



Tiktok Social Media as a Platform for Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle Through Creative Exercise Videos

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Abstract

This study aims to explore in depth the use of the social media platform TikTok as a tool for promoting healthy lifestyles through the distribution of creative exercise videos presented in an innovative and captivating way. This study applies a descriptive qualitative method with content analysis techniques, involving 20 creative physical exercise videos on TikTok selected based on their high engagement and viral nature. Data collection was conducted through structured observation, audio-visual recording, and examination of the health messages contained in each video, whether through verbal, non-verbal, or visual elements. The analysis focused on patterns of information delivery, movement aesthetics, music utilization, and user interaction mechanisms. Research findings reveal that creative exercise videos on TikTok have great potential as a means of promoting health. Several factors that increase the effectiveness of the content include: easy and repetitive exercise movements that are simple to follow, dynamic music to boost enthusiasm, short video lengths so as not to tire the viewer, and lively visual elements to evoke emotional appeal. Furthermore, TikTok's interactive features such as comment sections, duets, stitches, and challenges have been proven to encourage user participation in reproducing exercise movements, thereby creating a chain effect that expands the spread of health promotion messages. The results of the study confirm that TikTok is not only an entertainment platform, but also an efficient health communication channel with a visual-learning approach. This digital participation-based health promotion model has the potential as a contemporary strategy to increase public awareness and motivation toward physical activity and the formation of healthy lifestyles. Therefore, TikTok holds strategic value in the development of public health programs during the digital transformation era.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology over the past twenty years has fundamentally changed the way people communicate, including in terms of disseminating health information. Social media now serves not only as a platform for building friendships, but has also evolved into a fast, interactive, and influential channel for distributing information that impacts the behavior of the wider community (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010); (Kietzmann et al., 2011). In the field of health promotion, social media offers strategic potential as a channel for delivering health messages that can be accessed by various age groups, regions, and social backgrounds (Ventola, 2014).

One platform that has experienced the most significant growth is TikTok, a short video-based application that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to select and distribute content according to user preferences. TikTok's algorithm enables content, including health-related content, to reach millions of users quickly without requiring a large following (Anderson, 2020); (Zulli & Zulli, 2022). This makes TikTok a potential tool for visual, creative, and entertaining health campaigns.

In the field of public health, low levels of physical activity are a global problem that requires serious attention. The World Health Organization (World Health Organization, 2010) states that lack of physical activity is one of the main risk factors for chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease. In Indonesia, data from the (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2023) shows that the prevalence of physically inactive people is still at an alarming level, requiring innovative, inclusive, and appealing strategies for the younger generation. Social media, especially TikTok, is relevant because digital content consumption has increased dramatically among the productive age group (Statista, 2022).

Within the TikTok ecosystem, one of the most viral and highly engaging types of content is creative exercise videos, which combine simple exercise movements with rhythmic music, entertainment elements, visual creativity, and easy-to-follow choreography. This type of content helps increase motivation to move, especially for the younger generation who need visual stimuli and entertainment when doing physical activities (Asmika et al., 2024); (Jianfeng et al., 2024). Simple, repetitive movements that follow the rhythm of the music are the main attraction that encourages users to join in the challenge or recreate the video.

In addition, TikTok not only acts as a content distribution channel, but also supports parti-

cipatory culture as described (Jenkins et al., 2009). Features such as comments, duets, stitches, and hashtag challenges allow users to interact directly, generate new content, and build digital communities that encourage healthy lifestyles. It is this element of interactivity that distinguishes TikTok from other platforms, while also strengthening its role as a collaborative and sustainable health promotion tool (Montag et al., 2021); (Omar & Dequan, 2020).

Although the use of TikTok as a channel for disseminating health information is becoming increasingly common, scientific studies that specifically examine the role of creative exercise videos as a tool for promoting healthy lifestyles are still limited. Most previous studies have focused more on the use of TikTok in education, marketing, or its impact on adolescent behavior in general. Therefore, this study is important to fill this knowledge gap. This study aims to: evaluate the function of TikTok as a means of promoting healthy lifestyles through the distribution of creative physical exercise videos, and identify message patterns, visual elements, and interaction mechanisms that influence community participation in physical activities.

Thus, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of digital media-based health promotion strategies, particularly in utilizing creative content such as physical exercises to improve public fitness in the era of digital transformation.

The uniqueness of this study stems from its innovative method, which combines an examination of creative exercise content on the TikTok platform, health promotion ideas, and a theoretical framework of communication through digital channels. This perspective provides fresh insights into the mechanisms behind imaginative movement content in motivating public participation in daily exercise. Using this approach, the study was able to identify powerful health communication patterns, describe dynamic interactions among users, and highlight the function of creative gymnastics as a tool for movement education through short videos a dimension that has rarely been analyzed in depth in previous studies.

To expand the exploration, the analysis of creative gymnastics content involves evaluating components such as captivating visual elements, energetic music rhythms, and relatable stories, which make the video easy for a wide audience to digest. Health promotion ideas are applied to evaluate the effectiveness of persuasively delivering positive messages about fitness, while digital communication theory helps to understand how

TikTok algorithms accelerate content dissemination and form solid online communities. Key research findings include the identification of message patterns that evoke internal motivation, such as dance challenges tailored to viral trends, as well as interaction dynamics that include comment features, duet collaborations, and sharing that increase mutual engagement. Furthermore, the role of creative exercise as a short video-based movement education medium emphasizes its high accessibility, enabling learning without space and time limitations, unlike conventional approaches that are often less appealing. These elements not only fill a gap in scientific literature but also offer practical applications, such as the development of more efficient public health campaigns in the digital age, where creative content can change lifestyles to be more active and fit. Thus, this research enriches health communication strategies that are more flexible and technology-based.

METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis to understand how TikTok is used as a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle through creative exercise videos. This method was chosen because it is capable of interpreting the meaning of messages conveyed in visual, audio, and text forms in a systematic and contextual manner (Krippendorff, 2019). In the context of social media, content analysis provides an in-depth picture of communication patterns, visual strategies, and user responses to health messages (Neuendorf, 2017).

The main data sources were 20 TikTok videos on the theme of creative gymnastics. The videos were selected using purposive sampling, which is the determination of samples based on certain characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Patton, 2015). The video criteria are as follows:

1. Have at least 10,000 likes, as this indicates a sufficiently high level of visibility and engagement (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).
2. Use hashtags related to physical activity, such as #creativeexercise, #workout, and #healthylifestyle, to ensure that the content is relevant to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.
3. Features health messages or exercise movements, either explicitly or implicitly.
4. Published between 2023 and 2025, to reflect contemporary trends on TikTok.

Data collection was carried out using three

main techniques:

a. TikTok Content Observation

Researchers conducted direct observations of selected videos to identify visual, audio, and narrative elements. Observations were carried out systematically to assess how content was constructed and how health messages were inserted (Creswell & N.Poth, 2018).

b. Documentation

Documentation was carried out by taking screenshots of each important scene, recording captions, hashtags, and comments, and storing metadata (number of likes, views, shares). Documentation aimed to maintain data trails and facilitate in-depth analysis of video elements (Bowen, 2009).

c. Coding The coding process is carried

out to identify visual messages (gymnastics movements, expressions, editing style), verbal messages (screen text, captions), and nonverbal messages (music, rhythm, atmosphere). This technique allows researchers to find patterns and main themes in the presentation of creative gymnastics content on TikTok (Saldaña, 2022).

d. Drawing Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn gradually and repeatedly (iteratively) by considering the consistency of findings, the interrelationship between data categories, and relevance to health promotion theory and digital communication theory.

Data validity is strengthened through source and technique triangulation, namely comparing observational data, documentation, and coding to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results were obtained through content analysis of 20 TikTok videos on creative gymnastics that met the criteria of popularity, hashtag relevance, and health messages. The research findings generally show that TikTok has strong characteristics in attracting attention and influencing user participation in physical activities.

Level of User Interaction with Creative Exercise Videos

Of the 20 videos analyzed, the average user interaction showed a fairly high number, with 25,000 likes, 1,200 comments, and 5,000–50,000 shares. This high level of participation reflects that creative exercise content has strong visual and emotional appeal among TikTok users. According to the theory of engagement on

social media, the number of likes, comments, and shares is an indicator of audience acceptance and interest in certain content (Khan, 2017). TikTok, with its algorithm that is responsive to user interactions, plays a significant role in driving the virality of content, especially visual content such as gymnastics. These findings are also in line with research (Carril et al., 2025) which states that videos with themes of physical activity and dance challenges are the most frequently appearing content categories on the For You Page (FYP), thus facilitating the dissemination of health messages.

Characteristics of Creative Gymnastics Content

Content analysis shows characteristic patterns as shown in the following **Table 1**.

Table 1. Characteristics of Creative Gymnastics Content

Characteristics	Research Findings
Movement	Dynamic, repetitive, simple, and easy-to-follow movements; combined with dance fitness elements.
Music	Using upbeat music, trending sounds, or popular remixes that increase motivation to move.
Duration	Approximately 15–30 seconds, in line with users' preference for short and concise content.
Health Message	Encouragement to exercise, education about the benefits of fitness, encouragement to participate in challenges, and quick exercise tips.
Visual	Using attractive costumes, bright lighting, outdoor locations, gyms, or studios with aesthetic visual arrangements.

Health Message Patterns in Videos

Through the data coding process, the proportion of health messages was found as shown in the following **Figure 1**.

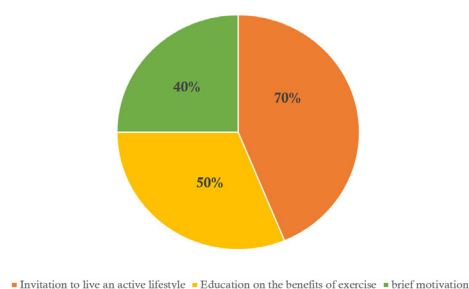


Figure 1. Pie Chart of Health Message Patterns

From the **Figure 1**, it can be explained that 70% of the messages encouraged an active lifestyle, inviting users to move, exercise, and stay fit. Meanwhile, the educational message pattern about the benefits of exercise accounts for 50%, explaining the effects of exercise on physical and mental health. The short motivational message pattern accounts for 40%, consisting of encouraging phrases such as “*Let’s move!*”, “*Keep active!*”, or “*Stay healthy!*”. Health messages presented in a visually appealing and engaging manner are one of the most effective strategies in digital campaigns (Lupton, 2016).

The Impact of Platform Interactivity

TikTok's unique features such as Duet, Stitch, and Challenge have a major influence in engaging audiences. Many users imitate exercise movements, create their own remixes, and participate in viral challenges. This shows that TikTok facilitates participatory health promotion (participatory culture) as stated by (Jenkins, 2019). Platform interactivity has been proven to strengthen message dissemination and increase the chances of behavioral change.

The results of this study are in line with the findings of (Garcia, 2024), which revealed that Physical Education (PE) students use TikTok as a source of fitness content, where body transformation videos, fitness tips, and motivational content have been proven to have a significant influence on interest in exercise. These findings are reinforced by research (Aryanto & Irwansyah, 2025), which shows that health content on TikTok can influence healthy lifestyle changes through social interaction mechanisms and platform algorithm support that encourages user engagement.

Furthermore, research by (Suryanti et al., 2025) confirms that social media, including TikTok, contributes to increased awareness of healthy living among students. (Kiko, 2025) also found a strong relationship between the intensity of TikTok use, the type of content consumed, and the formation of digital lifestyles among adolescents. Meanwhile, a study by (Berlian et al., 2024) shows that TikTok-based interventions in the form of nutrition education for secondary school students can increase understanding and awareness of health, thereby strengthening TikTok's potential as an educational medium in the field of health.

Research findings indicate that TikTok can be an effective digital medium for promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyles. This effectiveness is influenced by several factors:

1. Visual Appeal and Short Video Format

Creative exercise content on TikTok relies

heavily on visual appeal, music, and rhythmic movements. The short video format (15–30 seconds) has been proven to make it easier for users to understand, imitate, and remember the movements. This is in line with the findings (Vaterlaus et al., 2021) which state that short videos are more effective in influencing users' health preferences than long content. Thus, creative exercise videos combine educational and entertainment elements that increase the audience's motivation to move.

2. Social Learning and Motivation

Based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), individuals can increase their self-efficacy in performing an activity when they see visual examples from others. TikTok, with its dance and exercise video features, facilitates this modeling process. Simple movements and attractive visuals make users feel that:

"I can imitate this." This psychological effect plays a positive role in increasing participation in physical activity".

3. Interactivity as a Driver of Mass Movement

The challenge feature on TikTok has a significant impact on spreading health messages. According to (Jafar et al., 2023), digital participation in the form of challenges can trigger collective action or mass movements in society, including physical activities. In this study, creative exercise challenges were proven to encourage more users to imitate the movements, create new versions, invite friends to join, and repost health videos. This shows that TikTok is not just an entertainment platform, but also a space for public health collaboration.

4. Behavior Transformation Through Media Convergence

The TikTok platform combines visual elements, music, narrative, and interaction to create a digital ecosystem that encourages health behavior transformation (Montag et al., 2021). Therefore, promoting a healthy lifestyle through creative exercise videos is a relevant and effective strategy in the digital age.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that TikTok has great potential as a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle, particularly through the dissemination of creative exercise videos. The high level of interaction, attractive content characteristics, and creative and visual health messages make TikTok an ideal medium for digital health campaigns. Short, energetic, and easy-to-imitate creative exercise

videos can increase users' motivation to engage in physical activity, create widespread participation through TikTok's interactive features, and spread health messages quickly through viral mechanisms.

Thus, TikTok is not only an entertainment platform but also a strategic tool for public health promotion. For further research, quantitative studies are needed to directly measure the impact of TikTok exercise videos on individual physical fitness.

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