents involved (e.g., their age, and how much screen times they spend in TikTok), and the methods used which is pre-screening, interviews and journal reflections. This makes it easier for readers to determine whether the study's environment is comparable to their own, allowing them to evaluate how applicable the findings are to their own circumstances. Sampling strategies refer to clearly explaining how respondents were selected and the criteria used for inclusion which is selected by pre screening and the criteria used are undergraduate students in UNIMAS aged 19 above and those who

spend a lot of time on the TikTok. This allows others to evaluate whether the findings are transferable to similar groups or settings.

Dependability in this research refers to ensuring the consistency and reliability of the study's findings. Dependability can be achieved, by focusing on methodological documentation and audit trails. Methodological documentation involves clearly detailing every step of the research process, such as how data was collected, analysed, and any decisions made throughout the study. This transparency allows others to replicate the study or evaluate the dependability of the findings meanwhile an audit trail is a record of decisions, changes, and data analysis process during study (Ahmed, 2023).

Lastly, confirmability guarantees that the results represent the experiences of the participants rather than the prejudices of the researcher. Reflective journaling, member checking, and peer debriefing can all help achieve this. In order to minimize biases and validate the correctness of the results, peer debriefing entails discussing findings with experts or colleagues. Through member checking, participants can examine the results to make sure their opinions are accurately reflected and have the opportunity to remedy any errors. Maintaining impartiality and transparency during the study is facilitated by reflexive journaling, which calls for the researcher to keep a notebook in which they can consider their own prejudices and ideas (Ahmed,2023).

3.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter discussed the research design including qualitative research and phenomenological approach, research location and population, data collection techniques that include survey and interview, procedure of analysing data, ethical consideration and trustworthiness in study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 covered respondent's demographic, developing topics, conclusions and literature-related discussions. The researcher presented findings from interview with six students from UNIMAS. In this chapter, the researcher would discuss the findings from the interviews according to four research questions which is how do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok, why do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok, what are the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok and what are the drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok? The collected data provided a clear explanation of the mental health content in TikTok.

4.1 PARTICIPANTS DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

No	Gender	Age	Religion	Faculty	Screen time	Exposure to content
1.	Female	22	Islam	FSKPM	2hours29min	Multiple times a day
2.	Female	23	Islam	FSKPM	11hours	Almost every day
3.	Female	23	Islam	FENG	3hours	Multiple times a day
4.	Female	22	Islam	FSKPM	2 hours	A few times a week
5.	Male	22	Islam	FELC	2hours50min	Almost every day
6.	Male	23	Islam	FELC	2hours	Almost every day

Table 1: Participant's Demographic Background

4.1.1 First Participant

Respondent 1 is a 22-year-old female who follows Islam. She is from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSKPM). Her screen time is 2 hours and 29 minutes indicates moderate usage. This suggests balanced engagement with TikTok content that occurs

frequently but not excessively. She also exposed to mental health content in TikTok multiple times a day.

4.1.2 Second Participant

Respondent 2 is a 23-year-old Muslim female. She is also from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSKPM). Respondent 2 had the highest screen time among all participants, with a reported usage of 11 hours per day. This reflects a very high level of engagement, potentially indicating heavy reliance on the platform. She is exposed to content almost every day.

4.1.3 Third Participant

Participant 3 is a 23-year-old Muslim female. She is from the Faculty of Engineering (FENG). Her screen time is 3 hours, and she is exposed to content multiple times a day.

4.1.4 Fourth Participant

Participant 4 is a 22-year-old Muslim female from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSKPM). Respondent 4 recorded 2 hours of daily screen time, representing a relatively average engagement level. The exposure is present but possibly more controlled or limited by daily routines. She is exposed to content several times a week.

4.1.5 Fifth Participant

Participant 5 is a 22-year-old Muslim male. He is from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FELC). His screen time is 2 hours and 50 minutes, and he is exposed to content almost every day.

4.1.6 Sixth Participant

Participant 6 is a 23-year-old Muslim male. He is from the Faculty of Language and Communication (FELC). His screen time is 2 hours indicating moderate usage, and he is exposed to content almost every day.

4.2 THEMES

University students were the focus of this research, which aimed to explore more about mental health content in TikTok through university students' lenses. To guide the investigation, four key research questions were posed. These questions served as a framework for exploring the different ways students connect with mental health-related videos. Based on the interview sessions with six participants, the researcher identified relevant themes that emerged from their shared experiences and insights. These themes were then used to answer the research questions and to better understand the nature of the phenomenon under study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	THEMES
1. How do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?	Core Theme: Pattern of Engagement 1. Commenting 2. Liking 3. Following creators
2. Why do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?	Core Theme: Motivation Behind Engagement 1. Relatable Content 2. Self Help 3. Knowledge
3. What are the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok?	Core Theme: Perceived Benefits 1. Feeling understood 2. Knowledge and Awareness 3. Positive changes
4. What are the drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok?	Core Theme: Drawbacks 1. Overwhelming and Triggering 2. Self-Comparison 3. Misinformation

Table 2: Themes

4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1 Research question 1: How do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?

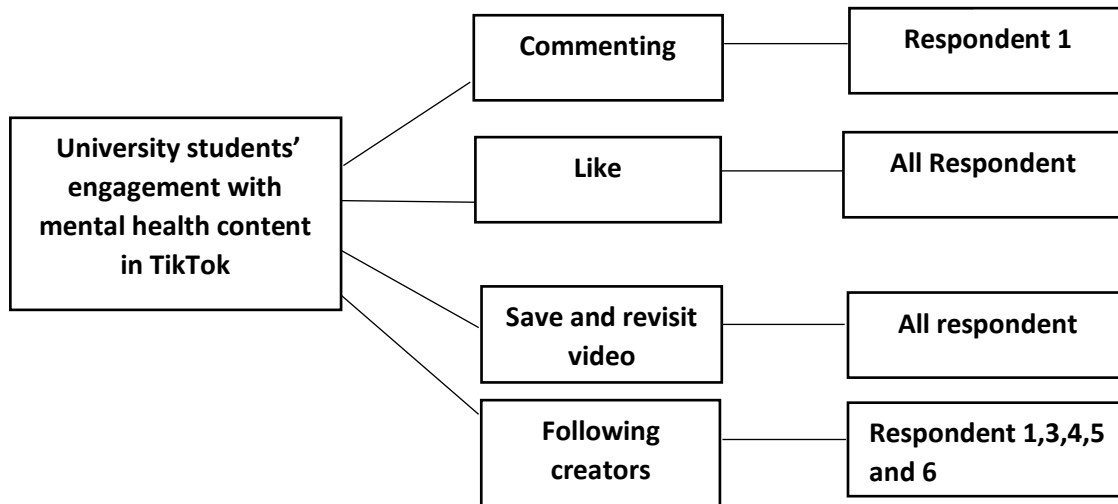


Figure 1.5: Core Themes on the University Students Engagement with Mental Health Content in TikTok.

University students' engagement with mental health content in TikTok.

The figure above presents a brief overview of how university students engage with mental health content on TikTok. It highlights four main themes of interaction which is commenting, liking, saving, and revisiting videos. This provides a general overview of typical engagement patterns among students.

Theme 1: Commenting

Based on the interview findings, only one respondent (respondent 1) reported actively engaging with mental health content on TikTok by commenting on videos. This form of interaction appears to be less common among others respondent (university students) compared to other forms of engagement.

Respondent 1 said that *"I often comment things like, support what he/she says because I feel like, ah yes, this is true"*

Respondent 1 who shared how they engage with mental health content on TikTok indicated that they expressed personal thoughts, showed support, or sought clarification from the content creator. This suggests that for some individuals, commenting serves as a way to build relationships or foster dialogue within the TikTok mental health community. However, other respondents stated that they did not comment on mental health content in TikTok.

R2:....comment? usually, I don't comment but I just read people's comments

R3: because I'm not the type of person who likes to comment on things. It's like oh I take that thing. Then just adjust. I don't have to comment much

R4.... because like there's nothing I really want to comment on plus, I am afraid of being judged, like my friends watching me comment on TikTok and I feels uncomfortable. I don't know why hahahaha.

R5...but I rarely comment, maybe because I'm shy or I feel like I don't have anything important to add.

This finding further supports the idea that commenting is not the preferred method of engagement for most university students when it comes to mental health content on TikTok.

Respondents cited a variety of reasons for avoiding comments, including personal preference, fear of judgment, and a lack of meaningful input to contribute.

Respondent 2 mentioned that even if they did not comment, they often read the comments section, suggesting that engagement can still occur in a more observational or passive form. Respondent 3 simply stated that they were not the type of person who liked to comment, reflecting their individual communication style. Respondent 4 expressed concerns about being judged, particularly by peers, highlighting the role of social pressure and self-consciousness in online behavior. Similarly, Respondent 5 cited feelings of embarrassment and uncertainty about adding value through comments.

Theme 2: Liking

All respondents indicated that they frequently "like" mental health-related videos on TikTok. This form of engagement was described as the most common and effortless way to interact with content.

R1... liking because sometimes it is relatable

R5: ... Yes, I usually press 'like' if I think the content is useful or relates to me.

The fact that all participants exhibited this behaviour consistently indicates that like is a popular and accepted way to interact with TikTok content related to mental health. It illustrates a meaningful yet passive exchange that enables kids to subtly and nonverbally contribute to discussions about mental health.

Theme 3: Save and Revisit Video

All respondents reported that they often save mental health-related videos on TikTok. Saving videos was described as a purposeful action, allowing them to revisit meaningful or informative content at a later time.

R1:.. *When I feel a little down, I'll look for that video*

R2:... *If for reference maybe yes, if i feel like i can't watch the content then no. For example, let's say I came across this TikTok, it's like showing, it created a website for someone who likes self-harm or something, so let's say I know someone who has self-harmed and maybe still is, so maybe at that time they weren't in a good situation, so I first save the video when they're in a good mood and then I send it to them.*

R3:... *Yes, to look back, like quotes or motivational words.*

R4:... *especially if there are useful tips, like how to control anxiety or breathing exercises. I save them because I want to watch them again when I need to, or I save videos that are sad because I want to deal with my sad emotions at that time so I can watch them again.*

R5:.. *Yes, sometimes, I save videos that relate to me. Then, I'll watch them again when I'm feeling down or need motivation at that time.*

R6:... *Yes, I save it and look back. Usually, because it's something related to me, like stress or depression or tips, motivation, these are what I think are useful for me. Then, I'll look back when I have time.*

Based on answers from all six participants, it emerged that saving videos on TikTok served a meaningful and personal function for university students, particularly in relation to mental health content. Each respondent stated that they saved videos with the intention of revisiting them later, particularly during times of emotional stress, for motivation, or when they felt the need to reflect.

Respondents highlighted a variety of reasons for saving content, including motivational quotes (R3), helpful coping strategies such as breathing exercises (R4), and relatable themes such as stress or depression (R6). Several, such as R1 and R5, shared that they returned to the

saved videos when they were feeling down, as a form of emotional support. Others, such as R2, also saved videos as a reference to help others when the time was right, demonstrating thoughtful and empathetic use of the content.

Theme 4: Following creators

Several respondents shared that they follow TikTok creators who consistently post content related to mental health. This action reflects a deeper level of engagement, where students not only consume individual videos but also show long-term interest in the creator's content and message.

R1:... Yes, but I don't remember who

R3:.... If the creator there is this one person but I don't remember much his name. Because I did see his content first and i like to hear, listen to clips of podcasts in TikTok.

R4:... I follow a few accounts that focus on self-care with motivational quotes. I like their content because it seems to resonate with me and is easy to understand.

R5:... Yes, I follow several content creators who always talk about self-healing and mental health. I'm interested because the way they present things is very simple, easy to understand, not like a lecture.

R6:....Tthere are certain but not many. I also follow the creator because they gives useful tips or gives motivational words. So, I follow.

However, only one respondent mentioned that she do not follow any mental health content creators on TikTok.

R2:... So far, I don't follow cretators very much because sometimes when I follow, their content will be included in the FYP. It can be triggering or heavy, that's how it is. I'm having a good day but then suddenly the content comes in and i feels like triggered, so it's like Im not having a good day.

Most respondents shared that they follow TikTok creators who regularly post mental health content. They mentioned that these creators offer content that is relatable, motivating, and easy to understand. For example, Respondents 3, 4, 5, and 6 stated that they follow creators who share podcasts, self-care tips, motivational quotes, or mental health advice in a way that feels authentic and accessible. This indicates a deeper level of engagement, where students not only watch individual videos but also choose to stay connected with creators whose content supports their mental well-being.

However, only one respondent (Respondent 2) mentioned that she did not follow any mental health content creators. She explained that following such accounts can cause mental discomfort, as sensitive content can appear on her feed unexpectedly and affect her mood.

4.3.2 Research question 2: Why do university students engage with mental health content in TikTok?

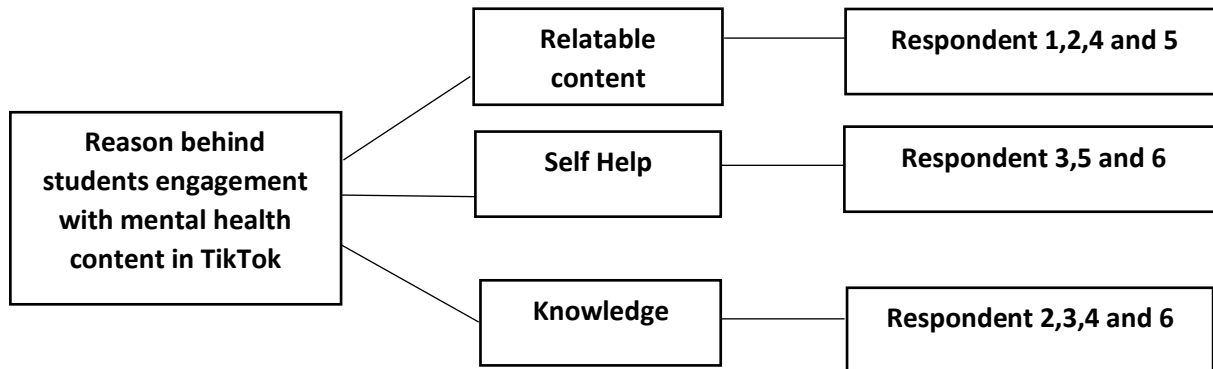


Figure 1.6: Core Themes on Reason behind Students' Engagement with Mental Health Content in TikTok

Reason behind students engagement with mental health content in TikTok

The figure above presents a brief overview of reasons students' engagement with mental health content in TikTok. It highlights three main themes of reason which is relatable content, self-help and knowledge. This provides a general overview of reason behind engagement among students.

Theme 1: Relatable content

All respondents mentioned that they engaged with mental health content on TikTok because they found it relevant to their personal experiences. They shared that the content often reflected their own thoughts, emotions, or situations, making it more meaningful and relevant.

R1... Really. Sometimes when I look at the content, uh, it's exactly what I'm feeling at the time. Okay, for example, I'm feeling sad or having a problem with a friend and then I have negative thoughts about myself, so, in one of the contents, it said that sometimes friends think we're good

and then we think that person is wrong, but if we look back, it's possible that we're wrong too. So better, reflect on yourself first and then I think back, that's right.

R2... Some yes, some maybe no because the way we approach mental health is different for everyone

R4... Yes, really. Sometimes when I watch videos about burnout or coping with emotions, I feel like, hey, I feel the same way.

R5... yes, the person who made the video mentions the same things I'm experiencing. For example, when the video talks about anxiety or something like depression, right? I immediately think, "oh, I'm like this, it's like the signs he has, like I have it." So, I can relate to myself hahahhaa.

Respondents agreed that the mental health content they found on TikTok felt relevant to their personal experiences. Respondent 1 described moments of emotional alignment where videos helped them reflect on their own actions during conflicts with friends. This type of content promotes self-awareness and encourages personal reflection. Respondent 4 shared that videos that discussed emotional exhaustion or struggles resonated deeply, often reflecting their own feelings. Respondent 5 also found the content to be very relevant, especially when it addressed topics like anxiety and depression, stating that it felt like the creators were describing their own experiences.

These responses suggest that relevance is a key factor in why university students engage with mental health content on TikTok. When content reflects their daily thoughts, emotions, or struggles, it creates a sense of connection and understanding. This emotional relevance encourages students to engage with the content more deeply, whether by watching, saving, or reflecting on it.

Theme 2: Self Help

The availability of self-help information on TikTok was another important factor driving university students' engagement with mental health content. Many participants stated that the information they used provide helpful guidance, coping mechanisms, or words of inspiration that they could implement in their daily lives. This included advice on managing stress, improving mental health, and overcoming barriers such as fatigue or anxiety.

R3... Helpful. Usually being helpful most of the time. I mean affected. It's the mindset. It's a mindset. I will look towards motivational quotes or videos. And then slowly like try to read back. And then digest it in myself. Because usually my kind of quotes are what Islam has, right?

R5... Sometimes when I'm tired or stressed, watching videos like this can help me feel calmer. Some videos calm my emotions at that time, some videos give tips and motivation.

R6.... I would say yes because the content I watched helped me emotionally, how do I handle stress or what, especially since I'm still a student. So, burnout and all that stuff is familiar. Then, there are also videos with motivational words that make me aware of certain things.

Several respondents emphasized that mental health content on TikTok serves as a form of self-help, especially during times of stress or emotional exhaustion. Respondent 3 shared that motivational videos and quotes, especially those aligned with their personal values, help them reflect and adjust their mindset. Similarly, Respondent 5 mentioned that such videos offer emotional relief and practical motivation, especially when they are feeling tired or overwhelmed.

Respondent 6 also described the content as emotionally helpful, especially in managing stress and exhaustion as a student. They appreciated videos that provided motivational tips and messages, which helped them become more aware of how to cope with their situations. This response suggests that self-help content on TikTok can offer immediate emotional support and simple coping strategies, making it a useful tool for students facing mental health challenges.

Theme 3: Knowledge

University students also interact with TikTok's mental health content in order to learn more about and comprehend mental health concerns. Students can gain a better understanding of their own emotional experiences or the challenges faced by others by using the platform's easily understandable explanations and insights.

R2...there are people in my life who are struggling and everything and they're open about it so I want to understand their situation or comfort them when they're struggling or something so if there's mental health content, I watch it.

R3... Even the Al-Quran itself has its own phrase, right? Regarding this. So, it's okay. I already read it. But like from the perspective of understanding humans. I will usually search for it on TikTok.

R4... I kind of like to see because I can gain knowledge about mental health.

R6... Sometimes, because I want to know myself why. For example, if I feel like I've been sad for a long time, I don't have any motivation, I tend to look for why I'm like that on TikTok, then TikTok releases videos related to mental health.

Some respondents stated that they engaged with mental health content on TikTok to gain a deeper understanding of mental health issues, for themselves and for others. Respondent 2 explained that they watched such content to better support a friend or loved one who may be struggling, aiming to gain more understanding and comfort.

Respondent 3 mentioned seeking explanations from a human perspective, even after learning from religious texts, using TikTok as a tool to explore mental health more broadly. Respondent 4 clearly expressed an interest in learning through the videos, while Respondent 6 stated that when experiencing prolonged sadness or low motivation, they would turn to TikTok to learn more about their emotional state. This response suggests that TikTok serves not only as a platform for emotional expression but also as an accessible mental health education resource for students.

4.3.3 Research question 3: What are the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok?

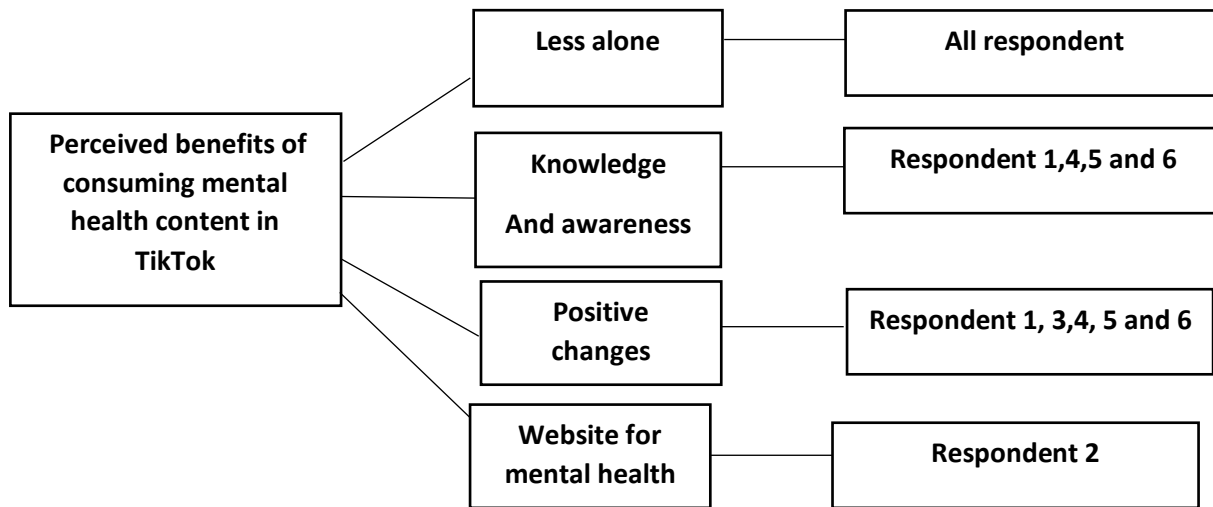


Figure 1.7: Core Themes on the Perceived Benefits of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok?

Perceived Benefits of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok?

The figure above presents a brief overview of perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok. It highlights four main themes of perceived benefits: less alone, knowledge and awareness, positive changes, and website for mental health. This provides a general overview of perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok.

Theme 1: Less alone

One of the key benefits reported by university students when engaging with mental health content on TikTok is the feeling of being understood. This emotional connection occurs when students see content that reflects their own experiences, thoughts, or emotions.

R1... Yes. Because it feels like oh, it's true that what I did was wrong, it's mostly true that I have the right to feel that way, but at the same time, don't let that feeling get you down.

R2...*At the same time because we know that person is also going through the same thing and we can relate. So, we were like oh I'm not the only one*

R3... *Oh, I'm not alone...*

R4... *It really feels that way. Sometimes when I read other people's comments, I feel like a lot of people are actually experiencing the same thing. So, it doesn't feel strange or isolated.*

R5... *Yes, very much. Why is that, because, when other people share their experiences with stress or other problems, for example anxiety or something, I feel a little relieved because it turns out I'm not the only one who feels that way. It kind of gives me support, even if it's just from the TikTok app itself. Maybe because there's a community like that and then there are a lot of people who feel the same way, it kind of creates a feeling... like a sense of belonging? Ha, that's how it is...*

R6... *Because I see on TikTok, there are other people who have the same experience as me. It's like they've been through what I'm going through so I feel understood, I don't feel like I'm alone.*

Every respondent said they felt understood when they interacted with TikTok's mental health programming. Respondent 1 reported that the material encouraged them to examine their feelings and behaviours, acknowledging their emotions while cautioning them against dwelling too much on them. Both Respondents 2 and 3 emphasized how comforting it is to know that they are not alone in their challenges.

According to respondent 4, reading other people's remarks made them feel less alone and more connected. According to Respondent 5, who described it as a sense of belonging within a virtual group, watching others share similar experiences also made them feel comforted and supported. Respondent 6 additionally highlighted how they felt less alone and more emotionally supported after finding others who had gone through similar things. These responses show that relatable content on TikTok helps students feel acknowledged, understood, and emotionally connected, even through a digital space.

Theme 2: Knowledge and Awareness

For university students, TikTok is a helpful resource for learning about and spreading awareness of mental health. Users can search for and read information that discusses many areas of mental well-being, such as symptoms, coping mechanisms, and general mental health education, thanks to the platform's accessibility.

R1: ... Yes, the content I see mostly provides information about mental health, either ways to reduce stress or signs that you have mental health or why TikTok is such a vast and big platform. Everyone can go into TikTok and search for what they want and creators also share many types of information.

R4... I think the good thing is that we can get information easily because TikTok, the internet, is at our fingertips. If you want to know about something, you can just search on TikTok.

R5... In general, eh...hmmm. I think the good thing is that there is a lot of mental health content on TikTok and then there is a lot of information about mental health, right? So, people are happy to see that information. They can just search. Second, maybe give awareness to people because for me it really gives awareness, like we can know the signs of burnout, stress, anxiety, right? I myself am aware of what is happening to me. So, we can be sensitive to ourselves.

R6...it's easy to get information about mental health, giving awareness to people. From people who don't know about the signs of mental health to people who do know.

Respondent 1 mentioned that TikTok offers a variety of mental health information, such as signs of mental health struggles and ways to reduce stress. They highlighted the platform's broad reach, making it easy for users to find relevant content. Similarly, Respondent 4 emphasized that information is now easily accessible, with TikTok offering quick searchability at users' fingertips.

Respondent 5 appreciated the abundance of mental health content, explaining that it not only provides information but also creates awareness. For example, they learned to recognize signs of fatigue, stress, and anxiety, helping them become more self-aware. Respondent 6 also emphasized TikTok's role in spreading awareness, stating how the content helps both those who are unfamiliar with mental health issues and those who are already aware. This response

suggests that TikTok plays a role in educating and informing users, helping them become more sensitive to their own and others' mental states.

Theme 3: Positives Changes

Respondents said that after interacting with TikTok's mental health content, their lives had improved. This includes greater coping mechanisms for handling relationships and stress, enhanced self-awareness, and enhanced emotional regulation.

R1... Yes. For example, about friends, relationships, family. If I have a problem with my family, like fighting or something and then I wonder why my family didn't persuade me at that time and then the content on TikTok, say, maybe sometimes the person doesn't persuade me because the person doesn't know they did something wrong. So, when we get angry, they don't even know we're being angry. So, the only thing we do is talk. Express it but in a good way. Sometimes if you feel like crying or something, there's content to say, take a deep breath, think back calmly.

R3... Many. Many. Thank God many. In terms of faith. Thank God. Like okay.... And then, it really helps me in boosting my own confidence.

R4... Yes. I'm more aware of self-care now. I've also learned to take things slow and prioritize mental health more than before.

R5... I'm trying to practice self-care more consistently. Before, I used to ignore myself. Ignoring that doesn't seem to care much about my own emotions. But now sometimes I do something like that...journaling. For example, when I'm angry or sad, that's more effective because it makes my stress less. I learned this method from TikTok.

R6... Yes, it helps me feel more motivated when I see content that is motivating, useful tips that help me and I can understand why I am like this, because of the knowledge I have gained.

However, R2 said that *"That's a little hard to say because our lives are not stable, they don't always go up. So, maybe we're like oh it's a good change but then suddenly we shut down or triggered, we fall every time too, So, it depends on the situation"*

Respondent 1 shared how certain videos helped them better understand relationship dynamics, especially in family settings, encouraging more constructive communication. Respondent 3 noted the impact the content had on their spiritual well-being and confidence. Similarly, Respondent 4 and Respondent 5 described how they became more mindful of their self-care and emotional needs, some even using journaling as a stress relief technique learned through TikTok.

Respondent 6 echoed this sentiment, stating that the motivational and informative videos helped them feel more in control of their emotions and more aware of their mental state. However, Respondent 2 offered a more nuanced view, explaining that while positive changes can occur, emotional progress is not always consistent, as individuals may still experience setbacks depending on their life situations. This highlights that while TikTok may contribute to personal growth, its effects can vary based on individual circumstances.

Theme 4: Website for Mental Health

R2... Yes, like I said just now there is this one website where it gives like an alternative for someone who likes to self-harm. So, instead of you self-harm on yourself, you go into that website, you do the activities there instead.

One of the participants highlighted the presence of a website that was introduced through TikTok, which offers alternative coping methods for individuals struggling with self-harm. Respondent 2 mentioned discovering a platform that provides activities to replace self-harming behavior, suggesting that TikTok not only offers mental health content but also serves as a bridge to external supportive resources. This reflects the platform's potential to spread awareness about tools and services that can promote safer coping mechanisms and support individuals in distress. Although only one participant mentioned this, it demonstrates the broader impact that digital platforms can have in connecting users to professional help and structured interventions.

4.3.4 What are the drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok?

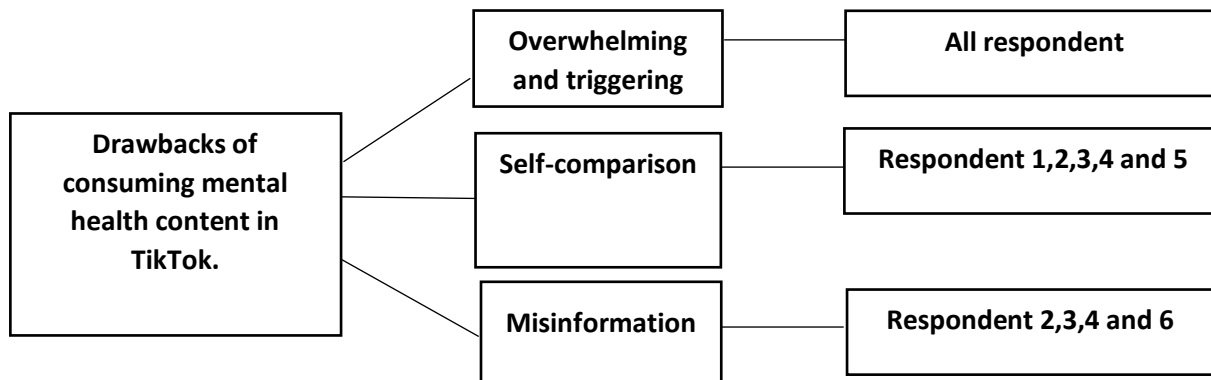


Figure 1.8: Core Themes on the Drawbacks of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok?

Drawbacks of Consuming Mental Health Content in TikTok?

The figure above presents a brief overview about drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok. It highlights three main themes of drawbacks which overwhelming and triggering, self-comparison and misinformation.

Theme 1: Overwhelming and Triggering

Although TikTok's mental health content might be helpful, many respondents agreed that it can also be overwhelming or triggering, particularly when used excessively or unexpectedly. Respondents talked about instances in which the content left them feeling depressed, uncomfortable, or emotionally spent.

R1... Yes, sometimes I feel like, like I said earlier, there is content that says that if we think about ourselves, there is something wrong and then I feel like I don't want to accept that. I feel like, how could I be wrong, I prioritize my feelings. I prioritize myself, why do I have to feel that way? I feel overwhelmed, take time.

R2... Yes. Because the people who made the video, some of them might put a trigger warning, some don't. So, those who didn't put it, we ourselves don't know what the content is, it's like someone talks about something we triggered, and then it's like they shut down right away.

R3... At first. It seems. There is slight discomfort. Because, it feels like. I have this. That's how it is. This is like. Oh. I do have this. But after a long time listening, I will think like. Oh. Do I really behave like this? With this symptom? First, it is really uncomfortable. But after a long time. when I have heard. Try to hold it with myself. Listen to that thing. This is like an acknowledgement. Because, I will say, oh, that's right. There is actually this thing. So, I need to change it.

R4... Sometimes I feel overwhelmed like... it's like when I watch too many mental health videos, it also affects my state at that time, especially when I am sad, it makes me even sadder. Then it's like when we scroll, we don't know what the next video is, so it's like we're suddenly triggered, shocked when we watch it.

R5... Ever. It's a lie if you haven't. There are times when I watch too many videos about trauma or anxiety or something, I feel like those things affect me so I feel like I'm getting worse at that time. For example, I'm having a bad day, then I keep watching TikTok, then scroll out to this sad video or something. TikTok is smart, it looks like it's watching the video we're engaged in and then it releases another video like that. Then I start to feel bad about myself. My emotions get heavier, the sadness drags on.

R6.... I think yes when I watch videos about mental health over and over again. It triggers our mood, if that time we are sad, we will be sadder and more frustrated again.

Respondent 1 expressed feelings of defensiveness and overwhelm when certain videos challenged their self-perception. Respondent 2 highlighted the lack of trigger warnings in some videos, which could lead to sudden emotional shutdowns. Respondent 3 expressed initial discomfort from seeing relatable symptoms but ultimately found the content to be a path to self-awareness.

Respondents 4 and 6 indicated how binge-watching mental health videos while already feeling low can worsen their emotional state. Similarly, Respondent 5 described how TikTok's

algorithm tends to amplify sad content based on previous engagement, which can deepen negative emotions. This insight suggests that while TikTok provides easy access to mental health information, unfiltered or repeated exposure may negatively impact users' emotional well-being, especially during vulnerable moments.

Theme 2: Self-Comparison

Another recurring theme among the respondents was the tendency to compare themselves with others when engaging with mental health content on TikTok. Most respondents admitted to experiencing feelings of inadequacy or discouragement after seeing others seemingly manage their mental health better or make faster progress.

R1... Yes. When I look at certain content, I feel like why did he say that, why did he support that, why did he disagree with what I feel. Like that.

R2... Yes, there is obviously because people like to say, you're just like this, he's worse. But then I remember there was a quote where he said something like, there is someone who is drowning 20 meters deep, there is someone who is drowning 50 meters deep, but they're both drowning. So, it's the same, there's no need to compare how many people are drowning, they're both drowning

R3... Oh I used to have thought of like. It's like comparing like, this person even though he has mental health he or she can still do this work. I used to be so jealous with that.

R4.... Ha'ah, I've been there. When I see other people seeming okay with their mental health journey, I feel low about myself, wondering why I'm so slow to progress.

R5... Yes hm, sometimes. Because I see people on TikTok who have successfully gotten out of the world or something like that, but I don't. I feel like I'm still stuck with my problem. But sometimes, because that person also shares tips for their problem, so I take those tips too.

However, respondent 6 said no.

Respondent 1 felt invalidated when creators expressed opinions that clashed with their own feelings. Reflecting on how viewers often compared hardships, respondent 2 highlighted

the importance of acknowledging that pain is real no matter how severe. Despite experiencing mental health issues, respondent 3 said they felt jealous of those who appeared productive. This sentiment was shared by respondent 4, who said they felt left behind in their personal journey when they saw others doing better. Despite occasionally finding hope and helpful guidance in the information, respondent 5 also expressed feelings of being trapped. Respondent 6 claimed that they were not subjected to such comparisons. Overall, these reflections highlight how exposure to others' experiences on TikTok can trigger self-comparison, which may lead to negative self-perception, although for some, it can also serve as a source of motivation.

Theme 3: Misinformation

Several respondents expressed concerns about the spread of mental health misinformation on TikTok. The nature of the platform, where anyone can share content regardless of expertise, increases the risk of false or misleading information.

R2... not everyone approaches that coping mechanism the same way. So, if you make the wrong coping mechanism, it will affect you. It's like self-diagnosis

R3... To get mental health advice or information from TikTok, there is risk. There are because there are sometimes. Some misinformation being spread out. People won't know that it's a misinformation. Unless, that person will prove that it is misinformation. not associated with anything and when the person himself did the experiment. But, most of the time, there is misinformation. I always see it in TikTok.

R4... The information given is not from a real expert or professional so... how dangerous is it for people to believe it.

R6.... If the bad thing is that I don't know for sure whether the information given is true or not, there will be people who will believe it without further searching or filtering the information. That will harm them.

Respondent 2 stressed that not everyone is successful with coping strategies and following incorrect advice inappropriately can have negative consequences, including self-diagnosis. Respondent 3 highlighted that while TikTok offers content related to mental health, false information is rampant and can be difficult to detect unless someone actively denies it or cites a reliable source. Respondent 4 raised a similar issue, highlighting that many videos are not produced by qualified experts, which can make the material potentially damaging and even harmful. Respondent 6 also noted that people can take things at face value without checking their accuracy, which can have a negative impact on their mental health.

4.4 JOURNAL REFLECTIONS

THEME RQ 2	RESPONDENT JOURNAL REFLECTIONS
RELATABLE CONTENT	<i>"I watched a short video, it made me felt sad because it was so relatable"</i> (Respondent 3)
SELF-HELP	Thursday's mention of <i>"mental exhaustion"</i> and the attempt to <i>"motivate myself to keep going"</i> highlights the respondent's intention to use the content for self-regulation and encouragement (Respondent 1) <i>"Feel less heavy-loaded on my mind", "like I can step forward"</i> after engaging with self-affirmation (Respondent 2) <i>"search for motivation"</i> (Respondent 5)
KNOWLEDGE	Across multiple days which is Wednesday and Saturday, the respondent emphasized learning new or deeper understanding of psychological concepts, suggesting a clear knowledge-seeking motivation (Respondent 2) <i>"I learn something new today: Anxious always move their leg, zoning out, brain fog, repeating actions"</i> (Respondent 3) Throughout the week, the respondent repeatedly mentioned watching the content <i>"untuk mengetahui lebih lagi"</i> (Respondent 4) <i>"rasa ingin tahu tentang mental health"</i> (Respondent 6) <i>"know some good tips"</i> (Respondent 5)

THEME RQ 3	RESPONDENT JOURNAL REFLECTIONS
LESS ALONE	<i>“It’s good to know that my feelings are valid too,”</i> (Respondent 1) Thursday’s response revealed that the respondent felt emotionally validated when they related their experience of being judged to the video content, highlighting a sense of being understood <i>“memahami diri kerana berasa takut dijerkah”</i> (Respondent 4)
KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS	Several entries, particularly Wednesday and Saturday, highlighted a better understanding of mental health concepts such as sadness and the differences between anxiety, depression and burnout supporting the benefits of increased knowledge and awareness (Respondent 2) The respondent consistently expressed a desire to learn more about anxiety, depression, personality disorders, and mental health from Islamic views (Respondent 4) <i>“tambah knowledge”</i> after watching mental health awareness (Respondent 6)
POSITIVES CHANGES	<i>“energetic and happy”</i> and <i>“grateful”</i> after watch positive content about love or meaningful relationships (Respondent 1) Mindset video: Positivity and self-improvement (Respondent 3)

	<i>“Rasa gembira dapat tolong kawan”</i> and <i>“rasa sedikit tenang”</i> after watching motivation content (Respondent 6)
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THEME RQ 4	RESPONDENT JOURNAL REFLECTIONS
OVERWHELMING	Respondents experienced <i>“mixed feelings”</i> and felt <i>“triggered”</i> by content related to depression and PTSD (Respondent 2) <i>“teringat cerita dulu, jadi sedikit sedih”</i> and <i>“rasa terganggu”</i> after watching trauma content and mental health content which is Depression content (Respondent 5) <i>“sedikit terganggu”, “rasa sedih”</i> after watching Bpd and trauma content (Respondent 6)

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains the study's conclusions, consequences, and recommendations. Chapter 5 is crucial since it provides readers with a comprehensive overview of the study.

5.1 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provides a comprehensive introduction to the study, including the background, problem statement, study aims and objectives, research questions, conceptual and theoretical framework, definitions of key terms, significance of the study, and limitations. It concludes with a summary that sets the foundation for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2 presents a detailed literature review, highlighting its role in shaping the direction of the research, informing the methodology, and supporting the data analysis. It explores the key issues related to the research topic and concludes with a summary of the main findings from previous studies.

Chapter 3 focuses on research methodology, outlining the research design, target population and sample, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, research approach, pilot study, and ethical considerations. This chapter offers a clear explanation of how the study was conducted and highlights the ethical steps followed throughout the research process.

Chapter 4 presents the research findings and discussion, beginning with an introduction and informant profiles. It then outlines the detailed findings, followed by an in-depth discussion, and concludes with a summary. These findings are directly linked to the research objectives and interpreted in relation to existing literature, offering a deeper understanding of how mental health content on TikTok impacts UNIMAS students.

Together, these chapters create a cohesive narrative that explores the research topic comprehensively from laying the groundwork in Chapter 1 to presenting and analysing the findings in Chapter 4.

5.2 DISCUSSIONS

5.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

The present study aimed to explore mental health content in TikTok on university students. Six young adults involved in this research and were interviewed face to face and their lived experiences were formed into several theme according to the research questions. The respondents shared their perspective opinion regarding the mental health content in TikTok.

The themes related to Research Question 1 in this study are commenting, liking, save and revisit videos and following creators. These themes focus on how university students engage with mental health content in TikTok. The researcher findings were compatible with a study performed by Stillwell (2024), entitled “The formation of TikTok’s Influencer-Led Mental Health Community: A content Analysis of Social Penetration Theory” which indicated that TikTok foster participation and engagement through interactive features such as commenting, liking videos and sharing.

Interview findings revealed four main themes regarding how university students engaged with mental health content on TikTok which is commenting, liking, saving videos and following content creators. Commenting was the least common form of engagement, with only one respondent actively participating by sharing supportive comments or personal thoughts. According to Stillwell (2024), users frequently engage by commenting on videos, often sharing their own mental health struggles in response to what influencers share. This form of reciprocal self-disclosure fosters empathy and connection within the community. However, most students avoided commenting due to embarrassment, fear of being judged or feeling they had nothing meaningful to add but some still engaged passively by reading other people’s comments. Social media platforms often create environments where individuals feel pressured to present themselves favorably. This performance-oriented atmosphere can lead to self-consciousness and anxiety about online interactions, causing users to avoid commenting to prevent potential criticism or negative feedback (Manochikitsa, 2025).

In contrast, liking videos was the most common and easy form of engagement. all respondents frequently liked mental health content that they found relatable or helpful. Another important form of engagement was saving videos, which all participants did with the intention

of revisiting them later for motivation, emotional support or to help others. This suggested a purposeful and personal use of content. Finally, most students followed mental health content creators that they found relatable and informative, indicating a deeper and more ongoing form of engagement. Users participate by saving (favouriting) and sharing videos that they find interesting. This passive participation shows support and aids in disseminating information about mental health to larger audiences (Stillwell, 2024). Only one respondent avoided following such creators, expressing concerns that sensitive content could trigger negative emotions. Overall, students prefer passive or private forms of interaction, engaging more through liking, saving, and following rather than public commenting.

5.2.2 RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

Next, the theme related to Research Question 2 is relatable content. Each respondent emphasized how the TikTok videos they watched about mental health spoke to their own experiences. The videos often depict their current emotions, situations or internal struggles, making the content feel very personal and relevant. For example, respondent 1 shared that a video discussing misunderstandings in friendships helped her reflect on her own behavior and promoted self-awareness. Another respondent, which is respondent 4 mentioned that content about burnout and emotional struggles mirrored what she was going through, while respondent 5 said videos about anxiety and depression seemed to describe his own symptoms. According to Stillwell (2024), TikTok mental health content resonates strongly with audiences primarily through creators sharing raw, authentic personal experiences. This vulnerability creates an immediate "this is me" connection, making viewers feel seen and validated in their own experiences.

Respondent 3 also, stated in her journal reflection, *"I watched a short video, it made me feel sad because it was so relatable,"* suggesting that the content touched on unresolved or sensitive personal issues. This emotional resonance suggests the powerful effect of relatable content in triggering self-reflection and emotional responses.

Second theme that emerged under research question 2 is self-help. Some respondents use the platform to find motivational content, emotional comfort, and practical tips for managing stress, anxiety, and academic burnout. Respondent 3 explained that motivational videos particularly those that align with her personal and spiritual beliefs help her to reflect and shift her mindset. Respondent 5 noted that such videos often help him calm down during stressful times, while Respondent 6 said the content helped him manage emotions and offered realistic strategies for dealing with academic fatigue. These responses suggest that students see TikTok as a source of immediate, accessible support. According to Turuba et al (2023), Many young people appreciated these short, engaging videos that provided coping techniques and inspirational words, suggesting that they could try out new techniques they had picked up from TikTok to manage their emotions. Additionally, young people said that the inspirational words and material from authors who had been through similar things made them feel hopeful and validated, encouraging emotional resilience in challenging situations.

In journal reflection, Respondent 1 journaled about experiencing “*mental fatigue*” and how she tried to “*motivate myself to keep going*” after engaging with the video, indicating a deliberate effort to improve their mental state. Respondent 2 stated that viewing self-affirming content make she feel “*less of a burden on my mind*” and like she could “*move forward,*” suggesting a therapeutic effect. Similarly, Respondent 5 shared that he actively “*look for motivation,*” reflecting the way some users turn to the platform to find encouragement during difficult times.

Last theme which is knowledge. Responses from Respondent 2, 3, 4, and 6 indicated that university students could benefit from the mental health information presented in the TikTok video in several important ways. According to Respondent 2, the information was useful for understanding and helping people facing mental health issues. By watching the mental health content, she hoped to show compassion and comfort to a friend or family member experiencing emotional challenges. The desire to understand mental health from a broader human perspective was highlighted by Respondent 3. She acknowledged that religious teachings such as the Quran taught them about mental health, but she also used TikTok to learn more about human psychology and behaviour. Respondent 4 shared that she enjoyed watching mental health videos for general knowledge, indicating an interest in becoming more informed

about emotional and psychological well-being. Meanwhile, Respondent 6 highlighted a more personal use of the platform, explaining that he engaged with mental health content to understand their own emotions especially during times of prolonged sadness or low motivation.

A clear pattern of knowledge seeking was also evident in the journal entries. Respondent 2 described on Wednesday and Saturday that she had gained a deeper understanding of psychological concepts, indicating a consistent interest in learning. Respondent 3 shared, *“I learned something new today: Anxious always moving their feet, zoning out, brain fog, repeating actions,”* highlighting a growing awareness of behavioral symptoms related to mental health. Meanwhile, Respondent 4 journaled that she watched TikTok content *“to learn more,”* indicating a desire for deeper understanding. Respondent 6 echoed this sentiment by expressing *“curiosity about mental health,”* and Respondent 5 stated gaining *“some good tips,”* further emphasizing that TikTok serves as an informal but meaningful source of mental health information

According to Turuba et al. (2023), youth often use the platform to better understand themselves and others, seeking explanations for feelings like sadness or lack of motivation, which can serve as a form of self-education and self-awareness. This aligns with findings that TikTok provides a space for peer-supported learning, normalizing mental health challenges, and sharing practical coping strategies. Moreover, respondent 3's reference to reading the Quran and seeking human understanding on TikTok speaks to the platform's role as an additional resource beyond traditional religious or cultural texts, seeking insights into human behavior and mental health, as highlighted in the article's discussion of gaining knowledge from diverse content creators to better understand mental health (Turuba et al., 2023).

According to Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), people actively select and consume media content in order to satisfy particular wants and desires (G.U. & F.O., 2023). University students select and consume mental health videos in TikTok to satisfy their needs.

Based on Uses and Gratifications Theory, the reasons respondents gave for engaging with mental health content can be effectively linked to several core media consumption motives. First, relatable content reflects identity motives, as individuals are drawn to media that reflects their own experiences, emotions, or beliefs, allowing them to connect with the content on a personal level. This sense of identification helps users explore or validate their self-concept. In addition, relatable content often fulfils a need for social interaction, as it encourages conversation with others or creates a sense of shared understanding, especially around sensitive topics such as mental health. It is also related to friendship motives, as consuming content that reflects personal struggles can reduce feelings of loneliness and offer emotional comfort.

Second, self-help is driven by several gratifications. It is mostly associated with informational motives as people seek helpful guidance and coping mechanisms to manage their mental health. Since the consumption of self-help content can offer a momentary respite or distraction from real-life stress, it is also related to the objectives of escapism and diversion. In addition, by assisting people in creating or enhancing their self-image through constructive mental health behaviours and narratives, this content serves the purpose of identification.

Finally, the knowledge motive directly corresponds to both information and supervision satisfaction. Respondents who seek knowledge are motivated to learn and stay informed about mental health topics, trends, and research. This engagement allows them to better understand their own experiences and stay informed about the broader societal discourse on mental health.

5.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Interview findings revealed themes regarding the perceived benefits of consuming mental health content in TikTok. The first theme is less alone. When viewers of TikTok mental health content find their own feelings, experiences or challenges reflected in another person's narrative, they feel understood and less alone. Based on a study by Ramsden et al (2024) entitled "The Role of TikTok in Student's Health and Wellbeing", the majority of participants felt that being exposed to previously invisible mental health conditions was very beneficial as it made them feel less alone and helped them understand others experiencing similar difficulties. This was also stated in a study conducted by Turuba et al. (2023), that is, when young people watch videos of creators talking about their experiences, including symptoms, coping strategies, and treatments, they feel less alone, more validated, and more hopeful about conquering their challenges.

Respondents reported a significant sense of validation and emotional connection. R1 mentioned, for example, that the information made them consider their behaviour and sentiments, acknowledge the validity of their emotions and the importance of not letting them control them. Both respondent 2 and respondent 3 highlighted how comforting it was to know that others were facing similar difficulties, as it made them feel less isolated.

Respondent 4 explained how reading other people's comments made she feel connected to a wider group facing similar issues, reducing feelings of isolation or strangeness. Respondent 5 highlighted the relief and support of hearing others talk about stress and anxiety, which helped them feel like they were part of a shared community. Respondent 6 echoed this sentiment, explaining that seeing others with similar experiences made him feel seen and understood emotionally, reinforcing that his struggles were not unique or shameful.

Some respondents reported feeling emotionally seen and validated through TikTok content according to their journal reflection. Respondent 1 wrote, *"It's nice to know that my feelings are valid too,"* revealing a sense of comfort from seeing their emotions reflected in the content. Meanwhile, Respondent 4 mentioned that the videos helped her and she stated *"understand myself because I was afraid of being judged,"* especially when recalling past

situations in which they felt judged. This journal reflection suggests that such content can help individuals feel understood, reducing emotional isolation.

Next theme is knowledge and awareness. It is clear from the responses provided by respondent 1, 4, 5, and 6 that TikTok is an accessible and educational medium for mental health education and awareness. According to Rathy (2023), TikTok has quickly grown into a safe space for productive conversations on mental health. Many users share their stories, advice, and information without feeling judged. As a result, more people are using TikTok to learn about mental health. They watch short videos that help them understand mental health better. This makes TikTok a popular place for people looking for knowledge and help about mental health.

Respondents highlighted how easy it is to find mental health content on TikTok, stating that users can quickly search for topics and discover a wealth of knowledge across the network. Respondent 1 stated that TikTok is a vast and customizable source of knowledge as it provides content on stress management, mental health symptoms, and general awareness. Respondent 4 also mentioned how easy it is to have information about mental health “at our fingertips,” supporting the notion that TikTok makes mental health education faster and more accessible.

Respondent 5 agreed, expressing gratitude for the wealth and variety of mental health information and highlighting in particular how it increased awareness of symptoms such as stress, anxiety, and fatigue. He was able to better understand their own emotional states as a result of this awareness. Respondent 6 further highlighted that TikTok contributes to education for people who are curious about mental health as well as those who are unfamiliar with it.

Respondent 2, in multiple entries in journal reflection, reflected on gaining clarity about sadness and the differences between anxiety, depression, and fatigue. Respondent 4 indicated a continued interest in learning about anxiety, depression, personality disorders, and also emphasized curiosity about Islamic perspectives on mental health. Respondent 6 specifically mentioned gaining new insights by stating “*increased knowledge*” after watching mental health awareness content, confirming that the platform plays a role in informal psychoeducation.

It is believed that a plethora of information, including first-hand stories about mental health recovery, is extremely helpful in raising awareness and debunking stereotypes that people with mental illness are inferior, incompetent, crazy, or violent. The majority of participants felt that being exposed to previously unseen mental health conditions was very beneficial as it made them feel less alone and helped them understand others who were going through similar difficulties. Afterwards, participants felt more comfortable managing and talking about their own problems, and some even began using self-management strategies to maintain their mental health, thereby intentionally sharing more positive content on TikTok (Ramsden et al, 2024).

Third theme under research question 3 is positive change. Respondents shared several positive changes after watching mental health content on TikTok. For example, respondent 1 mentioned that the content helped them better understand family conflicts by encouraging calm and clear expression of emotions. Similarly, respondent 3 said the video increased her confidence and trust. In addition, respondent 4 became more aware of self-care and learned to prioritize her mental health while respondent 5 shared that he started practicing self-care more consistently, such as journaling when feeling angry or sad, which helped reduce stress. Similarly, respondent 6 felt motivated by helpful tips and gained knowledge that helped them understand their emotions. However, respondent 2 emphasized that mental health is not always stable there are good moments, but also times when she feels triggered or shut down depending on the situation.

In the journal reflection, Respondent 1 described feeling “*energized and happy*” and “*grateful*” after consuming content about love and meaningful relationships. Respondent 3 mentioned benefiting from mindfulness-oriented videos that promoted positivity and self-improvement. In a similar vein, Respondent 6 stated that he felt “*happy to help a friend*” and “*I felt a little calm*” after engaging with motivational content. This reflection suggests that TikTok is not just informative but can also uplift and inspire positive emotional change.

This finding aligns with a study by Ramsden et al. (2024) that stated through the use of the platform, many people can develop coping mechanisms for stress, anxiety, anger, procrastination, and negative self-talk. These coping mechanisms include journaling, breathing exercises, grounding, inner child work, meditation, journaling, and friends. Youth appreciate

the opportunity to experiment and try out many techniques, although not every strategy works for them.

Last theme which is a website for mental health. Respondent 2 shared an example of how TikTok's mental health content can offer practical alternatives to dealing with difficult emotions. She mentioned a website recommended in the video that provides activities for people with self-harm urges. Instead of harming themselves, users are encouraged to engage in these activities, offering a healthier way to manage their feelings. According to Blum (2021), mental health professionals are beginning to leverage TikTok's vast popularity to raise awareness, share positive messages and encourage self-care tips with a younger, wider audience. This highlights how mental health professionals on TikTok are not only raising awareness but also providing immediate, actionable tools and support. It shows how the platform can serve as a bridge between users and trusted resources, empowering young people to find healthier coping mechanisms during times of emotional stress.

5.2.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Interview findings revealed themes regarding the last research question which is drawbacks of consuming mental health content in TikTok. The first theme is overwhelming and triggering. While TikTok has been beneficial in raising mental health awareness, several respondents expressed concerns about the emotional impact of repeatedly engaging with such content. Respondent 1 shared feelings of being overwhelmed and confused when content suggested that putting oneself first could be seen as selfish, leading to emotional conflict and a need to retreat. Similarly, Respondent 2 highlighted the risk of being triggered by content without proper warning, which could lead to sudden emotional shutdown.

Respondent 3 described feelings of discomfort and self-denial when recognizing the symptoms of mental health issues depicted in the videos, but ultimately acknowledged the need for personal growth. In contrast, Respondents 4, 5, and 6 discussed how consuming too many mental health-related videos especially during vulnerable moments increased their sadness and stress. For example, Respondent 5 stated that TikTok's algorithm tended to push down sad or similarly triggering content, increasing their emotional distress. This suggests that while TikTok can be a valuable tool for mental health education, it also carries the risk of emotional overload or unintended triggers, especially when the content is used excessively or without context. According to Milton et al, (2023) there is what is referred to as a "runaway train" in terms of mental health as users feel the algorithm is changing rapidly and they have little control over the community or content they see. These findings suggest that while TikTok creates a supportive environment for mental health organizations, there are significant concerns about how the algorithm may influence users' perceptions of community and well-being.

Despite the many benefits, some journal reflections revealed negative emotional effects triggered by certain content. Respondent 2 reported experiencing "*mixed feelings*" and a "*triggered*" feeling after watching videos related to depression and PTSD, indicating excessive emotional arousal. Respondent 5 wrote that he felt "*remembered stories, a little sad*" and "*disturbed*" after watching trauma-related content, particularly about depression. Similarly, Respondent 6 reported feeling "*a little disturbed*" and "*sad*" after viewing content about borderline personality disorder (BPD) and trauma. This response underscores the risk of emotional distress when viewers encounter content that is too close to their past trauma or unresolved emotions.

Other research has noted manifestations of mental illness on online social media platforms and raised concerns about the potential for traumatic and “triggering” TikTok videos to be potentially harmful to certain viewers (Basch et al., 2022). A study by Schluchter (2024) also stated that TikTok can sometimes go too far. Users understand that sudden changes in content may cause adverse reactions, especially in people with mental health issues. One respondent in the study claimed that people who are more vulnerable may experience problems earlier.

Second theme under this research question is self-comparing. Respondent 1 shared feeling confused or upset when others on TikTok disagreed with or invalidated their feelings. Respondent 2 mentioned being affected by people who compare mental health struggles, but found comfort in a quote that reminded them pain is still pain, no matter how deep. Respondent 3 admitted to feeling jealous of others who seem to cope better while having mental health issues. Similarly, Respondent 4 said she felt down when seeing others appear to be doing better in their healing journey, making her question her own progress. Respondent 5 also experienced this, feeling stuck when others shared success stories, though he sometimes found useful tips from those same videos. These responses show that while TikTok can offer support, it can also lead to harmful self-comparisons that affect users’ emotional well-being.

Through the lens of social comparison theory, the Nursing Times article "How Social Media Use and Social Comparison Affect Mental Health" (Nursing Times, 2020), examines the relationship between social media use and mental health. According to this notion, people often use comparisons to assess their own worth. By constantly displaying carefully selected photos and achievements, social media sites encourage users to compare themselves to others more frequently, which increases this behavior. Comparing oneself to people who are perceived to be better is an example of upward comparison, which often leads to feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and dissatisfaction. Conversely, downward comparisons can promote complacency even though they may temporarily increase feelings of self-esteem.

The last theme is misinformation. Respondent 2 emphasized that not all coping methods work the same for everyone, and using the wrong method can have dangerous consequences much like self-diagnosing without proper knowledge. According to Caron (2022), people are using TikTok to self-diagnose mental illness based on these short films, according to studies

and press reports, although opinions about the validity and usefulness of these assessments vary.

Next, respondent 3 stated that there is a real risk in getting mental health advice from TikTok, as misinformation can spread easily, and many people may not realize it is false unless someone proves otherwise. Similarly, Respondent 4 expressed concerns about the credibility of the content, stating that much of it does not come from real experts or professionals, which can be dangerous if people blindly believe it. Respondent 6 also agreed, saying that people may accept information without verifying it, which can lead to harm. This concern highlights the importance of critically evaluating TikTok content and ensuring that mental health advice comes from trusted and professional sources.

According to Basch et al, (2020), further research showed that COVID-19 information on YouTube and TikTok is inaccurate or unhelpful. If such serious misinformation is found in COVID-19 health content, a topic that requires scientific accuracy, then the same risk applies or perhaps even greater when it involves mental health, which is often more subjective and harder to diagnose. Mental health advice that is not supported by science or shared by professionals can lead to misdiagnosis, the use of harmful coping strategies, or delayed treatment. Therefore, just as with physical health information, users must critically evaluate mental health content on TikTok and seek support from qualified mental health professionals to avoid the negative effects of misinformation.

Findings from the interviews revealed three key downsides to using mental health content on TikTok which is emotionally overwhelming and triggering content, harmful self-comparisons, and misinformation. Respondents described feeling emotionally exhausted or confused after repeatedly watching distressing videos, especially videos without proper warnings or with messages that conflicted with their beliefs. Others experienced feelings of inferiority or jealousy when comparing their mental health journeys to those of individuals who appeared to be more successful online. Other respondents also raised concerns about the spread of unverified or misleading mental health advice, which could lead to self-diagnosis or ineffective coping strategies.

This experience can be understood through the framework of Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT), developed by psychiatrist Aaron T. Beck in the 1960s. CBT is based on the idea that thoughts, emotions, and behavior are closely related, and that the way an individual perceives a situation significantly shapes their emotional and behavioral responses. According to Beck (2011), all psychological disorders share the presence of distorted thinking patterns, and emotional well-being improves when individuals learn to evaluate their thoughts more realistically and flexibly.

In this context, overwhelming TikTok content may activate automatic negative thoughts or cognitive distortions such as catastrophizing and emotional reasoning, which lead to emotional shutdown or confusion. Harmful self-comparisons reflect distortions such as all-or-nothing thinking or "should" statements, which negatively affect self-perception. The spread of misinformation fosters the development of false core beliefs and maladaptive behaviours, especially when users accept content without verifying its credibility. As Fenn & Byrne (2013), explain, it is not the event itself but a person's interpretation of the event that drives their emotional response.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Los Angeles (2020) further explains that thoughts serve as internal commentary that shape feelings such as anxiety or sadness which then influence behaviours. For instance, if someone feels triggered by TikTok content, their interpretation may lead to avoidance behaviour, such as withdrawing from social interaction or ignoring professional help. This demonstrates CBT's foundational model: situations trigger thoughts, which influence feelings, and these feelings drive behaviours. In turn, behaviours can reinforce the cycle. Therefore, CBT provides a useful lens to understand the psychological risks associated with consuming mental health content on TikTok and offers strategies for breaking unhelpful cycles through more balanced thinking and behaviour.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This study explored mental health content on TikTok among university students. Findings revealed that students typically engaged with this content through actions such as liking, commenting, saving, rewatching posts and following mental health content creators. This behaviour reflects their active participation and interest in mental health topics on the platform.

Students reported engaging with the content because they found the content relatable, helpful for self-reflection and a valuable source of knowledge. It served as an accessible form of self-help, offering comfort and insight during challenging times.

Additionally, perceived benefits of using mental health content on TikTok included feeling understood, gaining mental health awareness and experiencing positive changes such as increased self-care, emotional regulation and motivation. These benefits suggest that TikTok can play a supportive role in promoting mental health among university students.

However, the study also revealed several weaknesses. Students reported feeling overwhelmed or triggered by certain content, especially when the content appeared repeatedly in their feed. Some also experienced negative self-comparisons when seeing the mental health progress of others. In addition, misinformation and the spread of non-expert advice were common concerns, posing risks to students who may accept the content without critical evaluation.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study allow the formulation of several recommendations for academic institutions, mental health practitioners, content creators, and university students. First and foremost, it is important to support university students who frequently access mental health content on TikTok to improve their digital literacy. This requires developing the ability to critically evaluate the validity and reliability of internet information, especially when it comes to health and well-being. Despite its ability to provide relatable and emotionally stimulating content, TikTok should not be used as a substitute for expert help. If students are experiencing severe mental health problems, they should be advised to seek advice from a qualified professional or to double-check any material they encounter with reliable sources. For mental health professionals, especially counsellors and psychologists working in universities or private practice, this study highlights the importance of using digital platforms such as TikTok as a tool for outreach.

Mental health professionals can actively participate in the creation of content to offer validated information in an accessible and engaging format for youth. They should also educate students about identifying red flags in harmful or misleading content. Additionally, counseling services at universities should consider integrating social media discussions into their sessions, as many of students' emotional states are closely linked to their online experiences.

Those who create content about mental health issues must also be responsible for the information they disseminate. They should avoid recommending diagnostic labels or treatment options without professional qualifications, offer clear disclaimers, and use trigger warnings when discussing sensitive subjects. To ensure the accuracy and safety of the information they provide, creators should, where possible, work with licensed mental health professionals. The educational value of their content will be enhanced by including resources such as support websites, hotlines, and citations to scientific studies.

Academic institutions such as universities should take a more proactive role in addressing the impact of digital media on students' mental health. This could include offering workshops on responsible content use, providing training on digital literacy and media awareness, and encouraging students to seek offline help when needed. Universities can also conduct internal surveys to better understand their students' specific digital habits and provide tailored support programs accordingly.

Finally, to enhance the depth and applicability of future research, it is recommended that the scope of participants be expanded to include individuals beyond the university student demographic, particularly those aged 30 and above, to capture more diverse perspectives and maturity levels. Plus, while TikTok was the central platform of this study, future research could benefit from examining mental health content across multiple social media platforms, as different platforms offer varying content formats, user interactions, and influence patterns. This broader approach would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how digital media shapes mental health discourse and user experiences.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS

Important implications for future research, mental health practice, and policymaking are presented by this study. Researchers can use this study as a starting point to investigate how social media platforms influence mental health, particularly among young people and college students. Larger sample sizes for future studies that include people from a variety of age groups, educational backgrounds, and geographic locations may be beneficial. Researchers may also wish to conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of engaging with mental health content on platforms such as TikTok. Research comparing multiple platforms, such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, may have the potential to provide important new information about how content curation algorithms and formats impact mental health-related attitudes and practices.

From a counselling and psychological support perspective, the findings reveal that mental health professionals need to be aware of how social media shapes their clients' mental health narratives. Students may come to sessions with preconceived ideas based on the content they consume online. Counsellors must be prepared to validate feelings while gently challenging misinformation. Training programs for professionals could incorporate modules on digital culture and social media trends to ensure practitioners are up-to-date.

On a broader scale, there are policy implications for social media platforms and health communications. Social media companies, particularly TikTok, are being urged to take more responsibility in regulating and moderating mental health content. This could include improving algorithms to prevent users from overreacting to sensitive content, especially when they are in vulnerable situations. Platforms should also consider verifying mental health professionals who create content and flagging potentially harmful videos with appropriate warnings or support links. Public health campaigns may also consider using platforms like TikTok to disseminate accurate mental health education in formats that resonate with younger audiences.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge some limitations. First, the study conclusions are limited in their generalizability as they only looked at a small sample of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) students and, the sample is all in their 20s. The experiences of the participants may not be fully representative of university students in Malaysia or other countries where academic, technical and cultural conditions may vary. Data will be improved and cross-cultural comparisons can be made with a more diverse group of participants.

Second, while mental health content is widely available on many other social media platforms, the study was limited to the TikTok platform. The types of user engagement and its psychological impact may differ significantly across platforms due to the use of different algorithms, content formats, and community rules. A more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between digital media and mental health could be gained by investigating alternative platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, or X (Twitter).

5.7 SUMMARY

This study of mental health content on TikTok among university students provides important insights into how mental health content functions on social media and how university students engage with it and its impact on them. The findings suggest that students should develop critical thinking skills when consuming online content, while counsellors and mental health professionals are encouraged to use social media to share trustworthy and youth-friendly information.

Content creators should be responsible by including trigger warnings and avoiding self-diagnosis advice. Universities can also educate students about safe and mindful use of social media. However, the study has limitations, such as focusing only on UNIMAS and TikTok students, relying on self-reported experiences, and not assessing the accuracy or long-term impact of the content. Future research should consider larger samples and other platforms to better understand the influence of online mental health content.

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Appendix

TRANSKRIP FYP

RESPONDEN 1

Pengkaji: So, soalan saya, how often do you watch mental health- related video on TikTok?

Responden 1: Daily

Pengkaji: Setiap hari?

Responden 1: Ya, setiap hari.

Pengkaji: Second, do you interact with mental health-content by liking, commenting or sharing? Why or why not?

Responden 1: Ah yes, mostly comment.

Pengkaji: Kalau komen, awak komen apa?

Responden: Selalunya cakap macam, sokonglah apa yang dia cakap tu sebab rasa macam ah yes betul benda ni.

Pengkaji: Betul, berkait berkait dengan diri awak?

Responden 1: Ya.

Pengkaji: Seterusnya, have you ever followed specific creators or hashtag related to mental health? What drew you to them?

Responden 1: Yes, tapi saya tak ingat siapa.

Pengkaji: Banyak ke?

Responden 1: Ya, banyaklah juga.

Pengkaji: Do you save or revisit mental health content. Maksudnya dah save and the tengok balik mental health content tu.

Responden 1: Ya.

Pengkaji: Sebab?

Responden: Bila saya rasa down sikit ke saya akan cari balik video tu.

Pengkaji: Okay, seterusnya, what motivates you to watch or engage with mental health related content in TikTok?

Responden 1: Selalunya sebab diri lah, sebab rasa down, stress. Mostly sebab diri sendiri.

Pengkaji: Do you find the content relatable or helpful in your daily life? If so, in what ways?

Responden 1: Sangat. Sometimes bila saya tengok content tu, eh, tepat dengan apa yang tengah rasa time tu.

Pengkaji: Boleh tak awak terangkan lagi?

Responden 1: Okay, contohnya saya macam tengah sedih ataupun ada masalah dengan kawan and then ada negative thinking tentang diri tu so, dalam satu content tu dia cakap kadang-kadang kawan ni kita rasa diri kita baik and then kita rasa orang tu salah tapi kalau kita tengok balik kemungkinan diri kita ada salah jugak. So better, reflect dulu diri and then saya fikir balik, ye betul.

Pengkaji: Kalau mental health content tu yang awak tengok berkaitan dengan kawan, ada tak mental health content yang lain tentang mental health macam depression ke atau anxiety?

Responden 1: Ya, ada. Sometimes, saya rasa macam terlalu tak... diri tak cukup baik and then kadang rasa diri ni macam nak terlalu rendah atau terlalu low.... Rasa down time tu. So, ada content tentang mental health yang macam tu, tolong sikit diri saya. Macam tentang anxiety. Macam mana nak kurangkan rasa resah dalam diri bila something happens.

Pengkaji: So, are there particular challenges or issues in your life that make mental health content appealing to you?

Responden: Yes, sometimes saya rasa macam urm, apa yang terjadi pada saya time tu and then, tetiba quotes about mental health tu datang, macam kebetulan datang. Macam tahu keadaan saya waktu tu. So saya rasa macam menarik dan saya keep on tengok. Maybe sebab

tu content tu keep on datang dalam TikTok saya sebab saya nampak ia menarik dan saya engage dengan content tersebut.

Pengkaji: Have you learned anything valuable or helpful from mental health content on TikTok? Can you give example?

Responden 1: Ya. Contohnya macam, tentang kawan, relationship, family. Kalau saya ada masalah dengan family, macam gaduh ke apa and then saya rasa kenapa family saya tak pujuk saya time tu and then content dalam TikTok, cakap, maybe sometimes orang tu tak pujuk sebab orang tu tak tahu dia buat salah. So, bila kita merajuk tu dia tak tahu pun kita merajuk. So, the only thing yang kita buat adalah cakap. Utarakan tapi dengan cara yang baik. Sometimes kalau rasa nak menangis ke apa kan, ada content tu cakap, take a deep breath, fikir balik dengan tenang.

Pengkaji: oooo okay faham faham. Do these videos ever help you feel understood or less alone?

Responden 1: Yes. Sebab rasa macam oh betullah apa yang saya buat ni salah, mostly betullah saya berhak untuk rasa sedemikian, tapi at the same time jangan biar rasa tu makin membuat kita down.

Pengkaji: Okay, seterusnya, have you ever made positive changes in your life because of what you've seen in TikTok?

Responden 1: Ya, sangat. Sangat membantu. Macam yang saya beritahu sebelum ini.

Pengkaji: Baik, saya faham. Seterusnya, have you ever felt overwhelmed or anxious after watching mental health content? Why do you think that happened?

Responden 1: Yes, sometimes saya rasa macam, macam yang saya cakap tadi ada content yang cakap fikir balik diri kita ada salah jugak and then saya rasa saya taknak terima benda tu. Saya rasa macam, macam mana saya boleh salah, saya pentingkan perasaan saya. Saya utamakan diri kenapa saya kena rasa macam tu. Saya rasa overwhelmed, take time.

Pengkaji: Take time untuk terima?

Responden 1: Ya and bila saya tak nak terima benda yang saya lihat, saya akan screenshot dan akan tengok banyak kali. Sampai hati saya macam terima.

Pengkaji: Have you noticed any negative effect, like comparing yourself to others after watching mental health content on TikTok?

Responden 1: Ya. Bila saya tengok certain content, saya rasa macam kenapa dia kata macam itu, kenapa dia sokong macam tu, kenapa dia tak sependapat macam mana dengan apa yang saya rasa. Macamtu.

Pengkaji: Do you think there are risks to getting mental health advice or information on TikTok?

Responden 1: Yes, konten-konten yang saya lihat mostly memberi information about mental health either, cara-cara untuk mengurangkan stress ke atau tanda-tanda anda ada mental health ini atau apa sebab TikTok ni platform yang luas and besar. Semua orang boleh go into TikTok and search apa diaorang nak and creators pun sebarkan banyak jenis informasi.

RESPONDEN 2

Pengkaji: So, thank you Ivy sebab nak participate dalam interview FYP. So, FYP saya tajuk dia, macam yang Ivy tahu, explore tentang mental health content dalam TikTok. So, untuk first soalan, soalan saya dalam bahasa Inggeris tapi Ivy boleh pilih lah nak cakap bahasa Inggeris atau Bahasa Melayu Okay, soalan yang pertama, what type of mental content yang Ivy tengok dalam TikTok? What type?

Responden 2: Usually more to like, ada yang heavy type, ada yang macam biasa-biasa tapi macam tak boleh nak rangekan mental health dia heavy ke tak. But usually macam ada je yang cakap pasal ADHD, eating disorder, depression, bipolar disorder or borderline personality disorder. Sebenarnya macam itulah.

Pengkaji: Okay, second, how often do you watch mental health content dalam TikTok?

Responden 2: Selagi dia masuk FYP saya tengok, so maybe like 2 or 5 video Dalam sehari?

Pengkaji: Sehari. okay, so do you interact with mental health content by liking, commenting or sharing? Why or why not?

Responden2: Liking sebab sometimes dia relatable, komen, usually tak komen but kita just baca komen orang So, people would like engage through comment and like tell their experience through comments share, share kat kawan yang kita faham, dia boleh faham juga content tu. Usually, kawan saya yang ambil psikologi lah, saya share kat dia.

Pengkaji: Okay, so apa dia punya reaction bila awak hantar video dekat dia?

Responden 2: Sama ada kita buat dark joke atau dia cakap dia dah pernah belajar pasal benda ni.

Pengkaji: Okay, so have you ever followed specific creator or hashtag related to mental health content? Kenapa awak buat macam tu?

Responden 2: So far follow, saya tak follow sangat sebab sometimes bila follow dia punya content kan masuk dalam FYP kan Dia boleh jadi triggering or heavy, macam tu lah. I'm having a good day but nanti tiba-tiba content tu masuk dan dia macam triggered, so macam terus dah not have a good day lah.

Pengkaji: Okay, apa emosi awak time tu macam what? Kalau dia triggered tu kan apa yang awak rasa?

Responden 2: Shutdown

Pengkaji: Okay, so do you save or revisit mental health content?

Responden 2: If for reference maybe yes, kalau rasa macam tak boleh tengok content tu so tak.

Pengkaji: For reference contohnya?

Responden 2: Contohnya let's say kita ada terjumpa satu TikTok ni, dia macam tunjuk, dia create a website for someone yang suka self-harm ke apa kan, so let's say I know someone yang pernah self-harm and maybe still am, so maybe at that time they not in a good situation, so saya save dulu video tu bila mood dia dah okay baru saya hantar kat dia.

Pengkaji: So next section, what motivate you to watch or engage with mental health related?

Responden 2: Interest? Interest maksudnya yang macam, okay like I said, ada je orang dalam hidup saya yang struggling and everything and memang they open about it so nak lagi faham situasi dia or tenangkan dia bila dia tengah struggle ke apa so kalau ada mental health content tu tengok lah.

Pengkaji: So, more kepada untuk bantu orang lain tapi kalau untuk diri sendiri takde?

Responden 2: Diri sendiri maybe if some things tu dia relate, kalau macam benda macam tu saya lagi suka buat dark joke or humor. That's how I cope lah.

Pengkaji: So, do you find the content relatable or helpful in your daily life?

Responden 2: Some yes, some maybe tak sebab cara kita approach mental health tu setiap orang lain-lain. So even though kalau orang yang buat video tu therapist or psychologist but cara yang dia suggest tu tak sesuai dengan yang satu video yang saya tengok dia memang diagnosed with depression ke apa and dia bagi tau cara dia cope lain, maybe if saya lagi relate kepada yang non-professional tu, I would prefer the non-professional than the professional.

Pengkaji: So helpful ke?

Responden 2: Helpful

Pengkaji: So, are there particular challenge or issue in your life that make mental health content appealing to you?

Responden 2: Yes, generational trauma maybe. So cara dia appeal tu usually kalau yang macam like I said, mostly cara yang orang cope dalam TikTok ni usually generally kan diorang buat joke je lah because kalau nak touch deeper dia terlalu deep untuk talk about in public. So, people will just do jokes and people will be oh that is relatable, I do that too okay.

Pengkaji: So next section, have you learned anything valuable or helpful from mental health content on TikTok? Can you give an example?

Responden 2: Yes, like I said just now there is this one website where it gives like an alternative for someone who likes to self-harm. So, instead of you self-harm on yourself, you go into that website, you do the activities there instead.

Pengkaji: Do this video ever help you feel understood or less alone?

Responden 2: Both, both at the same time because kita tahu orang tu pun going through the same thing and kita boleh relate. So, kita macam oh I'm not the only one

Pengkaji: Have you made positive change in your life because of what you seen at TikTok?

Responden 2: Itu susah sikit nak cakap sebab hidup kita ni tak stabil, bukannya selalu go up. So, maybe kita macam oh it's a good change but then suddenly kita shut down or triggered, kita setiap kali jatuh juga, So, it depends on the situation

Pengkaji: Okay, so last section. Have you ever felt overwhelmed or anxious after watching mental health content? Why do you think that happen?

Responden 2: Yes, ada je. Banyakkan, like I said, they're triggered. Sebab orang yang buat video tu, some of them maybe akan letak trigger warning, some tak. So, those yang tak letak tu, kita sendiri dah tak tahu apa content ni kan, macam ada cakap pasal benda kita triggered tu, and then macam shut down terus.

Pengkaji: Okay, have you noticed any negative effect like comparing yourself to others after watching mental health content update?

Responden 2: Yes, ada obviously sebab people suka macam cakap, alah kau macam ni je, dia lagi teruk. But then I remember ada satu quote ni dia kata macam, ada someone ni drowning 20 meter deep, ada someone ni drowning 50 meter deep, but they're both drowning. So sama je, there's no need to compare berapa dalam diorang drowning, they're both drowning

Pengkaji: Okay, so do you think there are risks to getting mental health advice or information from TikTok? If so, what are the risks?

Responden 2: Of course ada, sebab some people they prefer dapatkan advice daripada professionals but tak semua orang ada kemampuan, so it depends on orang tu sendiri nak terima ke tidak advice tu.

Pengkaji: Okay, so kita boleh pecahkan ada advantage dengan disadvantage kan, so in general apa advantage-nya?

Responden 2: Free education, free advice, like TikTok it's free, you don't need to pay, you can be relatable to it and maybe find a way to cope yourself rather than just like find a therapist and pay RM200 for sessions Kalau yang keburukan dia? Disadvantage, tak semua orang approach that coping mechanism the same way. So if you tersalah buat cara coping mechanism, it will effect on you. Macam self-diagnose That's one thing, ramai juga cakap dalam TikTok, jangan self-diagnose But to think about it, if someone yang memang dah struggle, dia just tak pergi diagnose with professionals sebab dia tahu dia struggle, sometimes sakit bila dengar orang cakap macam tu sebab dia sendiri tahu apa yang dia dah go through, dia just tak dapatkan official diagnosis from professionals tu je.

Pengkaji: So, do you think macam benda tu akan lagi menambahkan negative effect pada diri dia atau tak?

Responden 2: I think yes, makin teruk.

RESPONDEN 3

Pengkaji: Untuk first soalan. What kind of mental health content yang awak tengok dekat TikTok? Sama ada macam motivational ke ataupun kalau yang mental health macam depression ke tu.

Responden 3: Usually in terms of mental health TikTok content lah. Usually, saya ni jenis yang suka tengok, okay lah. Dia part to motivation lah most of the time. Sebab nak kata depression tu ada je. Tapi dia tak engage sangat lah towards depression. Maybe like ways to identify depression, yes. Dia macam more to like ways to endure depression. How to self-healing, something like that lah and then part of that there's also like anxiety. Anxiety TikTok content also lah. Sebab ada lah a few years back. Something related about mental health occur in my life kan. So, like bila dah masuk degree. They start macam dah ada TikTok. Okay lah carilah benda untuk heal sendiri kan. Kalau nak minta parents, parents bukan faham. So self-healing. Okay lah alhamdulillah okey lah sikit-sikit. Based on that motivation. Tapi okay lah so far. It's really good content.

Pengkaji: So how often do you watch mental health content on TikTok?

Responden 3: Kalau per day. Per day maybe usually if it's based on FYP sendiri kan. Jadi usually akan muncul like three to four times a day. If I tengok TikTok lah. Kalau tak tengok TikTok tu kadang-kadang tu YouTube je lah. Sebab ada je kalau nak motivation tu cari kat YouTube. Satu atau dua video like that. But most of the time memang TikTok lah. Paling high source about mental health TikTok content. So, like I could say four per day lah. Kalau per week tak sure juga lah average. Tapi per day yes.

Pengkaji: So, do you interact with mental health content by liking, commenting or sharing? Why or why not?

Responden 3: Usually only liking. Because I'm not the kind of person that likes to comment on something. It's like oh ambil benda tu. Lepas tu adaptasi je lah. Dia tak payah nak comment sangat. Kalau nak share maybe like I will share it. Contoh nak share ke WhatsApp dia sendiri

kan. Untuk ingat balik oh mana tahu boleh guna benda ni. Kalau tak pun towards one of my friends. Sometimes lah. But most of the time to myself lah. Like ada dear self apa semua kat WhatsApp tu kan. So usually just like. And then if it's like really benefit to me. I will just share it to myself in WhatsApp. Supaya dapat tengok balik benda tu.

Pengkaji: Okay. Have you ever followed specific creator or hashtag related to mental health?

Responden 3: Kalau creator there is this one person but I don't remember much his name. Tapi tu dulu. Sebab memang saya tengok content dia dulu tu. Tapi yang sekarang ni I usually like. Hear, listen to clips of podcast in TikTok lah. There is this one podcast in TikTok. In terms of it's not feminism at all. It's like. Macam mana kata. It's like unity lah. There is also a man in that podcast. And then like three or two women. I'm not sure. Like all black. Tapi in terms of content it's really really good. Like oh okay. That's a really good perspective of them. Towards masalah perempuan-perempuan. Laki pun ada. So, like the audience ask them and then they will answer it and it's a really. It got me like open eye. Sebab memang like. Oh, betul juga apa dia kata tu. It's like really beneficial. Sebab memang daripada like me usually dulu. Selalu kisah pasal orang-orang kan. Like kalau orang tu tengok my appearance kan. Kadang-kadang tu ada ajak sneer comments like. Weh macam ustazah lah. Contoh lah. Tapi memang ada berlaku. So, like dulu tu memang kisah sangat pasal appearance. Tapi sekarang ni bila dah makin dewasa. Dah malas kan. Cuma like the mindset tu masih ada. Jadi tengok benda TikTok content tu. Lama pandai detach from that kind of mindset. So, like lama-lama tu macam makin sihat lah rasa. Sebab no need to be looking pretty all the time. Untuk orang. Like for myself only lah. Kalau nak pretty, pretty. Kalau not, not. Macam tu je lah.

Pengkaji: Do you save or revisit mental health content? If yes, for what reasons?

Responden 3: Yes, untuk tengok balik, macam quotes or motivational words.

Pengkaji: Okay. So, second section. What motivates you to watch or engage with mental health content?

Responden 3: What motivates me? Usually, kalau time tu macam bosan. Bukan bosan yang baik lah. Bosan yang depres kan. Bukan depres sangat lah. Stress lah most of the time. I will look towards motivation quotes or video. And then slowly like try to baca balik. And then hadam it in myself. Sebab usually my kind of quotes tu yang Islamic punya kan. But, ada juga yang bukan. Sebab bukan tu lebih memahami otak, yang Islam tu dari segi faith lah. So, like if dari segi otak dah mula okey sikit-sikit. I will like slowly, slowly lah try to pray lah. Maksud macam doa lah kan. Supaya dapat tenangkan sikit hati usually. So, like if stress lah. If I'm stressed, it motivates me untuk cari benda tu. If I'm not stressed, maybe I will. But like maybe in terms of benda lain yang bukan dari segi stress. Kalau macam stress kan cari tentang motivational punya kan. Lebih baik tak kalau cari tentang anxiety, depression. Yang tu ada. Kan dekat Al-Quran pun sendiri dah ada phrase sendiri kan. Berkenaan benda ni. So macam okay. I already read it. But like dari segi nak pemahaman manusia pula. I will search it on the TikTok lah usually. And then the tips and then the symptoms. Really, really like giving me stuff untuk kami hadam sendiri. Like kalau contoh tips untuk depression. Kan orang depressed. It's not always like gloomy at all. Ni macam akan ada ketawa, akan senyum. But deep down, ya sakit sebenarnya kan. So usually, I'm that kind of person. Orang sikit kan fikir. Terkeluar sangat lah. Kenapa? Orang takkan fikir yang saya ni jenis yang depressed dulu. Sebab orang fikir like oh always jolly. Always be happy. Sebab dulu tu tak happy sangat. So tu adalah pas-pas trauma dia tu dulu kan. So, like bila try dengar podcast self-healing tu kan. So, one of the tips that paling effective for me tu. Dia macam slowly cut off people yang toxic. Slowly. Kalau orang tu macam contoh lah. Dia jarang chat. Okay lah takpelah. I will consider as kenalan tu je. But if it's someone that always chat with me. Tahu tentang my deepest secrets. I will usually label them as my sahabat. Siapa yang benar-benar go with me but don't know much about my secrets. I will like say okay lah kawan. But like more to kenal. Kenalan. Sahabat is another term that for me. It looks really-really rapat. Kawan yes. But for me penggunaan sahabat dan kawan tu ada beza dia lah. Sahabat rapat. Kawannya tak rapat sangat. Tapi kenalan. So that's one of the effective things that help me a lot lah. And then the second most effective tips untuk depression for me. Is that always take a walk. Kalau dah stress semua tu. Sebab depression. It's not something easy to endure. But always having suicidal thoughts and all that. Like awal-awal dulu pun time asasi tu pun. Ada tu fikir. But time tu sebab kan bukan kat sini kan. Asasi kat situ kan. So, most of the time taking a walk is like a luxury lah. Memang dah mula macam

tengok alam. Tengok kehijauan alam. Tu je yang dapat tenang sikit hati. Masuk degree. Alhamdulillah ada lah seorang kawan macam okey. It seems okay. Although I'm still too used to be walking alone lah. Kalau dapat dengar lagu jogging sendiri. Nak healing kan. Tapi kalau ada orang yang okey. Memang okey lah jadinya. Itulah. It's something sensitive.

Pengkaji: So, do you find the content relatable or helpful in your daily life?

Responden 3: Helpful. Usually being helpful most of the time lah. I mean affected lah. Mindset lah. Memang mindset. Yang kedua tu physical health. Mindset tu dari segi mental health lah for me. Lepas tu physical health.

Sebab dulu tu memang lemah lah rasa. Dulu lemah. Sekarang ni dah merasa strong lah sikit. Macam dapat immune towards contoh physical activity semua tu. So macam bila dah immune sikit tu. It gives me confidence. Lepas tu lama-lama confidence tu. It will affect the third thing. Which is my physical appearance lah basically. So dari segi itu pula. Memang ramai yang okey kata. Makin berseri macam tu lah contohnya. But I do get that comment a lot lah. Sebab before ni pun memang gloomy lah nampak. So, like the three top things that being affected. Is my mental, physical health. And then my physical appearance lah. Maybe fourth tu I could say my relationship with people. Not just BF lah. I don't have BF anymore. Single is better lah. So macam relationship the fourth one for me. So yeah, lah tu je lah so far.

Pengkaji: Are there particular challenges or issues in your life that make mental health content appealing to you? Appealing?

Responden 3: Of course, untuk saya ada. Like the thought of having friends in degree always consuming me. But dapat nampak lah siapa yang ikhlas, siapa yang tak ikhlas. Jadi I'm jenis yang observe orang. Tapi senyap-senyap. I don't tell people that I observe. Because I don't want it to ruin my own experiment on them. Macam tu lah. So, like usually I will sengaja. I will sengaja do this. I will see if they will ikhlas ke tak giving me contoh lah advice. If I were like down contoh I will ask this one friend. This one friend will always comfort me or advise me. The other friends yes, they will advise. But in terms of comfort, I could say no. But only this one friend. This one friend the only one that I could consider like really really really sahabat.

This one. Dia macam only this one friend yang okay betul-betul. Yang lain tu okay. But like for me as a kawan je lah. So, like it's not easy. Bila orang fikir kenapa tak jalan dengan mereka lima. Oh, I will say oh okay. Lagipun masing-masing ada tempat masing-masing.

Pengkaji: Okay so our next section. Have you learned anything valuable or helpful from mental health content on TikTok? Can you give an example?

Responden 3: Valuable. Ada. Always ada. One of the quotes. Yang I always hear. Be yourself. Even if other orang tak suka. Just don't bother about it. And try to improve yourself. Sebab even if kita dah improve. We will not satisfy semua orang. So, like kita dah improve. Kalaupun orang tu dah tengok kita daripada kita gloom era. I mean depression era. Pasa dah makin glow up. Akan ada yang support. Tapi akan ada yang macam jealous. It always like that. So dapat nampak juga dah. It's not intentional but. Dapat rasa. Kan orang jenis kawan ni could vibe kan. One of the tips that I hear from the podcast jugalah. So that really helps me in terms of. Associating myself dengan orang yang. Better macam tu lah. Not all people are bad. But there are some negativities in them. Yang kamek rasa I should avoid. I could to go. But in terms of hanging out all the time. No. I will just. Biarlah orang kata sorang-sorang. If it affects my mental. By hook or by crook. I need to cut off slowly lah. Contoh yang paling lawak tu lah. Ex. But that's another story lah for that. Sebab ex tu pun draining energy. Yalah. Biasalah orang nak try-try kan. Orang sorang-sorang. Aduh. Semua lelaki lah reflect dah lah. So that's one of the valuable things that I hear lah. Which is just. Don't bother to fikir pasal orang. If orang tu worth untuk dikisahkan. Yes. Just go. If not. Nah. Just slowly. Slowly go away. Dry-dry tu boleh. But just don't involve too much. Itu je lah.

Pengkaji: So, do this video help you feel understood or less alone? Video? Mental health content. It's not really like feel.

Responden 3: It's not really macam ada rasa. Oh, I'm not alone. It's. Ni rasa biasa. But. The thought of having. Ada orang lain juga mengalami benda tu. Ni macam. Rasa kesian lah. Empathize. Because I empathize with other people juga. So bila first-first dengar podcast semua tu. Memang rasa. Oh, ada orang. Tapi lama-lama tu tak biasa. So, like. I know. I acknowledge other people's punya struggle. Cuma. The empathize tu. Empathize with people

tu memang kuat lah. Like. Oh kesian. Apa lah yang mereka hadapi. Macam tu lah. So. Maybe. A bit like. Oh, ada orang juga. Macam tu lah. Ada gang. Okay. Okay.

Pengkaji: Have you made positive changes in your life. Because of what you've seen on TikTok?

Responden 3: Banyak. Banyak. Alhamdulillah banyak. In terms of faith. Alhamdulillah. Macam okay. Tapi ada kalahnya turun naik-turun naik. So memang perlu istiqamah lah benda tu. Like for example this one. Wearing handsocks. I'm not the kind that always wearing handsocks. Tapi. Atau sebab fikir oh. Oh right. Pertama fikir balik oh. My bapak. Okay lah. I will slowly wear this. Just for him. Pastu slowly memang try adapt supaya. For my own self lah. Sebab kalau buat untuk orang lain. It will not kekal usually. And then in terms of mindset. It really changes me. Tapi ada orang akan fikir like. Kenapa, I change lah. Sebab dulu tu I happy. And then tiba-tiba tu I gloomy. But now I'm just neutral lah. I will like. Talk with people. Tapi it's not too cheery. Unless it's someone yang betul-betul rapat. I will be cheery. Tapi kalau orang tu macam. Something off. And then dalam mata jumpa. It will sometimes. Depending on dia lah. Tengok lah. Macam mana orang tu dapat nampak jugalah. Macam mana rupa. Maybe they're penat. Depends on them. So it's more to neutrality lah on me. But it really changes me lah. Tu pun. Physical appearance pun banyak berubah juga. Alhamdulillah. Okay lah. Daripada dulu. Now. Okay lah. Try nak bermanja dengan exercise semua tu kan. Sebab orang kata. Kalau tiba-tiba rasa lonely tu. Kalau lonely tu kan kadang-kadang datang balik. Relax kan. Orang kata. Try penatkan diri. So penatkan diri is by maybe walking or jogging. Kalau in terms of relationship, If with people. Alhamdulillah makin okay. Maybe sebab. I did doa tahun lepas. Kurniakan orang sekeliling yang okay for me kan. So bila masuk tahun dua. Tahun dua ni. Memang dapat orang yang okay. Okay. Dia segi kawan. Nampak lah lah making no case. But I try to engage more. Dengan talking with them. Although ada certain topic yang mereka cakap. Mereka tahu. But I don't. I didn't know about that. I will just let it slide. And only like focus on something yang. Lebih worth lah. So, like kadang. I don't feel like. I will feel left out. But that's the nature of them. So, like. I don't really mind. Sebab dah tahu. Kawan je lah. Bukan apa-apa lah. Tapi kalau this one friend. Always updated to me. Yes. I will always.

Okay dengan dia. I won't feel like left out only her lah. Basically. So macam okay lah saya sikit.

Pengkaji: Last section okay. Boleh boleh. Have you ever felt overwhelmed or anxious after watching mental health content?

Responden 3: Awal-awal tu. Nampak lah. There is. Slightly discomfort. Sebab, rasa like. Oh. I have this. Macam tu lah. Oh. I do have this. Tapi bila-bila lama-lama dengarkan, sometimes tu. dia akan rasa connected pula. Dia pandai. Sebab. Dia akan fikir like. Oh. Kamu memang camtukah? Do I really behave like this? With this symptom? So ni macam. First first tu. memang tak selesa. Tapi lama-lama tu. bila dah dengar. Try to tahan with myself. Dengar benda tu. Ni macam akan jadi acknowledgement. Sebab, dia akan kata, oh, betul lah. Ada lah benda ni sebenarnya. So. I need to change it. But changing it. Is not easy. That's for sure. So. I need to injure myself. Untuk. Istikamah. Self-healing. Tiba-tiba ni akan down balik. So. kita tiba-tiba macam tak tahu eh, macam mana nak buat ni. Tapi lama-lama tu. dia akan up balik. Bila mana dah fikir balik. Oh. Okay wait. I need to do this semula. Try to do this. One more time. So, lama-lama tu daripada slow-slow. It will be. Okay again lah. It's like. Stairs lah. Makin up. It's not all the time. But. Yeah. It's a struggle lah.

Pengkaji: Have you ever. Noticed any negative effects. Like comparing yourself to others. After watching your type content on Tiktok?

Responden 3: Oh. Yang tu dulu ada. Dulu the thought of like. Oh. Orang ni. It's like comparing like. Orang ni walaupun ada mental health. You still boleh buat kerja ini. Kerja ini. Kerja ini. Boleh active. I used to be so jealous with that. Sebab memang kamek jenis yang suka involved on activity yang boleh mencantikkan resume kan. Tapi, deep down I really like. I really like volunteerism lah. So bila dulu tu memang dengar rang ni sebenarnya ada mental health. Ini. Ini. Kan. There is a slight jealousy lah. And then. A bit concerned. Sebab. First first tu, dia macam semua orang n tapi still boleh buat kerja ini and still got the appreciation. Like honours. But like. Concern ada juga sebab constant pressure is not good. That's for sure. So first first tu memang macam tu lah. Tapi lama-lama tu. dah makin tak ada lah. It's more like empathy lah.

Empathy more sebab macam oh arap mereka okey lah. Macam tu. Sebab I know the constant pressure feels like. So. Alhamdulillah. Macam tak ada sangat lah. Macam tu je lah.

Pengkaji: Okay, so do you think there are risks to getting mental health advice or information from TikTok? If so, what are the risks?

Responden 3: To getting mental health advice or information from TikTok, there is risk. There are sebab there are sometimes. Some misinformation being spread out. People won't know that it's a misinformation. Unless, orang tu akan buktikan bahawa misinformation tu. tak dikaitkan dengan apa-apa and bila orang tu sendiri buat eksperimen tu. But, most of the time, memang ada misinformation tu. I always see it in TikTok. Dia macam. I want, first video. Video A. Video B kan. Video A. I already watch it. So, It's really beneficial but video B says that what video A says, it is not good and I was like. Pelik lah kan. Macam. Kenapa tak good? Bila tengok comment section. Ada yang bagi. Try bagi reasoning. But the reasoning. Is not logical at all. So, I could say that. Or there's something wrong. Bila tengok-tengok-tengok. Sebenarnya video A i more accurate sebab video B. Maybe it, only applies to certain people on certain situations. So, it's not really. Misinformation. But. In terms of. Perspective I'd say. Sebab ak semua orang hidup sama kita lah. So, misinformation will always occurs. Sebab kalau TikTok orang nak likes, views so there. There will always be that. But. It's really good to make sure that the information is good lah. Like. Apa orang kata? True. Correct. Accurate. Kalau misinformation tu takut buat minda orang tu. tak betul. Macam contoh. Toxic masculinity. Ada seorang tu. apa namanya. Ted. Ted apakah. Lupa dah. Nama lelaki.

Masculinitinya...terlalu toxic. Sampaikan lelaki pun fikir I'm a sigma, I'm an alpha for this. But the mindset is so wrong sampaikan orang fikir nonchalant is like that. Which memburukkan nama nonchalant sebenarnya. Sebab nonchalant lain lagi. For me, sebab nonchalant is more like. It's not dry text and all. It's more like not really caring about people most of the time. Biasanya tengok lelaki. Tapi there are perempuan yang nonchalant. For me that information given by that guy is really really wrong sebab mindsetnya terlalu toxic. I don't like it. So that's only lah.

Pengkaji: Okay. So, in general kan mental health content dia ada kebaikan dan keburukan kan. So, boleh tak bagi in general kebaikan dan keburukan.

Responden 3: Kebaikan mental health TikTok for me, so far lah, kebaikan dia it gives me more faith in humanity. That's the first ever thing sebab manusia memang banyak betul-betul yang jenis toxic. But, tak semua toxic. Second, it gives me beneficial in terms of my physical, my mental health and my physical appearance. Third, it also helps in term of relationship, differenciating which one is better and which one better to cut off. And then the other kebaikan is that, it really helps me in boosting my own confidence. Itulah kebaikan, Keburukan, maybe so far, im not really sure but like so far for people if they got the wrong information they may or may not be consumed by it. So, it will be categorized into two types, yang ambil baik benda tu or yang ambil buruk benda tu. And then we got another one which is ambil sebulat-bulat benda tu tanpa analyze betul-betul. Bila ambil bulat-bulat, orang tu akan tiba-tiba jadi toxic, boleh jadi keburukan. Cause TikTok, it is internet right, so internet although a lot of information, kita perlu hati-hati jugak sebab not all are correct. It depends on someone punya pemahaman. Keburukannya if orang tu, tak faham apa yang disampaikan. Second one, toxicity in terms of community, motivation kan banyak kategorinya ada yang jenis health, fitness apa semua lagi. I notice ada toxic community yang meng ok kan obesity which is not good. Walaupun orang kata, tak apala orang ni okay kita boleh bagi support, its okay but don't support them to eat more. We should support them like slowly eat something health, exercise.

RESPONDEN 4:

Pengkaji: Okay, terima kasih sebab sudi luangkan masa untuk interview pada hari ini. Saya mulakan ya, dengan soalan pertama iaitu macam mana awak engage dengan mental health content di TikTok?

Responden 4: Sama-sama, kalau ikutkan, saya memang agak kerap tengok mental health content kat TikTok. Dalam sehari tu mesti ada satu dua video tentang mental health content kat TikTok yang lalu kat feed saya.

Pengkaji: Okay baiklah, so, adakah awak interact dengan mental health content by liking, commenting or sharing? Kalau ya, kenapa dan kalau tidak kenapa tidak.

Responden 4: Biasanya saya akan like dan share sahaja sebab kalau comment macam tak ada apa sangat nak dikomen plus takut kena judge ke apa kan, macam kawan kita tengok kita komen kat TikTok rasa macam tak selesa. Tak tahu kenapa. Hahahaha.

Pengkaji: Takut kena judge ke macam mana?

Responden 4: aaa, macam ye jugak macam takut kena judge dengan kawan... macam tula. Tak selesa.

Pengkaji: Okay, faham. Next, awak ada tak follow mana-mana content creator yang buat video tentang mental health content?

Responden 4: Ha ah ada cuma tak ingat Namanya. Saya ada follow account yang focus on self-care dan juga yang selalu beri motivation quotes. Saya suka sebab content diaorang macam kena dengan diri saya lepastu macam simple nak faham.

Pengkaji: Pernah tak awak save atau revisit content tersebut?

Responden 4: Pernah, especially kalau ada tips yang berguna, macam cara nak kawal anxiety atau breathing exercise. Saya save sebab nak tengok balik bila perlu ataupun saya save video yang macam sedih kan sebab saya nak layan emosi sedih saya time tu.

Pengkaji: Oh, faham. Bagus. Next, kenapa awak tertarik nak engage dengan mental health content kat TikTok ni?

Responden 4: Saya rasa sebab kadang-kadang saya sendiri struggle dengan stress, jadi bila nampak content macam tu, saya rasa macam ada orang faham urm lepastu saya macam suka nak tengok sebab macam nak ambil knowledge tentang mental health.

Pengkaji: Content tu relatable tak dalam kehidupan seharian awak?

Responden 4: Yes sangat. Kadang-kadang bila tengok video tentang burnout atau coping dengan emosi, saya rasa macam “eh, aku pun rasa benda yang sama. Jadi aku tak keseorangan”.

Pengkaji: Bagi awak, ada tak cabaran atau isu yang membuatkan awak lagi mudah tertarik pada mental health content dalam TikTok?

Responden 4: Urm,, cabaran atau isu.. ada, contohnya bila stress dengan study atau part-time kerja. Kadang-kadang saya rasa overwhelmed. So, content macam ni macam reminder untuk take a break, jangan bebankan diri sangat. Gitu... hahahaha

Pengkaji: Okay faham-faham, dari segi manfaat pula, apa yang awak dapat dari mental health content di TikTok?

Responden 4: Saya banyak belajar tentang...apa ni, tanda-tanda anxiety, depression ke apa macam tu la. Sebab ilmu pengetahuan tu macam bagus la kan untuk kita. Saya asaja nak ambil tahu. Kadang ada juga tips nak elak burnout time lepas belajar lepastu ada tips macam apa tu.... breathing tak silap saya macam mindfulness la gitu.

Pengkaji: Ada tak rasa macam video tu buat awak rasa lebih difahami atau kurang keseorangan?

Responden 4: Memang rasa. Kadang-kadang bila baca komen orang lain pun, saya rasa macam ramai je sebenarnya alami benda sama. Jadi, kurang rasa pelik atau isolated.

Pengkaji: Ada tak perubahan positif dalam hidup awak sebab content yang awak tengok?

Responden 4: Ada, saya lebih aware tentang self-care. Saya juga belajar untuk take things slow dan prioritize mental health daripada dulu.

Pengkaji: Bagus sangat tu sebab kita macam aware dengan diri kita. Sekarang kita tengok pula bahagian kurang baik, ada tak kesan negative lepas tengok mental health content kat TikTok?

Responden 4: Kadang-kadang saya rasa overwhelmed macam... macam mana ek...macam bila tengok mental health video terlalu banyak, dia effect jugak keadaan kita time tu, lagi-lagi bila sedih jadi lagi sedih. Lepastu macam bila scroll kan, kita bukan tahu next video tu apa so macam tetiba trigger, terkejut bila tengok.

Pengkaji: Pernah tak rasa compare diri sendiri dengan orang lain lepas tengok content tu?

Responden 4: Haah pernah. Bila tengok orang lain macam dah okay dengan mental health journey dia, saya jadi rasa macam rendah diri, kenapa aku lambat sangat nak progress. Especially sebab saya kaitkan dengan burnout, stress belajar apa semya kan, macam orang lain okay je saya belum okay.

Pengkaji: Awak rasa ada risiko bila ambil nasihat dari mental health content dari TikTok?

Responden 4: Bagi saya ada. Sebab kadang-kadang nasihat tu tak sesuai untuk semua orang. Ada juga yang bukan professional tapi bagi advice macam pakar. Jadi saya kena tapis betul-betul sebelum percaya.

Pengkaji: Okay. So, in general kan mental health content dia ada kebaikan dan keburukan kan. So, boleh tak bagi in general kebaikan dan keburukan.

Responden 4: Aaaa, ya in general ada kebaikan dan keburukan. Saya rasa kebbaikannya adalah kita boleh dapat maklumat dengan senang sebab TikTok kan, internet, hujung jari je. Nak tahu tentang apa apa boleh je search kat TikTok tu. Second, boleh dapat tips yang berguna, motivation untuk diri sendiri la sebab kaitkan dengan mental health content kan, Dia bagi kita awareness juga tentang mental health dan cara nak jaga diri sendiri. But, for keburukan la eh bagi saya adalah ia bergantung kepada orang tu yang menilai video tu yang macam ambil bulat-bulat apa yang diberi. Macam, mental health content ni dia affect diri sendiri yang mana dia memburukkan lagi urm seseorang tu bila orang tu dia serap semua yang diberi. Dia tak letak boundaries on dia punya mental state so dia absorb je apa content tersebut. Tu yang boleh jadi self-diagnose. Oh lagi satu, macam kadang, information yang diberi bukan dari pakar atau professional yang betul so.. macam lagi bahaya orang percaya.

RESPONDEN 5

Pengkaji: Terima kasih sebab sudi luangkan masa untuk temubual kita pada hari ini. Untuk permulaan, boleh saya tahu berapa kerap awak menonton video berakitan dengan kesihatan mental di TikTok?

Responden 5: Ya sama-sama. Saya rasa saya tengok video berkaitan dengan mental health hampir setiap hari. Biasanya bila saya scroll, memang akan keluar video-video macam tips urus stress, self-care atau macam orang lain punya journey dengan mental health.

Pengkaji: ohh, faham. Okay, jadi awak berinteraksi dengan content tersebut contohnya, like, share, save video tak?

Responden 5: Biasanya saya tekan like kalau saya rasa content tu berguna atau relate dengan diri saya. Tapi, saya jarang komen. Mungkin sebab saya segan atau saya rasa tak ada sesuatu yang penting nak tambah. Kadang-kadang saya share dengan kawan if saya rasa dia pun boleh dapat manfaat atau dia boleh relate benda tu.

Pengkaji: Awak pernah follow mana-mana content creator atau hashtag tertentu yang memfokuskan kepada mental health content? Kenapa?

Responden 5: Ada, saya ada follow beberapa content creator yang memang selalu cakap pasal self-healing dan mental health. Saya tertarik sebab cara dia sampaikan sangat simple, mudah faham, bukan macam ceramah.

Pengkaji: Awak ada simpan atau tengok balik video-video tu? Awak ada simpan atau tengok balik video-video tu?

Responden 5: Ya, ada-ada. Saya save video yang macam relate dengan diri sendiri. Lepastu saya akan tengok semula bila saya rasa down atau perlukan motivation at that time.

Pengkaji: Apa yang mendorong awak untuk menonton atau interact dengan mental health content di TikTok?

Responden 5: Saya rasa hidup sebagai pelajar university ni penuh tekanan. Kadang-kadang bila saya penat atau stress, tengok video macam ni boleh bantu saya rasa lebih tenang. Ada video yang macam soothe saya punya emotion masa tu, ada video bagi tips dan motivation.

Pengkaji: Adakah content itu rasa dekat dengan kehidupan awak?

Responden: Sangat, ada orang yang buat video tu sebut benda yang sama saya alami. Contohnya, bila dia cerita pasal anxiety ataupun apa ni macam depression ke kan, terus saya rasa, "eh aku macam ni la, macam tanda tanda dia macam aku ada" Jadi saya boleh relate dengan diri saya hahahhaa.

Pengkaji: Ada tak cabaran tertentu dalam hidup awak yang buat mental health content ini lebih menarik?

Responden 5: Hmmm, mungkin stress sebab akademik atau sebab relationship dengan someone. Maybe sebab baru lepas break up so everything feels like macam, a bit susah sekarang. Jadi bila ada content yang beri motivation atau panduan, saya rasa ia sangat membantu.

Pengkaji: Apa manfaat yang awak pelajari daripada mental health content di TikTok?

Responden 5: Saya belajar banyak urm contohnya macam, teknik urus stres, macam kita tak boleh kawal semua benda, jangan urm apa ni terlampau risau dengan benda yang kita tak boleh control. Ada satu video bagitahu jugak macam tanda-tanda mental health gini-gini. Dia macam bagi saya menambah ilmu la gitu.

Pengkaji: Mental health content yang awak lihat, buat awak rasa lebih difahami atau kurang keseorangan?

Responden 5: Yes, sangat sangat. Sebab apa kan, sebab, bila orang lain kongsi pengalaman dia dengan stress atau macam masalah lain contohnya anxiety ke apa kan, saya rasa sedikit lega sebab rupanya bukan saya seorang je yang rasa macam tu. Benda tu macam beri saya sokongan, walaupun cuma dari apps TikTok tu sendiri. Maybe sebab ada komuniti yang macam tu and then ada ramai orang yang rasakan benda sama, dia macam wujudkan satu rasa apa tu... macam sense of belonging? Ha macam tu la..

Pengkaji: Awak pernah buat perubahan positif lepas tonton mental health content?

Responden 5: Saya cuba amalkan self-care dengan lebih konsisten. Sebelum ni saya abaikan diri sendiri. Abaikan tu macam tak berapa kisah la tentang emosi diri sendiri apa semua kan.

Tapi sekarang kadang-kadang saya buat apa tu...journaling. Contohnya time saya marah ke sedih ke benda tu lagi berkesan sebab dia buatkan tekanan saya makin berkurang. Saya belajar cara ni dekat TikTok.

Pengkaji: Tapi, macam mana pula dengan kelemahan atau kesan negative? Pernah rasa cemas atau tertekan selepas tengok certain types of mental health content

Responden: Pernah. Tipu la kalau tak pernah kan. Ada masa bila saya terlalu banyak tengok video pasal trauma atau anxiety ke apa ke kan, saya rasa benda tu macam affect diri saya so saya rasa diri saya at that time macam makin teruk. Contohnya la saya ada bad day, then saya keep on tengok TikTok tu kan, then scroll keluar video sedih ni la apa la. TikTok kan pandai tau, dia macam tengok video yang kita engage tu pastu dia keluarkan lagi video yang macam tu. Then saya start rasa tak sedap la dengan diri saya. Emosi jadi makin berat apa semua, sedih berlarut.

Pengkaji: Ohh faha. Ada tak kesan negative macam bandingkan diri dengan orang lain?

Responden 5: Yes hm. Kadang-kadang. Sebab saya tengok orang yang kat TikTok ada yang dah berjaya keluar dari dunia atau macam masalah diaorang kan tapi saya tak. Saya macam masih stuck kat masalah saya, Tapi kadang-kadang je sebab orang tu pun dia share tips untuk masalah dia so saya ambil juga tips tu.

Pengkaji: Awak rasa ada risiko tak kalau ambil nasihat daripada mental health content kat TikTok?

Responden 5: Memang ada. Tak semua orang yang cakap pasal mental health tu ada latar belakang professional macam kaunselor ke psikitari ke kan. Kita kena pandai tapis dan jangan percaya bulat-bulat. Nak tengok video boleh tapi kalau nak ambil apa yang dia bagi tu, kita sendiri la kena nilai bagus ke tak untuk diri. Macam tula..

Pengkaji: Okay. So, in general kan mental health content di TikTok, ada kebaikan dan keburukan kan. So, boleh tak bagi in general kebaikan dan keburukan.

Responden 5: In general, eh...hmmm. Rasanya kebbaikannya adalah mental health content di TikTok banyak and then banyaklah information tentang mental health kan. So, orang senang je nak tengok tentang information tu. Diaorang boleh search je. Second, bagi awareness maybe

kat orang sebab bagi saya ia memang bagi awareness la macam kita boleh tahu tanda-tanda burnout ke stress ke anxiety ke kan. Saya sendiri aware dengan apa jadi pada diri saya. So kita boleh peka terhadap diri. Tapi untuk keburukan maybe sebab dia ada affect diri saya kalau kita tengok secara berlebihan macam saya jadi overwhelmed and maybe kalau orang lain kan. maybe kalau diaorang tak dapat nak apa tu macam tahan ke apa..boleh lead kepada self-diagnose...

RESPONDEN 6

Pengkaji: Thank you sudi hadir untuk interview hari ini. Jadi, soalan yang pertama adalah how often do you watch mental health-related videos in TikTok?

Responden 6: Sama-sama. Aaaa biasanya hari-hari dan video tu akan lalu macam dua tiga kali atau lebih per days sebab saya asyik tengok so dia akan keluar kat FYP saya.

Pengkaji: Okay next, do you interact with mental health content by liking, commenting or sharing? Why or why not?

Responden 6: Saya just like and share. Like, if benda tu related dengan diri saya and share pulak saya akan share pada kawan saya yang macam faham that content. So kitaorang akan macam “ye weyh” ha macam tu sebab masing-masing faham content

Pengkaji: Oh faham... Next, have you ever followed specific creators or hashtags related to mental health?

Responden 6: Follow creators macam ada tapi tak banyak. Saya follow pun sebab dia macam bagi tips yang bermanfaat ataupun dia bagi kata-kata motivasi ke. Jadi, saya follow.

Pengkaji: Do you save or revisit mental health content? If yes, for what reasons?

Responden 6: Yes, saya save dan tengok balik. Usually, sebab benda tu berkaitan dengan diri saya macam tentang stress ke depression ke kan atau tips itu motivasi ini la apa yang saya rasa berguna untuk diri saya. Then, saya akan tengok balik kalau saya ada masa.

Pengkaji: Next section, what motivates you to watch or engage with mental health-related content on TikTok?

Responden 6: Mostly sebab diri sendiri kan, bila saya down ke apa sedih ke saya tend to tengok benda benda yang boleh menenangkan saya macam content tentang motivation yang bagitahu emosi yang tak terkawal boleh effect diri sendiri and saya slow-slow memahami, dan benda tu membantu diri saya. Kadang, sebab saya nak tahu diri saya ni kenapa. Ha contohnya kalau saya rasa macam saya ni dah lama sedih, tak ada semangat ke apa saya macam tend to nak cari kenapa saya macam tu dekat TikTok then TikTok macam keluarkan video berkaitan dengan mental health.

Pengkaji: Do you find the content relatable or helpful in your daily life? If so in what ways?

Responden 6: I would say yes sebab content yang saya tengok dia membantu saya dari segi emosi la macam mana saya nak handle stress ke apa kan especially saya student lagi. So burnout segala macam tu dah macam familiar. Then, ada jugak video bagi kata-kata motivasi yang membuatkan saya sedar tentang certain perkara.

Pengkaji: Certain perkara contohnya?

Responden 6: Certain perkara tu contohnya macam kalau kita tak capai apa yang kita nak tu sekarang tak bermakna kita dah gagal. So dia macam alter saya punya mind, jadinya saya rasa lebih calm and kurang stress.

Pengkaji: Are there particular challenges or issues in your life that make mental health content appealing to you?

Responden 6: Usually challenges berkaitan dengan diri sendiri la macam stress ke apa then maybe tentang relationship, trauma yang membuatkan content content macam tu lebih menarik untuk saya tengok.

Pengkaji: Next, have you learned anything valuable or helpful from mental health videos on TikTok?

Responden 6: Aaa yes... Kadang saya macam tahu tentang tanda-tanda saya sedang stress, tanda-tanda burnout atau macam tanda tanda you have this kind of mental health tapi sekadar macam awareness dan ilmu pengetahuan bagi saya.

Pengkaji: Do these videos ever help you feel understood or less alone? If so, how?

Responden 6: Sebab saya nampak kat TikTok, ada orang lain yang sama pengalamannya macam saya. Macam diaorang memang melalui apa yang saya tengah lalui jadi saya rasa difahami, tak rasa saya sorang sorang.

Pengkaji: Have you made any positive changes in your life because of what you've seen in TikTok?

Responden 6: Yes, dapat membantu saya lebih semangat apabila tengok content yang macam memberi motivasi, tips tips yang berguna jugak membantu saya and saya macam boleh tahu la saya ni kenapa macam ni macam ni, sebab knowledge yang saya dapat.

Pengkaji: Have you ever felt overwhelmed or anxious after watching mental health content? Why do you think that happened?

Responden 6: I think yes bila berulang ulang kali tengok video tentang mental health. Dia macam trigger kita punya mood time tu kalau kita tengah sedih kita akan lagi sedih dan frust.

Pengkaji: Have you noticed any negative effect like comparing yourself to others after watching mental health content in TikTok?

Responden 6: think no.

Pengkaji: Do you think there are risks to getting mental health advices or information from TikTok?

Responden 6: Yes, cause sometimes information yang diberi tak betul dan orang yang memberi nasihat tentang mental health bukanlah pakar dalam bidang tersebut. Mental health kan is a serious thing and benda ni perlulah daripada pihak pihak yang professional dari segi apa tu information yang disebarkan.

Pengkaji: So, in general apa kebaikan dan keburukan mental health content di TikTok?

Responden 6: In general, mudah dapat maklumat tentang mental health, giving awareness la kepada orang. Daripada orang tak tahu tentang tanda-tanda mental health ni kepada orang tahu. Then, ada tips and motivasi yang berguna. Kalau keburukan I think information yang diberikan tak tahu betul ke tak and akan ada orang yang percaya bulat-bulat tanpa search lebih lanjut atau tapis maklumat tu. Benda tu akan harm diri diaorang.