TIKTOK
AS A CASE

Moral and Ethical Impact & Immediate Effects on Human Knowledge

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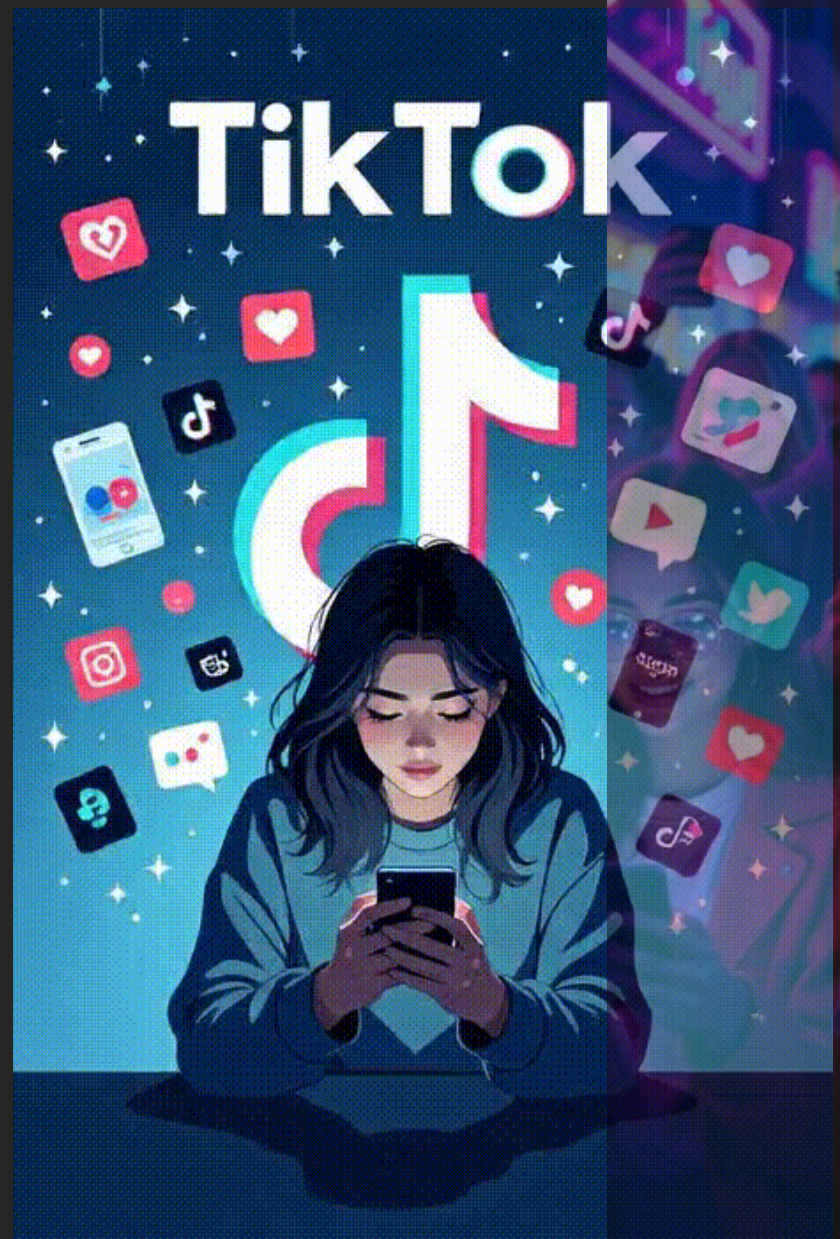

TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESSIBILITY

What is TikTok?

- Launched 2018 (ByteDance + Musical.ly merge)
- Short-form video platform (15s–3min)
- Global adoption >1B users in 2 years

Accessibility

- Free app, low entry barrier (phone + internet)
- AI-driven “For You” feed lowers search friction

MORAL LENS

WELLBEING X ADDICTION

Wellbeing Concerns

- "Infinite scroll" + dopamine-driven design
- Validated addiction measures: TikTok Addiction Scale (PTTUS)
- Attention span reduction: heavy short-video use linked to lower focus in young adults

Health Risks

- Higher screen time ↔ adolescent obesity risk (meta-analysis, 44 studies)
- WHO: sedentary behavior guidelines urge limits

Note for delivery: *Frame this as "design affordances" rather than blaming users—this aligns with human-centred design ethics.*

ETHICAL LENS

DATA AND GOVERNANCE CONCERNS

- EU fines (€530m, 2025) for inadequate child-data protections
- Cross-border transfer & national security concerns → bans on government devices

Algorithmic Risks

- Opaque recommender → filter bubbles, misinformation
- Echo chamber research: evidence is mixed, but diversity exposure matters

(Visual: news headline montage)

IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

RAPID ADOPTION

- Dance/lip-sync → expanded into education, activism, commerce
- "For You" page reshaped discovery: people consume before intent

Industry Response

- Clones: Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, Netflix "Fast Laughs"
- Short-form became industry default

SOCIETAL SHIFTS

SCREEN TIME, ACTIVITY, OBESITY

- **Youth culture:** new influencers, meme culture dominance
- **Education:** micro-learning (“EduTok”)
- **Commerce:** live shopping, TikTok Shop
- **Social life:** reduced face-to-face interactions, more sedentary time

(Visual: split-screen: TikTok learning vs TikTok shopping)

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Positive

- Democratized creativity, visibility for underrepresented groups
- Global cultural exchange

Negative

- Increased anxiety/depression in youth
- Attention fragmentation
- Institutional mistrust (data governance, national security)

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

WELLBEING BY DEFAULT

- Adjustable feed pacing;
- "Break" prompts;
- Friction at high-use thresholds;
- Default bedtime quiet hours for minors

EXPOSURE DIVERSITY

- Inject serendipity & dissenting viewpoints;
- User-visible diversity sliders;
- Periodic "new domains" challenges

DATA DIGNITY

- Plain-language data flow maps;
- Local storage guarantees;
- Third-party audits;
- Parental dashboards;
- Region-appropriate safeguards

TAKEWAYS

TIED TO BRIEFING…

- TikTok is a UX success story
→ but design choices amplify **addiction, attention loss, sedentary risks**

- Ethical acceptance depends on **data transparency** & **wellbeing-first design**

- Human-Centered Design can balance creativity with responsibility

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SPEAKER NOTES

•**S2:** TikTok's mass adoption stems from extremely low friction: no search, just scroll; the recommender "meets" the user.
•**S3:** There's now validated measurement for *problematic TikTok use*; lab evidence suggests attentional costs with heavy short-video use. Frontiers+1UOA Scholar
•**S4:** Ethical acceptance depends on transparent data governance; EU rulings and public-sector bans show institutional risk perceptions. ReutersAP News
•**S6:** WHO frames the health baseline; meta-analyses link screen time to adolescent obesity risk; interventions can help. World Health OrganizationBioMed CentralScienceDirect
•**S7:** Information diets narrow under some recommender settings; bake in diversity to reduce bubble effects. Evidence is mixed → avoid overclaiming. arXivReuters Institute
•**S9:** Human-centred fixes: wellbeing defaults, exposure diversity sliders, and audit-ready data flows.

THANK YOU

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