

TIKTOK - THE INFLUENCE ON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS

Adina NICHITA¹, Dumitru ENACHE², Cristina Veronica ANDREESCU³,

¹MSc, Faculty of Environmental Engineering and Food Science; ²PhD in Systems Engineering, University of Oil and Gas, Ploiești; ³Lecturer, PhD, The University of Medicine and Pharmacy “Carol Davila”, Bucharest;

ROMANIA

E-mail: ¹nichitaadina79@gmail.com, ²ing.dumitru.enache@gmail.com, ³cristina.andreescu@umfcd.ro

ABSTRACT

Mobile applications are a significant part of our lives, especially the applications that help solve particular problems at certain stages of our lives or those that are the very object of our work. In the field of education, mobile applications have been integrated in the teaching of lessons or in the transmission of information. Various applications on the market have been largely adopted for the information transmission from the educational environment. TikTok is one of these applications, and in this article we aim to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of using this application in the educational environment. At the same time, the effects of the heavy use of this application by adolescents are analyzed and also inadequate situations to be avoided in the use of the application are highlighted. Statistical data are presented through a questionnaire-based study. At the end of the article opinions on the purpose of the application and its use in education, as an educational tool are presented.

Keywords: *applied questionnaire; educational tool; social media; TikTok;*

INTRODUCTION

Currently, social media are some of the first means of communication and interaction in the world, blossoming enormously in the recent years, in addition getting diversified both in number and in terms of the functions they possess. Each social network has a special character and exhibits common and yet unique functions. The use of social networks in the field of education implies one of the measures accessible to pupils, students, teachers, that have been adopted as a fragment within the life of each of us.

From an educational point of view, these can be seen as a simple educational tool, designed to transmit different types of media content among the users, offering within them various functions, in order to facilitate communication, such as text messaging, multimedia messaging, user account creation, possibility to create groups. Thus, the information transmission is simplified by a few clicks, but also by the speed with which the information is conveyed to the users.

Since the occurrence of the social media, they have been surrounded by various pros and cons about their existence and the benefits and risks they present.

In the education field, the advantages of the social media are: fast interaction with other users, videocall, transmission of multimedia files, the possibility of a private conversation, encryption of the conversations, back-up of conversations, inconsiderable distance between users, instant feedback, through push notifications .

Among the disadvantages there should be mentioned: data confidentiality, security of personal data, cyberbullying, the possible addiction it generates, the display of inappropriate information, the permanent internet connection, the consumption of considerable time resources.

Looking from different points of view, both students, teachers and all the persons involved in education, may use the different social networks as a new method of transmitting information to their own pupils/students and not only. Thus, the field of education may be extended from the school to the social area. On the other hand, the negative effects that social networks have should be also taken into account and therefore, their management should be performed consciously, prior to the disadvantages changing the course of our lives.

1. TIKTOK – EDUCATIONAL TOOL

TikTok is a mobile application available on different operating systems, Android, iOS and is considered a media application because its functionalities are the creation of short-form video and its sharing. The application is available worldwide through various Market Apps such as Huawei App Gallery, Google Play Store or Apple App Store. Being an application available worldwide, it quickly attracted the attention of the users of other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and as users began utilizing it, the interest for it increased exponentially. Hence, an assessment made by Sensor Tower (2019) showed that this app registered a number of 33 million downloads in the App Store in the first quarter of 2019, thus surpassing the other social platforms mentioned above. (https://www.oberlo.com/blog/tiktok-statistics#5_TikTok_Usage_by_Country)

According to a statistical report conducted in January 2021 by Brandon Doyle, TikTok is available in over 150 countries, with over 1 billion users. Brandon states that most of the TikTok audience is in the 13-40 age range. Referring to some statistics, according to Brandon, TikTok has almost one billion active users per month. Starting in November 2018, when there were approximately 680 million active users the number has currently risen to 1 billion. (<https://wallaroomedia.com/blog/social-media/tiktok-statistics/> #: ~: text = Total% 20App% 20Downloads% 20% E2% 80% 93% 20The% 20TikTok, Tower% 20n% 20April% 2029% 2C % 202020)

Given this exponential development, the question has arisen as to whether this video share application may be used as an educational tool to convey knowledge to one's students via short videos. Various teachers have embraced this application as a means of transmitting information, whether we are talking about math teachers, biology teachers or about teachers of other subjects, they all have the opportunity, by creating short videos, to transmit the information online.

The main advantages of TikTok in content creation are: the duration of the videos, their length being as short as a couple of seconds, the possibility of making a video through the application on your smartphone, without the need for a sophisticated film equipment, editing may be performed also from the phone, therefore the time to create and post a video is reduced, without the need for a PC and complex editing programs. Among other advantages of TikTok in the transmission of knowledge is the content categories from which users can

watch videos, the organization by areas of activity allowing users to watch videos from that particular segment. Moreover, a video added in the educational field, is viewed through the platform not only by its own students but also by other students, from other regions, schools, but also by users who are not pupils or students, but individuals from society, hence widening the audience, one may discuss about an extension of the school education towards an informal, social one.

The disadvantages of TikTok in the educational environment are: the impossibility of conducting video conferences, the time allotted to a video is reduced, in comparison to other platforms such as Youtube, so lectures may not be posted, or activities to conduct a lesson in class. Being a video platform, it does not allow sharing text files, spreadsheets or PPT / Prezi presentations or their storage in a designated space, in comparison to Google Classroom.

2. PSYCHO-SOCIAL ASPECTS OF TIKTOK AMONG ADOLESCENTS

In the UNICEF Publication “Creating resilient education systems in the context of the Covid- As described in the previous passage, TikTok has positive effects on the pupils and the society as a whole, but it also has negative effects. They largely depend on the end user as well as on how he understands the use of TikTok. The improper use of the platform by users implicitly leads to the creation or distribution of inappropriate content.

Thus, certain negative aspects are distinguished:

- Having mostly a young audience, they develop a possessive character to improve their own physical appearance, which can sometimes lead to frustrations and even a slight depression related to the way each one looks;
- Choosing the wrong topic attracts viewing unwanted content.
- Most users believe that TikTok is a way to make any type of content go viral; in this way, in order to increase one's audience, one posts certain videos with different themes, some pleasant, others inappropriate, which leads to a reduced viewing. As a result, depression, frustration may appear as to the expected personal outcome of a video, which implies emotional discomfort.
- Dangerous physical actions sometimes become intensely viewed; hence, stunts, unsupervised fighting, the use of pyrotechnic objects for various purposes, represent a series of actions that involve physical injury, either in a mild or in a serious form, these being performed not according to some protection laws, but only according to everyone's beliefs.
- By excessively using TikTok, teenagers dismiss a lot of the time offered to the family, friends, so most of the time they spend online, this having negative consequences in terms of the individual's social life.
- TikTok is an application that requires, for viewing different videos, an important resource of time, some users not being aware of the duration spent online, and that the time allotted for the study is diminished. In their minds, an addiction is created on viewing as many videos as possible and thus the notion of time is lost.

All these aspects were reported by Sonika Garg in an article called "Tik Tok Latest News: How it's affecting Youth and teen negatively ”posted in May 2020. (<https://techzimo.com/tik-tok-negative-impact/>)

2. QUESTIONNAIRE-BASED SURVEY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

This survey aimed to fill in a questionnaire with a content of seven questions. The questionnaire was applied to a sample of 50 adolescents, both girls and boys aged between 14 and 18, from different high schools in Dâmbovița County.

According to the questionnaire, the following results were obtained:

Question number one of the survey aimed to identify the use of the TikTok application among adolescents. The result processing of this question identified that 82% used this application, and 18% of adolescents did not.

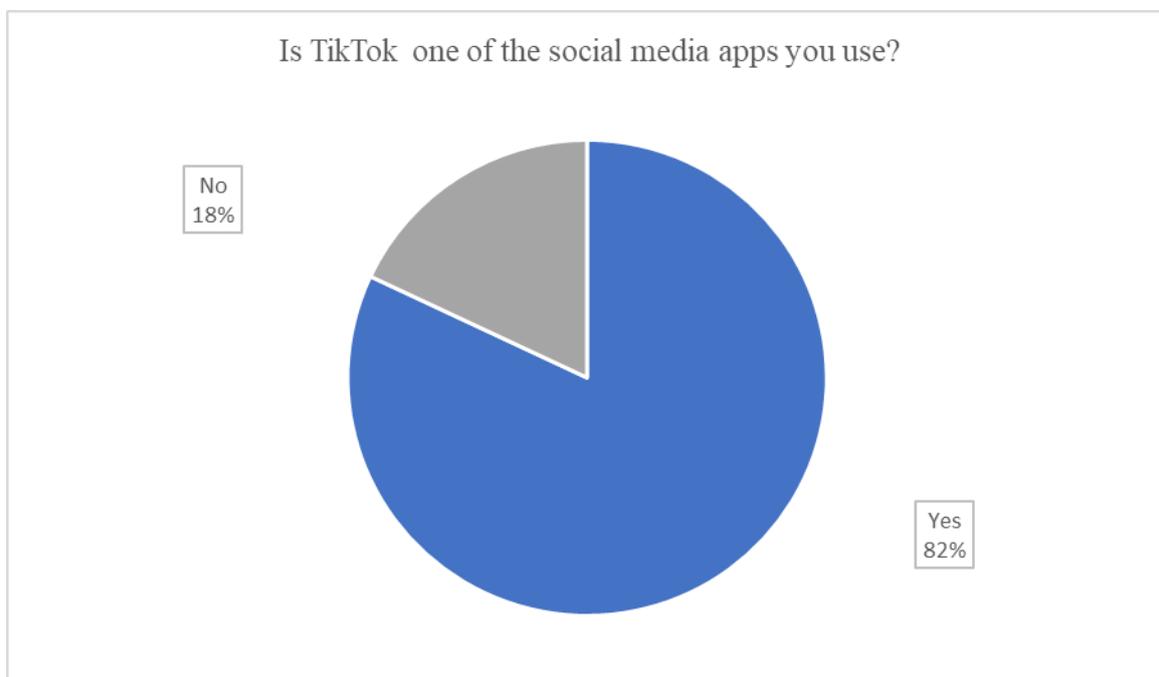


Chart 1: Interpreting survey results from question 1

Question number two aimed to identify the time spent by teenagers on this application. Therefore, the time spent by the teenagers on TikTok application was less than 30 minutes / day for 40% of them, and 60% of teenagers stated that the time spent on this application was more than 30 minutes / day.

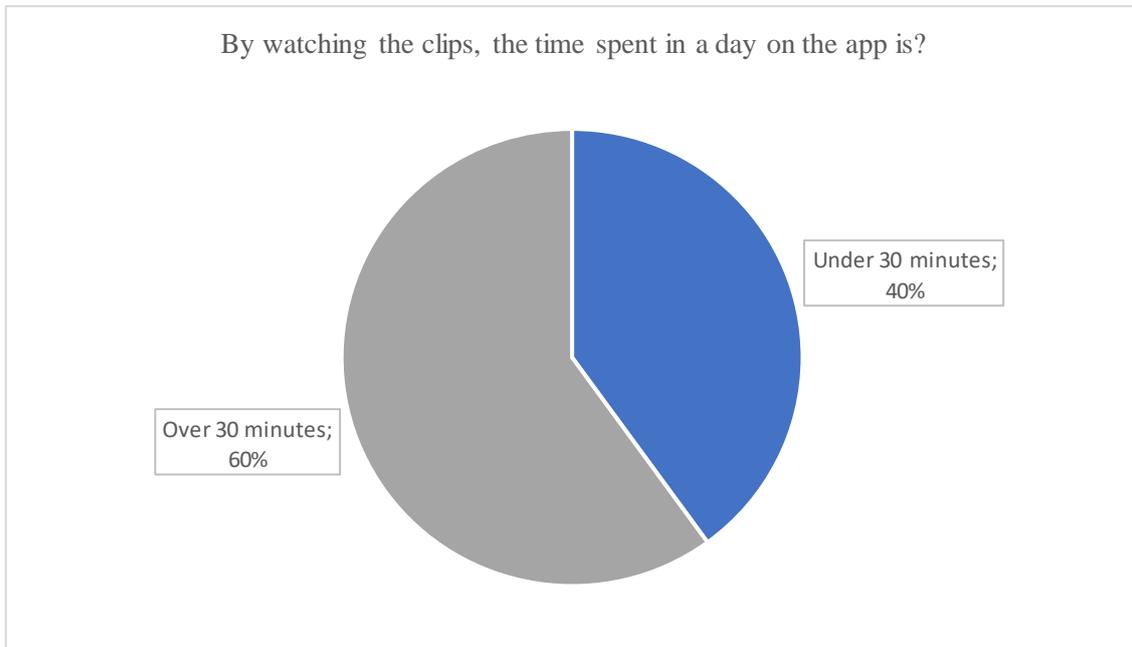


Chart 2: Interpreting survey results from question 2

Question number three aimed to identify the behavior of the adolescents after watching videos on the TikTok application. 38% of the interviewed students stated that they usually left assessments or comments for the watched videos, and 62% stated that they only watched the videos without leaving assessments or comments about them.

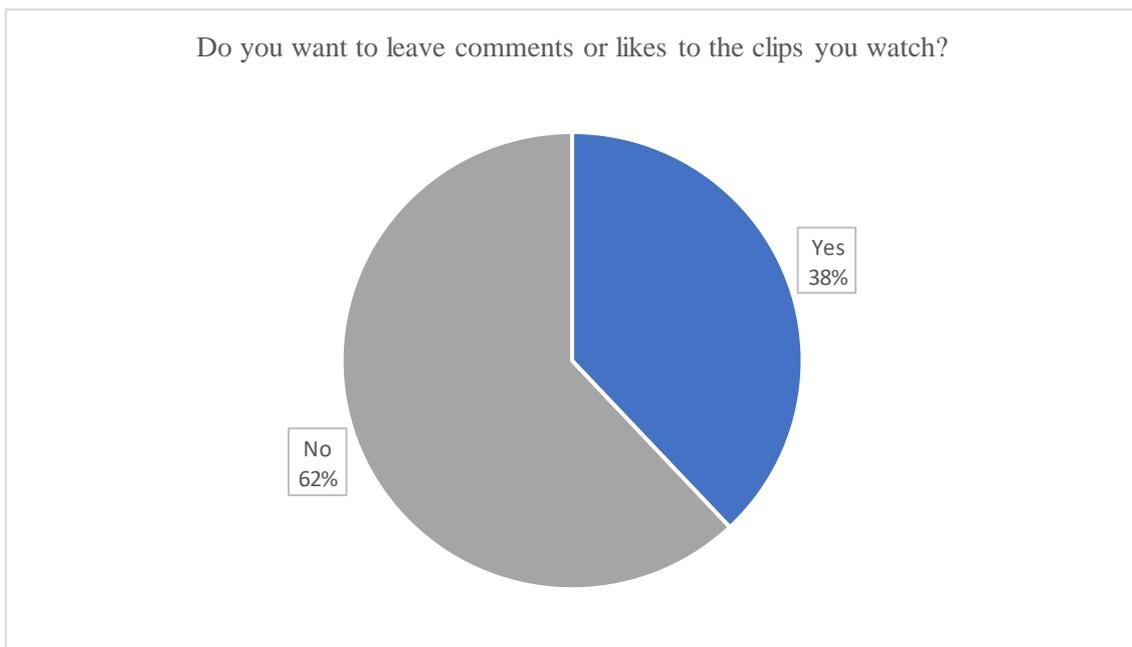


Chart 3: Interpreting survey results from question 3

Question number four meant to identify whether the pupils have watched inappropriate videos that might have involved physical injury or racial discrimination. 62% of teenagers stated that they watched such videos, and 38% said they did not watch.

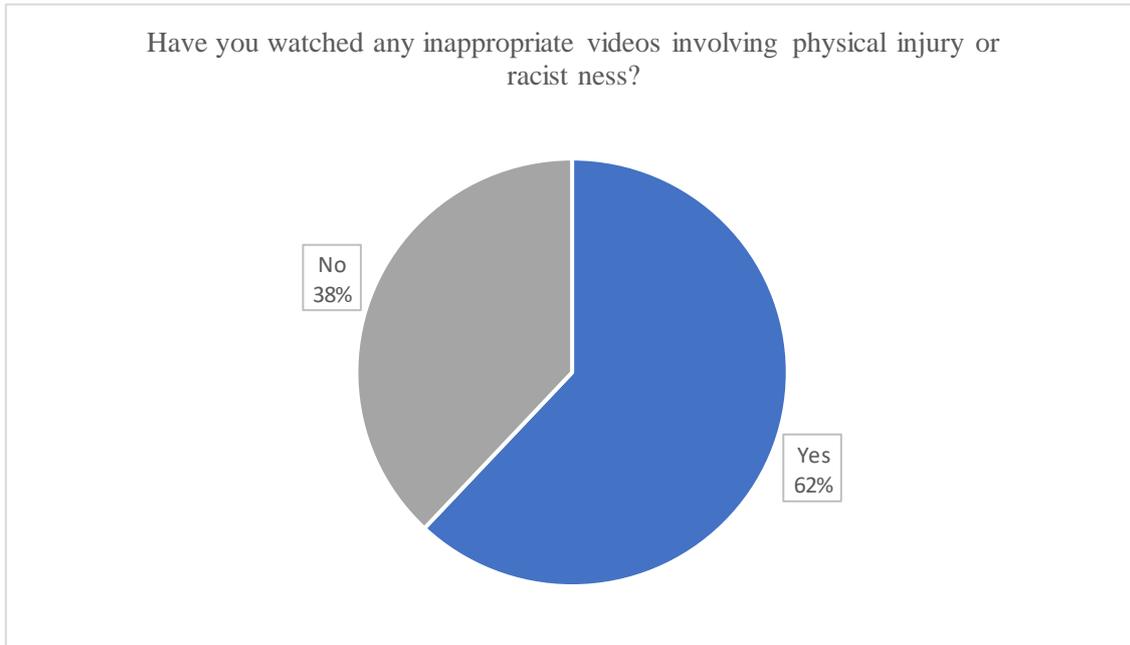


Chart 4: Interpreting survey results from question 4

Question number five meant to identify whether adolescents were watching videos on the TikTok app or they were actually participating by posting videos. 32% said they watch but also post videos on the TikTok application, and 68% said they only watch.

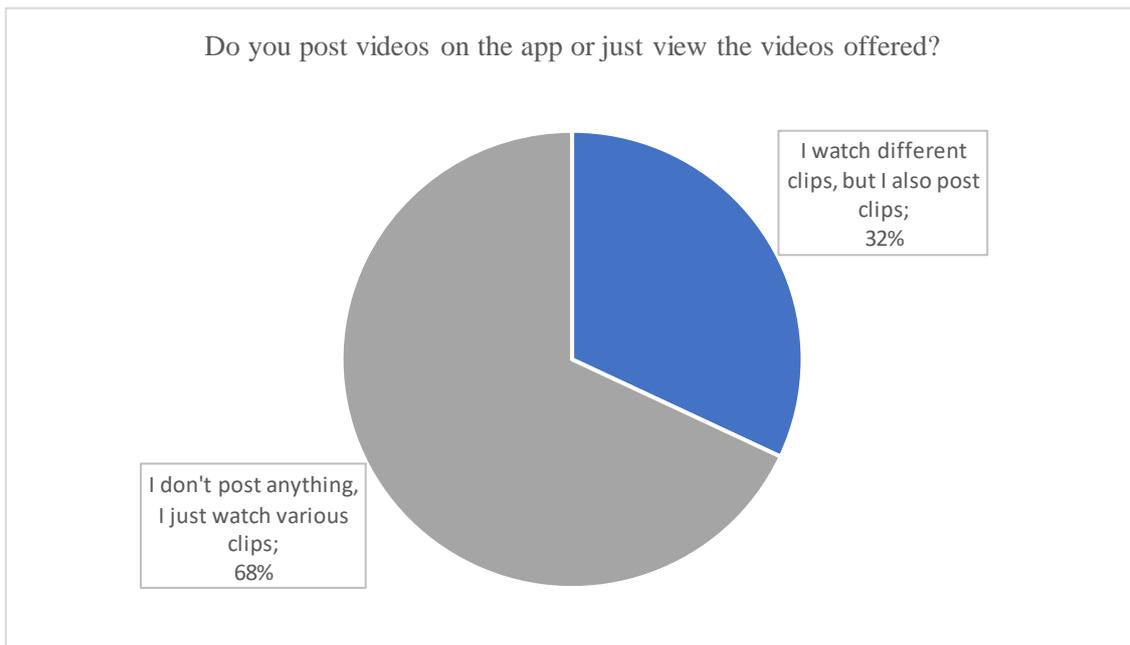


Chart 5: Interpreting survey results from question 5

By asking question number six, we wanted to get feedback from teenagers about the TikTok application, on the use of short videos for educational purposes. 60% of teenagers believed that the TikTok application could be used for educational purposes, and 40% of teenagers believed that the TikTok application could not use short videos as an educational tool.

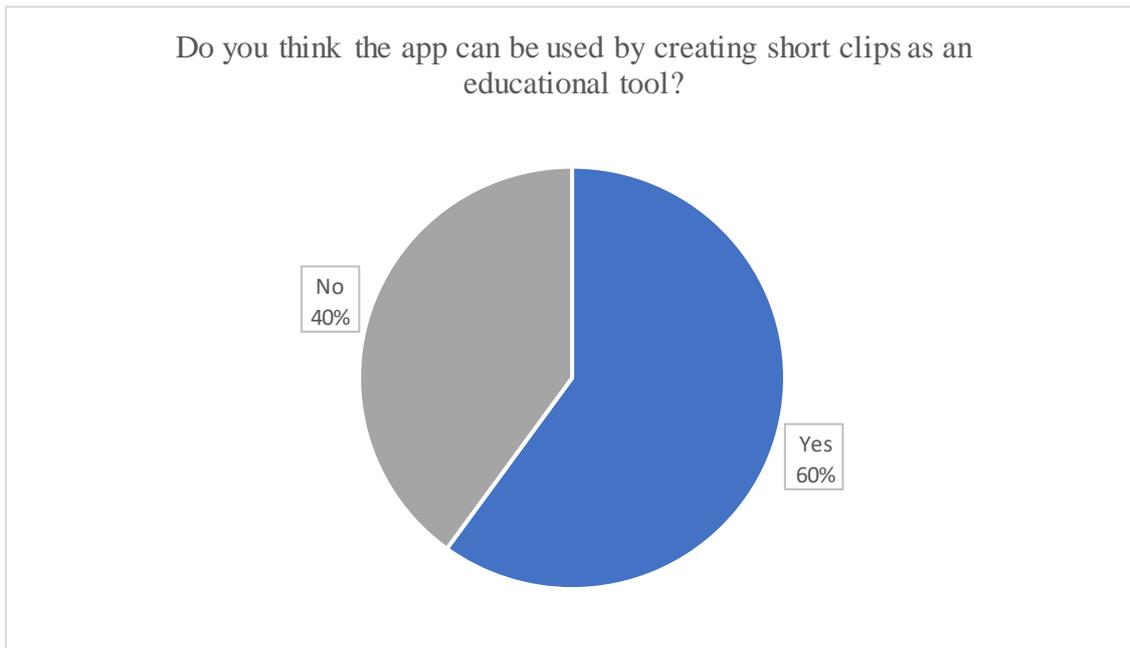


Chart 6: Interpreting survey results from question 6

In question number 7 from the survey, 100% of the interviewed adolescents agreed that the data be processed in order to obtain this statistic.

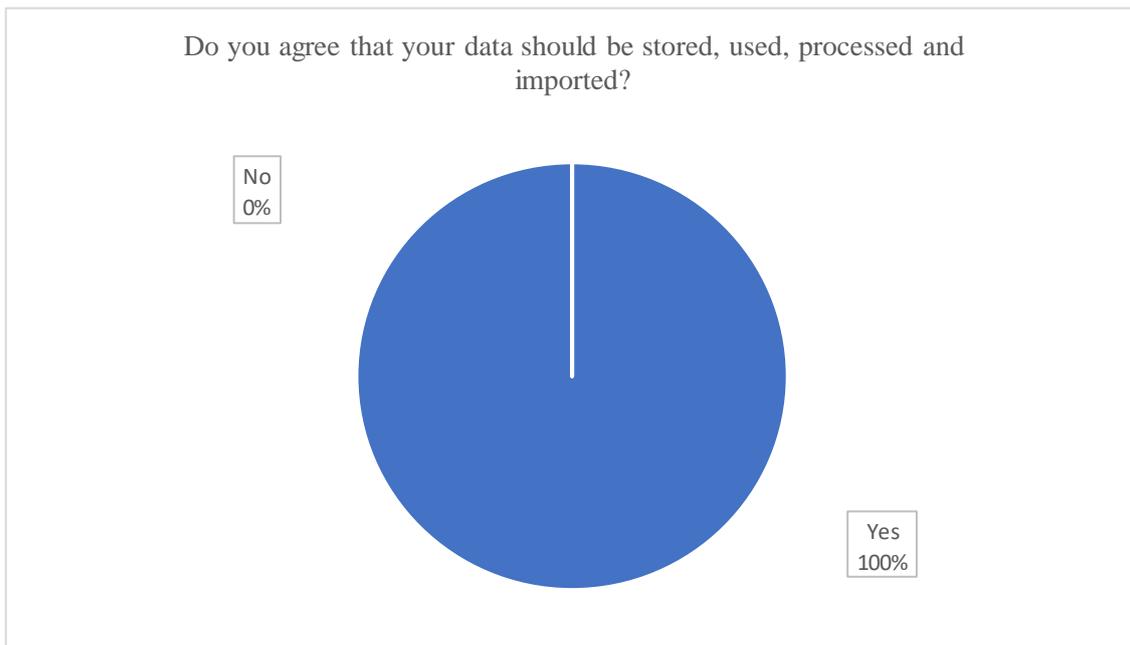


Chart 7: Interpreting survey results from question 7

DISCUSSION

The article makes a contribution by applying the questionnaire and interpreting the results, which makes us reflect, analyze the positive and negative effects of TikTok. It also deals with the argument of using TikTok as an educational tool. Analyzing the application and the whole package of functions it possesses, the problem of managing the time that people spend on this application by scrolling from one video to another still remains an issue. In order to reduce this time or to facilitate the viewing for educational purposes, it is necessary to create a study program, but also one for moments of relaxation. Thus, through an established program, the time allotted to the study may contribute to the improvement of school performance, and the time for viewing videos may be imagined for the relaxation moments and/or for reading the comments or for the chat corresponding to the videos.

In the article "Navigating the New Era of Influencer Marketing: How to be Successful on Instagram, TikTok, & Co." authors Michael Haenlein, Ertan Anadol, Tyler Farnsworth, Harry Hugo, Jess Hunichen, and Diana Welte describe TikTok as a 20-second attack to grab the attention of content consumers, this is especially favored among the young population. According to: (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0008125620958166>). With a huge user population, this application is a very effective means of marketing and promotion, the presentation of short videos in the form of advertisements implies a financial gain for companies promoting products or services on this application saving a lot of money compared to the promotion through television advertising.

CONCLUSION

TikTok may be used as an educational tool, but within limited limits, due to the length of the videos. This application has advantages, but also disadvantages that may predominate depending on the analytical ability of the person using the application, but also depending on the content they want to view. TikTok is currently an application for video content, intended for watching videos for fun. Due to the large number of users this application may be used for the promotion of products and / or service packages, the application being adopted for marketing. From an educational point of view, it is limited, and the current functionality of the application is not to favor the educational environment as a whole. The important thing is that by using the application, either for an educational purpose, or a marketing one or in other fields, its benefits should be fully exploited, while its disadvantages should be minimized.

Further efforts should be made to facilitate exchanges regarding the challenges and measures taken by Member States, including by connecting and improving the availability of databases containing open educational resources and the access thereof, in order to facilitate the exchange of different remote learning methodologies, tools and materials. In this context, to capitalize on existing opportunities, such as those available through eTwinning, the School Education Gateway platform and the e-Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE), to promote the use of self-assessment tools such as SELFIE and HEInnovate to support the capacity and digital transformation of schools and higher education institutions.

BIBLIOGRAFY:

- [1] Brandon Doyle (January, 2021). TikTok Statistics. According to: <https://wallaroomedia.com/blog/social-media/tiktok-statistics/#:~:text=Total%20App%20Downloads%20%E2%80%93%20The%20TikTok,Tower%20n%20April%2029%2C%202020.>
- [2] Maryam Mohsin (September 2020). 10 TikTok statistics that you need to know in 2021 [Infographic]. According to: https://www.oberlo.com/blog/tiktok-statistics#5_TikTok_Usage_by_Country
- [3] Michael Haenlein, Ertan Anadol, Tyler Farnsworth, Harry Hugo, Jess Hunichen, Diana Welte (2020) Navigating the New Era of Influencer Marketing: How to be Successful on Instagram, TikTok, & Co. According to: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0008125620958166>
- [4] Sonika Garg (May 2020) TikTok Latest News: How it's affecting Youth and teen negatively. Conformable: <https://techzimo.com/tik-tok-negative-impact/>
- [5] Florin POP, (2017). 20 reasons to use the Google Classroom app. According to: <https://www.eduapps.ro/blog/20-de-motive-pentru-care-sa-folosesti-aplicatia-google-classroom/>