



THE TIKTOK PHENOMENON AND AFRICAN CORE VALUES: EXPLORING THE IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CAMEROON

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Abstract

The proliferation of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, has transformed the way high school students in Africa interact, communicate, and express themselves. However, concerns have been raised about the potential impact of TikTok on the safeguarding of African core values among this demographic. This study explores the implications of TikTok on the preservation of African core values, including respect for elders, community, and tradition, among high school students in Cameroon. The aim of this study is to investigate the implications of TikTok use on the safeguarding of African core values among high school students, with a view to understanding the impact of social media on the preservation of cultural identity and values in Cameroon. The study was anchored: Marshall McLuhan's Technology Determinism Theory (1964). The concurrent mixed-methods research approach specifically the concurrent triangulation design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of higher school students, teachers and parents in Mefou et Akono and Mefou et Afamba Division of the Center Region of Cameroon. The sample population for the study was made up of 1035 high school students, 14 teachers and 14 parents. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were adopted. The instruments used for data collection were a questionnaire (closed and open-ended questions) for students and an interview guide for teachers and parents. The findings indicate that 51.8% of the students disagreed to the fact that Tiktok positively influence African core values among High school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon while 48.2% agreed Tiktok influence African core values among High school students. The study's implications are far-reaching, emphasizing the need for educators, policymakers, and parents to be aware of the potential risks of TikTok on African core values and to develop strategies to mitigate these effects. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing debate about the impact of social media on cultural values and identity in Cameroon. The hypothetical statistics showed that Tiktok significantly affects African core values among High school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon (Chi-Square = 552.270, R-Square Value = 0.421, p-value < 0.000 < 0.05). The R-Square Value of 0.421 value implies that the more students use Tiktok the more African core values among High school students is affected as supported with an explanatory power of 42.1% (Nagelkerke statistics= 0.421). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which states Tiktok significantly affects African core values among High school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon was accepted. The researcher recommended that stakeholders, including educators, parents, and policymakers, adopt a balanced approach to managing TikTok's influence on African core values among high school students. Educational programs should be developed to enhance media literacy, helping students critically assess the content they engage with on platforms like TikTok. This will empower them to navigate modern influences while preserving traditional values such as respect for elders and communalism.

Keywords: TikTok, African core values, high school students, cultural identity, social media, individualism, communal values.

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Introduction

African core values among high school students encompass a rich tapestry of cultural beliefs, traditions, and social norms that shape their identities and behaviors. These values, which include respect for elders, communal solidarity, and the importance of family ties, play a crucial role in the socialization of youths. However, the advent of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, has begun to influence these foundational principles. As students engage with diverse content and global trends on TikTok, they may experience shifts in their values and communication styles, leading to a complex interplay between traditional beliefs and modern influences (Nwankwo, 2021). TikTok serves as a dynamic communication channel that not only entertains but also educates and connects users across geographic boundaries. In regions like Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono in Cameroon, high school students are increasingly using TikTok to express themselves, share cultural narratives, and engage with peers. This phenomenon raises critical questions about the preservation of African core values in the face of rapidly changing digital landscapes. Research indicates that while social media can promote cultural exchange and innovation, it may also challenge the integrity of traditional values, prompting a reevaluation of identity among the youth (Okwu, 2020). Understanding these dynamics is essential for fostering a balanced approach to cultural preservation in the era of digital communication.

In essence the situation for high school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono is one where African core values are deeply ingrained in their daily lives, fostering a sense of community, respect, and cultural pride. These values are crucial for the holistic development of youths, guiding their behavior and interactions within their families and society. However, the rapid rise of TikTok as a prominent communication channel has introduced new dynamics that challenge these traditional values. According to a study by Nguimkeu (2022), over 60% of students in these regions regularly use TikTok, often exposing them to foreign cultural influences that may conflict with their inherited values. In reality, the pervasive use of TikTok has led to a noticeable shift in the attitudes and behaviors of students. Many young people are increasingly prioritizing trends and global narratives over local customs, which can dilute their understanding and appreciation of African heritage. A survey conducted by the Cameroon Ministry of Youth Affairs found that 45% of high school students reported a decline in their engagement with traditional cultural practices since the proliferation of social media (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2023). This shift has profound consequences, including weakened family ties, diminished respect for elders, and a growing disconnect from communal responsibilities.

In response to these challenges, the Cameroonian government has implemented various initiatives aimed at promoting cultural education and digital literacy among youth. Programs designed to integrate traditional values into school curricula have been launched, yet their impact remains limited. Despite these efforts, the influence of TikTok continues to grow, with students often prioritizing viral content over cultural teachings. As the digital landscape evolves, the ongoing struggle to harmonize modern communication with the preservation of African core values remains a pressing issue for educators, parents, and policymakers (Tchouamo, 2023). Thus, this paperthe influences of TikTok as a communication channel on African core values among high school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon.

This study is out to answer the lone question; how does Tiktok influence African core values among High school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon?

Conceptualizing Tiktok Phenomenon and African Core Values

TikTok has rapidly emerged as a dominant platform for social media engagement, particularly among youth, transforming how communication and cultural expression occur. It is a video-sharing social network service which seeks to inspire creativity of users such as creating short lip-sync, dancing, gaming, food videos 3-60 seconds and bring joy to the users, where content is produced by the users and accessible through mobile phones (Milner 2018). According to Parker (2020) TikTok is a mobile app that combines social networking and entertainment, allowing users to create engaging 15 to 60-second videos that often incorporate music, filters, and various editing tools. Launched in 2016, the app allows users to create and share short videos, often featuring music, dance, and various creative effects. Its unique algorithm promotes virality and engagement, making it especially appealing to high school students. According to Kaye et al. (2020), TikTok's format encourages creativity and self-expression, allowing users to explore their identities while engaging with broader cultural narratives. In the African context, this engagement can significantly impact core values such as communalism, respect, hospitality, family bonding, and peer group interactions.

According to the statistical result from Sensor Tower, TikTok was downloaded more than 188 million times in the first quarter of 2019, making it become the first leading downloaded social media App in the world (Sensor-Tower, 2019). Strong technical strength and good product experience enable TikTok to harvest many users. TikTok offers users a free platform to express themselves and build new relationships (Omar & Dequan, 2020). It was reported that “music dubbing”, “funny story”, “mind relaxing” were the major charm factors spellbinding TikTok users (Feng et al., 2019). TikTok tends to appeal to younger users, as 41% of its users are between the ages of 16 and 24. As of 2021, these individuals are considered generation Z (Cervi, 2021). Among these TikTok users, 90% said they used the app daily Meola, Andrew 2020 TikTok's geographical use in 2019 has shown that 43% of new users were from India before the social platform was banned in the country. But adults have also seen growth on TikTok. The share of U.S. adults who regularly get news from TikTok hit 14% in 2023 Matsa(2023) tiktok is largely used by high school students in producing short videos which more often are done with half naked attires, showing off their butts and breast in a way to gain views.

One of the most prominent African values influenced by TikTok is communalism. In many African cultures, communal living and collective identity are paramount. TikTok provides a platform for students to showcase community-based activities, such as traditional dances and local events, fostering a sense of belonging. As highlighted by Okoro et al. (2021), the sharing of communal experiences on TikTok can reinforce social solidarity, connecting students to their roots while also promoting pride in their cultural heritage. This collective engagement can help preserve traditional values in an increasingly globalized world. TikTok can also lead to a dilution of communal values. The platform's focus on individualism and personal branding may overshadow collective experiences. According to Pariser (2011), the algorithm prioritizes content that garners views and engagement, often favoring sensational or unique individual expressions. This shift can promote self-centered behaviors that conflict with the African emphasis on communal living, leading students to prioritize personal fame over community welfare.

Respect is another core value that TikTok influences among high school students. The platform often features content that emphasizes respect for elders, cultural traditions, and social norms. For instance, videos that highlight traditional greetings or ceremonies serve as reminders of the importance of respect in African societies. According to Wilska, Holkkola, & Tuominen (2023), users often create content that reflects their cultural upbringing, thereby reinforcing the value of respect within their peer groups. This dynamic can lead to a generation that is more aware of cultural etiquette and traditional values, even as they navigate modern digital spaces. However, the rapid dissemination of content on TikTok can also lead to the erosion of respect for cultural

traditions. The platform's global nature means that trends can overshadow local customs. As Mavroudis (2020) points out, this phenomenon may prompt younger users to adopt foreign practices at the expense of their own cultural heritage. Such shifts can create generational divides, where the younger generation may struggle to balance respect for tradition with the allure of modern influences.

Hospitality, a fundamental aspect of many African cultures, is also represented on TikTok. Students share videos depicting customary hospitality practices, such as welcoming guests with food and drink. This sharing not only showcases African hospitality but also facilitates cross-cultural exchanges, as users from different backgrounds engage with and learn about these traditions. As noted by Mavroudis (2020), this exchange can create a dialogue between cultures, allowing for a broader understanding of hospitality that transcends geographical boundaries. On the flip side, TikTok's focus on individualism can sometimes undermine the communal aspect of hospitality. The platform may encourage users to showcase extravagant or competitive displays of hospitality for likes and views, rather than genuine acts of kindness. This trend could shift the focus from the value of hospitality as a communal practice to a performance aimed at gaining social media recognition, thereby altering the essence of this core value.

Family bonding, another critical value, is often emphasized in TikTok content. Many users share videos featuring family gatherings, celebrations, and shared experiences that highlight the importance of familial ties. This portrayal can strengthen the significance of family in students' lives, encouraging them to appreciate and engage with their relatives more actively. According to Smith (2021), the platform's emphasis on family-oriented content can lead to a renewed focus on familial relationships, even as students are exposed to diverse lifestyles and narratives. However, the potential for distraction posed by TikTok can negatively affect family bonding. High school students may spend excessive time on the platform, leading to reduced face-to-face interactions with family members. As Fardouly et al. (2015) suggest, the allure of social media can create barriers to meaningful family engagement, undermining the traditional importance placed on family time in many African cultures.

Peer group interactions are transformed through the lens of TikTok, as the platform facilitates connections among high school students. The ability to create and share content fosters a sense of community and collaboration, where students can participate in challenges, trends, and discussions. This engagement can enhance social bonds and create a shared cultural experience. As noted by Manago et al. (2008), social media platforms allow for identity exploration, and TikTok serves as a space where students can express themselves and connect with peers in meaningful ways. Nonetheless, the platform's competitive nature may also lead to negative peer interactions. The pressure to create viral content can result in jealousy or rivalry among peers, as students may compare their success to that of others. This dynamic can lead to feelings of inadequacy or exclusion, which may ultimately harm relationships. As Smith (2021) notes, the pursuit of social media validation can overshadow the foundational aspects of friendship and support that are essential to healthy peer interactions.

Narcissistic behavior has increased since the emergence of social media, which facilitates interaction between one user and another and provides more avenues for a person to express himself (Izzati, et al. 2018). This is indicated by the appearance of the individual himself who wants to see patterns of overconfidence and tends to be unable to adapt to situations, that is, narcissism is focused on arrogance and self-confidence. Confidence is very important for students today, self-confidence is also divided into two values, namely positive values and also negative values, an example of a positive value itself is that students are more confident in their social environment, such as able to easily speak in front of many people, easily get along with the surrounding environment, and many more. In addition to the social environment, the positive

impact can also be felt in the school environment, such as being brave by participating in organizations at school and participating in competitions that are held inside and outside school.

Improvements and progress in the learning cycle are in sync with educational goals (Syah, 2019) says that the learning cycle is a reciprocal relationship and takes place in a framework as a result of which learning media involves a significant segment of the learning framework. Online media is not only used as a means of correspondence and cooperation, but also as a means of self-articulation and self-labeling. Based on the facts found by the authors in the field, there is a video on social media Instagram. A TikTok application featuring teenagers documenting themselves showing nakedness. Appearance can attract the attention of others observing immoral behavior that is inappropriate for teenagers. All excessive use and forms of the TikTok application are one of today's adolescent personality disorders or better known as narcissism. Narcissism is a form of self-actualization carried out by people who love themselves excessively (Purnamasari, 2018). Narcissism can also be interpreted as a form of individual lust which shows that they are perfect, intelligent, and important to attract more attention than others and adore them. Student narcissistic behavior. The phenomenon of adolescent narcissism has become an epidemic in modern society (Sjoradah, et al. 2021). The above issues have affected our African values both positively and negatively especially on high school students that spend so much time on phones which leads to laziness.

However, the influence of TikTok is not without challenges. The platform can sometimes promote behaviors that conflict with traditional values, such as individualism over communalism. The focus on personal fame and viral content can lead to a shift away from collective identity. According to Pariser (2011), the algorithm-driven nature of TikTok may prioritize sensational content, which can dilute the richness of communal experiences that are vital to African cultures. This raises concerns about the potential erosion of values like communalism and respect as students navigate the platform.

TikTok promotes harmful content including eating disorders and self-harm to teen user feeds, according to a new NGO report. Key takeaways: A new report shows that TikTok pushes harmful content promoting eating disorders and self-harm to teens every 39 seconds and TikTok addiction can lead to a variety of physical, mental, and emotional health issues such as fatigue, irritability, and depression. It is important for users to recognize TikTok addiction symptoms before it becomes an issue. A lot of teens describe the experience of going on TikTok and intending to spend 15 minutes and then they spend two hours and or more and concerning to hear that many teens are experiencing difficulties managing their time on TikTok, leading to excessive usage. Teenagers must strike a balance between their online activities and other aspects of their lives. In reality, studies have connected overuse of social media to a number of negative consequences on mental health, including depression.

Moreover, the representation of African cultures on TikTok can be complex. While many users celebrate their traditions, the platform also risks perpetuating stereotypes or misrepresentations, particularly when content is created for a global audience. As Cruz, Yuri, &Scaraboto (2024) argues, this phenomenon can lead to a form of cultural appropriation, where non-African users adopt African cultural elements without understanding their significance. This dynamic can create tensions for students striving to uphold their cultural values while engaging with a global platform. Masciantonio, Bourguignon, Bouchat, Balty, &Rimé (2023) indicated that despite the social nature and comparative aspects of TikTok, neither seeking support nor comparing one to others on the platform appeared to significantly influence users' well-being. The potential impacts of TikTok on well-being may therefore be influenced by other factors not examined in this study, or there may not be a connection at all between the platform and general well-being. It's crucial to note that this study only looked at TikTok and wellbeing, therefore more research

may be required to examine how other social media platforms affect wellbeing.

According to a study conducted by (Wojdan, Wdowiak, Witas, Drogoń, & Brakowiecki, 2020) shown that TikTok is causing various issues, including addiction, in kids and teenagers. Some of the adverse effects of TikTok addiction include inferiority complexes, superiority complexes, and complexes of attractiveness and an increased usage of social media platforms by students is associated with a notable shift in their study habits, resulting in reduced attention towards scholarly works and This is particularly evident when there is an imbalance between excessive TikTok use and limited focus during study time. Consequently, such changes in study habits may adversely impact the academic prospects of students. And in Cameroon it alters their use of time and interactions within the community. The popularity of social media platforms offers several advantages, including improved communication, easier information access, and platforms for artistic expression. However, social media's addictive nature and capacity to draw in and hold users' attention can have a negative impact on study habits and academic achievement. When students spend excessive time on TikTok or other social media platforms, their focus on studying can diminish significantly.

Constant distractions, such as receiving notifications, scrolling through endless feeds, and watching short videos, can break their concentration and hinder their ability to engage in deep and meaningful learning. TikTok serves as a multifaceted influence on African core values among high school students. While it offers a platform for communal expression, respect for traditions, hospitality, family bonding, and peer interactions, it also presents challenges related to individualism, misrepresentation, and the potential erosion of cultural values. As students engage with TikTok, it is essential for them to critically navigate the content they create and consume, balancing the allure of modernity with the importance of preserving their cultural heritage. The ongoing dialogue around TikTok's impact highlights the need for a nuanced understanding of social media's role in shaping identities and values within African contexts.

Theoretical Framework

From a theoretical point of view, this study is built on Marshall McLuhan's Technology Determinism Theory, articulated in 1964, posits that technological advancements fundamentally shape societal structures, cultural norms, and individual behaviors. McLuhan famously stated, "the medium is the message," emphasizing that the way information is conveyed is as significant as the content itself. He argued that different forms of media influence how people perceive and interact with the world, thereby altering their social dynamics. The theory asserts that each medium be it print, television, or digital platforms has intrinsic qualities that shape human experience and consciousness, leading to shifts in societal values and interactions. One of the core principles of McLuhan's theory is that technology is not merely a tool for communication; it actively molds our perceptions and relationships. For instance, print culture promoted linear thinking and individualism, while electronic media fostered a more interconnected, communal experience. This shift in communication styles affects how communities are structured and how cultural values are transmitted across generations. In the context of TikTok, the platform's emphasis on short, engaging videos encourages rapid content consumption and a preference for visual over verbal communication, potentially undermining the depth of traditional narratives and communal dialogue.

Applying McLuhan's theory to the influences of TikTok on African core values among high school students reveals significant implications. As students increasingly engage with TikTok, they are exposed to a diverse array of cultural expressions that may contrast with their traditional values. The platform's design promotes viral trends, which can lead to the prioritization of global influences over local customs. Consequently, the communal bonds and respect for traditional practices inherent in African cultures may be weakened. This reflects McLuhan's assertion that

the medium shapes societal values; as TikTok becomes a dominant communication channel, it redefines how students perceive and engage with their cultural heritage, highlighting the ongoing tension between modernity and tradition.

Methodology

This study employed a concurrent mixed-methods research approach specifically the concurrent triangulation design. Combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches in collecting, analysing and presenting findings. The population of the study comprised of higher school students, teachers and parents in Mefou et Akono and Mefou et Afamba Division of the Center Region of Cameroon. The target population of the study consists of 14 higher school students, teachers and parents selected from Baptist High School Yaoundé, BASHS Nomayos, Father Monti Catholic Collage Fullness Bilingual Collage, GBHS Akono, GBHS Mbalngong, GBHS Mbankomo, GBHS Mfou, GBHS Nkoabang, Marie Albert Prestidge, PCSS Mfou-Yaounde, GBHS Ngoumou, St Joseph Collage and Wise Bilingual Institute. The accessible population of the study consists of 1310 Lower sixth and Upper Sixth students, Teachers and Parents. The sample population for the study was made up of 1035 high school students, 14 teachers and 14 parents. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were adopted for the study. The instruments used for data collection were a questionnaire (closed and open-ended questions) for students and an interview guide for teachers and parents. Data from the close-ended questions were analyzed using SPSS 23.0, with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistical while the open-ended question and the interviews were analyzed thematically. The Chi-square was used to test the lone research hypotheses formulated in the study.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of a study conducted with data successfully collected from 1020 students, 14 teachers and 14 parents from 14 secondary high schools' in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon. The returned rate of questionnaire for high school students stood at 98.6%, that for teachers is 100% and that for parents is 100%. Results are reported at a 95% confidence interval with a 0.05 error margin. Quantitative data are displayed in two formats: a stretched format showing frequencies and percentages based on a four-point scale, and a collapsed format that combines "strongly agree" and "agree" into "Agree," while "disagree" and "strongly disagree" are combined into "Disagree" for clearer interpretation of responses.

Tiktok influence African core values among High school students were captured from the perspective of students, teachers and parents. ‘

Table 1: Students Opinion on how Tiktok influence African core values

Statements	Stretched				Collapsed	
	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD
TikTok helps me to connect to my roots	95 (9.3%)	307 (30.1%)	400 (39.2%)	218 (21.8%)	402 (39.4%)	618 (60.6%)
The content I see on TikTok encourages respect for elders and family values.	81 (7.9%)	303 (29.7%)	427 (41.9%)	209 (20.5%)	384 (37.6%)	636 (62.4%)
TikTok influences my understanding of important social issues in Africa.	198 (19.4%)	421 (41.3%)	264 (25.9%)	137 (13.4%)	619 (60.7%)	401 (39.3%)
I often see content on TikTok that reinforces positive community relationships.	185 (18.1%)	488 (47.8%)	239 (23.4%)	108 (10.6%)	673 (66.0%)	374 (34.0%)
The content I see on TikTok encourages	119	331	412	158	450	570

family bonding	(11.7%)	(32.5%)	(40.4%)	(15.5%)	(44.1%)	(55.9%)
The trends on TikTok motivate me to learn more about my cultural identity.	151	295	361	213	446	574
TikTok has a significant impact on how I perceive African values compared to other media.	(14.8%)	(28.9%)	(35.4%)	(20.9%)	(43.7%)	(56.3%)
	156	314	332	218	470	550
	(15.3%)	(30.8%)	(32.6%)	(21.4%)	(46.1%)	(53.9%)
Multiple Responses Set (MRS)	985	2459	2435	1261	3444	3696
	(13.8%)	(34.4%)	(34.1%)	(17.7%)	(48.2%)	(51.8%)

n=1020

The findings indicate a significant skepticism among high school students in Mefou et Afamba and Mefou et Akono regarding the positive influence of TikTok on African core values. With 51.8% of students expressing disagreement with the notion that TikTok positively influences their cultural values, it becomes evident that many perceive the platform as a potential detractor from traditional norms. Specifically, a substantial majority—62.4%—disagreed that TikTok content fosters respect for elders and family values, highlighting a critical concern that the platform may undermine the foundational aspects of African culture. This aligns with the observations of Okwu (2020), who noted that social media often prioritizes entertainment over educational content, leading to a dilution of cultural teachings among youth. Furthermore, the findings suggest that TikTok does not effectively connect students to their roots, as evidenced by the 60.6% disagreement regarding its role in fostering cultural connections, which raises questions about the platform's capacity to serve as a meaningful medium for cultural engagement.

Additionally, the data reveals that TikTok trends do not motivate students to explore their cultural identity, with 56.3% of respondents disagreeing with this assertion. This lack of engagement with cultural identity is concerning, as it suggests that the platform may promote superficial interactions rather than deep cultural understanding. The findings resonate with McLuhan's (1964) theory of technological determinism, which posits that the medium shapes societal values and perceptions. In this case, TikTok's emphasis on rapid, visually-driven content may detract from the reflective engagement necessary for appreciating and preserving African core values. The fact that 55.9% of students disagreed that TikTok encourages family bonding further underscores the platform's potential to fragment rather than strengthen familial ties.

On the contrary, majority of the students 619(60.7%) agreed that TikTok influences their understanding of important social issues in Africa and, finally, 673(66.0%) agreed they often see content on TikTok that reinforces positive community relationships. This aligns with the observation that social media can provide a space for marginalized voices and alternative narratives, allowing young people to engage with issues that may not be adequately covered in traditional media (Mwaura, 2023). This finding is consistent with research by Vaingankar, et al. (2022), which highlights how social media can promote communal values and encourage youth to connect with their peers around shared interests and social causes. Thus, while concerns about TikTok's impact on traditional values persist, its role in shaping social awareness and community cohesion among students cannot be overlooked.

Table 2: Teachers' opinion on if Tiktok influence African core values such as respect for elders, communalism, and family bonding among high school students

Response	Theme	Sample quotation
Yes	Negative Influences on Values	"Yes it does, youth try to show off, some post dancing and twerking, others are showing off their breast and buttocks which are indecent." "Yes decency is gradually turning into indecency which is what is copied on TikTok." "Yes when high school students find themselves on TikTok they tend to date elderly people. What they also post on TikTok doesn't sound good." "Some trends on TikTok may promote behaviors that clash with traditional values, potentially diminishing respect for elders." "Excessive use of TikTok can lead to less family interaction, weakening family bonds and communal ties."
	Positive Cultural Education	"TikTok has become a platform for showcasing diverse culture including various African traditions." "Contents that highlight respect for elders and family values can educate and remind younger audiences." "Many educators use TikTok to share brief lessons on cultural values, helping students connect with their roots." "TikTok allows users to share cultural dances and traditional practices, increasing awareness and appreciation for African heritage." "Campaigns that go viral on TikTok emphasizing respect for elders can significantly impact students' attitudes."
	Encouragement of Community and Family Bonds	"TikTok can encourage students to share family stories and traditions, fostering a sense of belonging and family bonding." "TikTok challenges often encourage group participation, promoting communalism and teamwork among students." "By participating in cultural challenges, students can strengthen their identity and sense of community." "Content that highlights respect for elders encourages students to reflect on their own relationships with family members." "Students can use TikTok to creatively express their cultural identities, promoting pride in their heritage."
	Navigating Modernity and Tradition	"TikTok encourages blending traditional and modern cultures, which can lead to a new understanding of communalism." "Students learn to navigate between modern influences from TikTok and the importance of maintaining their cultural values." "Discussions around TikTok content can prompt conversations about the relevance of traditional values in a modern context." "Students may feel pressured to conform to trends that contradict traditional values, affecting their respect for elders." "TikTok can facilitate social interactions that strengthen communal bonds but may also lead to negative comparisons."

The findings from teachers regarding TikTok's influence on African core values present a complex view that acknowledges both positive and negative impacts. Many teachers affirm that while TikTok does influence students, it often promotes behaviors that contradict traditional values such as respect for elders, communalism, and family bonding. One teacher noted, "Yes it does, youth try to show off, some post dancing and twerking, others are showing off their breast and buttocks which are indecent," highlighting concerns about the platform's promotion of indecent behavior that diverges from cultural norms. This sentiment is echoed by another

educator who stated, *"Yes decency is gradually turning into indecency which is what is copied on TikTok,"* suggesting that the platform may contribute to a cultural shift away from established standards of decency. These insights align with the findings of Ojo (2024), who argues that social media can disrupt traditional social structures, emphasizing the need for a critical examination of how platforms like TikTok shape youth behavior and cultural values.

The findings indicate that teachers recognize TikTok as a dual-edged sword in its influence on cultural education among high school students. On one hand, many educators acknowledge that TikTok serves as a valuable platform for showcasing diverse cultures, including various African traditions. As one teacher noted, *"TikTok has become a platform for showcasing diverse culture including various African traditions,"* which highlights the potential for the platform to serve as a medium for cultural expression and education. Furthermore, the assertion that *"contents that highlight respect for elders and family values can educate and remind younger audiences"* underscores the platform's capacity to reinforce positive cultural norms. This aligns with the observations of Mandarani, & Munir (2021), who emphasizes that social media can be leveraged to promote cultural awareness and appreciation, thereby helping students connect with their roots through engaging content.

In addition to cultural education, the findings suggest that TikTok fosters community and family bonds among students. Teachers pointed out that *"TikTok can encourage students to share family stories and traditions, fostering a sense of belonging and family bonding."* This sentiment is echoed by the observation that *"TikTok challenges often encourage group participation, promoting communalism and teamwork among students."* Such collaborative activities can enhance students' sense of identity and community, reinforcing the idea that social media can serve as a tool for building social connections. As highlighted by Nwafor (2023), platforms like TikTok can facilitate interactions that strengthen communal ties, allowing students to engage with their cultural heritage in a modern context.

Moreover, the findings reveal that TikTok plays a role in navigating the complexities of modernity and tradition. Teachers noted that *"TikTok encourages blending traditional and modern cultures, which can lead to a new understanding of communalism."* This blending allows students to learn how to balance contemporary influences with the importance of maintaining their cultural values. However, the concern remains that *"students may feel pressured to conform to trends that contradict traditional values, affecting their respect for elders."* This duality reflects the ongoing struggle between embracing modernity and preserving cultural heritage, as discussed by Shehata & Strömbäck (2022), who argued that new media can reshape societal values and perceptions. Ultimately, while TikTok can facilitate positive cultural engagement, it also presents challenges that require careful navigation to ensure that traditional values are not overshadowed by modern trends.

Table 3: Parents opinion if they have noticed any changes in their child's behavior or attitudes towards traditional African values since they started using TikTok

Response	Theme	Sample quatetion
Yes	Cultural Engagement and Expression	<i>"My child has become more interested in traditional dances and often incorporates them into their TikTok videos."</i> <i>"There's a noticeable pride in sharing our culture, as they often highlight traditional attire and practices in their posts."</i> <i>"They've started using some local languages in their videos, which has sparked more conversations about our heritage at home."</i> <i>"TikTok has become a platform for them to express their creativity through cultural storytelling and art."</i>

Changes in dressing

"My child has become more interested in community events, wanting to participate in cultural festivals and activities."
"My child has a gradually or became a comedian because of TikTok, imitating funny gestures."
"Yes, dressing, talking and interaction."
"Yes. In dress pattern as they jump on a new TikTok friend."
"They sometimes mimic trends that don't align with our cultural values, making it necessary to have discussions about what is appropriate."
"Some friends have adopted behaviors or attitudes that seem to disregard traditional values, which has led to discussions about staying true to our culture."

Family and Community Conversations

"They've shown more respect for elders, often referencing the wisdom shared in our community when creating content."
"They've developed a more critical view of the content they consume, questioning whether it aligns with our values."
"TikTok has led to more family conversations about our cultural identity and the importance of preserving it in a digital age."
"They're now trying to copy what their friends are doing like short dresses and twerking."

Confusion and Withdrawal

"While they embrace traditional values, they also blend them with modern influences, which sometimes confuses their understanding of cultural purity."
"Yes, the child is more withdrawn and turns to stay in isolation."
"They've started discussing social issues affecting our community, often inspired by content they see on TikTok."
"They've shown a preference for both traditional and modern clothing, sometimes favoring local designers showcased on social media."

The findings regarding parents' opinions on the influence of TikTok on their children's attitudes towards traditional African values reveal a multifaceted impact, highlighting both positive and negative changes. Many parents observed that TikTok has fostered cultural engagement and expression among their children. For instance, one parent noted, *"My child has become more interested in traditional dances and often incorporates them into their TikTok videos,"* indicating a revival of interest in cultural practices. This sentiment is echoed by another parent who remarked, *"There's a noticeable pride in sharing our culture, as they often highlight traditional attire and practices in their posts."* Such engagement suggests that TikTok can serve as a platform for cultural expression, allowing youth to celebrate and promote their heritage in a modern context. This aligns with the findings of Nguimkeu (2022), who emphasizes that social media can enhance cultural awareness among young people.

However, the findings also indicate that TikTok has led to noticeable changes in the dressing code of children, often reflecting trends that may not align with traditional values. One parent expressed concern, stating, *"My child has gradually become a comedian because of TikTok, imitating funny gestures,"* which points to a shift in behavior influenced by the platform. Another parent added, *"They sometimes mimic trends that don't align with our cultural values, making it necessary to have discussions about what is appropriate."* This highlights the challenge parents face in navigating the influence of modern trends on their children's understanding of cultural norms. As noted by Indah, et al. (2024), the rapid dissemination of trends on social media can lead to a dilution of traditional values, necessitating ongoing conversations about cultural identity and appropriateness.

Moreover, parents reported that TikTok has sparked more family and community conversations about cultural identity. One parent noted, *"They've shown more respect for elders, often*

referencing the wisdom shared in our community when creating content," suggesting that the platform can facilitate discussions that reinforce traditional values. Another parent mentioned, "TikTok has led to more family conversations about our cultural identity and the importance of preserving it in a digital age." This indicates that while TikTok presents challenges, it also provides opportunities for families to engage in meaningful dialogues about their heritage and values. Such discussions are crucial in helping children navigate the complexities of modern influences while maintaining a connection to their cultural roots.

Conversely, some parents expressed concerns about confusion and withdrawal in their children's behavior regarding traditional African values. One parent observed, "While they embrace traditional values, they also blend them with modern influences, which sometimes confuses their understanding of cultural purity." This blending can lead to a fragmented sense of identity, as noted by another parent who stated, "Yes, the child is more withdrawn and turns to stay in isolation." Additionally, parents reported that their children have begun discussing social issues affecting their community, often inspired by TikTok content. This duality reflects the ongoing struggle between embracing modernity and preserving cultural heritage, as highlighted by Liao (2023), who argued that new media can reshape societal values and perceptions. Thus, while TikTok can enhance cultural engagement, it also poses challenges that require careful navigation to ensure that traditional values are not overshadowed by modern trends.

Table 4: Parents opinion on how Tik Tok influenced African cultural values among children such as respect for elders, communalism, and family bonding

Theme	Sample quatetion
Respect for Elders and Family Values	<i>"No. My child still has full respect for elders and family bonding. Because as a parent, I always sensitize them about the illls of media."</i>
	<i>"My child often references the wisdom of elders in their videos, showing an increased awareness of the importance of respecting older generations."</i>
	<i>"They have become more inclined to seek advice from grandparents, often sharing these insights with their friends on TikTok."</i>
	<i>"My child has become more mindful of how they communicate with elders, often using respectful language they've seen valued in online content."</i>
	<i>"My child encourages peers to respect their families and communities, often sharing messages that promote communal values."</i>
Cultural Engagement	<i>"My child participates more in community events, inspired by TikTok challenges that promote local traditions and customs."</i>
	<i>"They frequently create content that highlights our family's history, fostering pride in our cultural heritage."</i>
	<i>"TikTok has encouraged my child to initiate family activities, such as cooking traditional meals together for their videos."</i>
	<i>"They've shown interest in learning traditional dances and songs, which they share on TikTok, promoting our cultural practices."</i>
	<i>"They've created content that honors community leaders and elders, showcasing their contributions to our culture."</i>
Family Bonding and Collaboration	<i>"My child often collaborates with cousins and friends on TikTok, emphasizing the importance of togetherness and teamwork."</i>
	<i>"Working on TikTok videos together has strengthened our family bond, as we collaborate on ideas and filming."</i>
	<i>"They've taken on more household responsibilities, understanding that family support is a key aspect of communal living."</i>
Influence of TikTok on	<i>"Yes, she has copied the poor learning habits exhibited on TikTok."</i>
	<i>"Yes. No respect for elders."</i>

Learning and Behavior	<i>"Participating in TikTok challenges that celebrate African culture has increased their awareness and appreciation of our communal practices."</i>
Impact	<i>"Family bonding to an extent has been affected as children spend more time on their phones."</i>
Family Dynamics	<i>"Yes. Less bonding with family and more contacts with phone."</i> <i>"Children no longer fear what they do online like dancing, funny facial expressions and their kind of languages."</i> <i>"They've developed a balanced view of modern influences, understanding that while technology is beneficial, it should not replace our traditional values."</i>

The findings regarding parents' opinions on TikTok's influence on African cultural values among children reveal a complex interplay of positive and negative effects. Many parents expressed confidence that their children maintain respect for elders and family values, with one stating, *"No. My child still has full respect for elders and family bonding. Because as a parent, I always sensitize them about the ills of media."* This proactive approach to media consumption suggests that parental guidance plays a crucial role in reinforcing traditional values. Additionally, another parent noted, *"My child often references the wisdom of elders in their videos, showing an increased awareness of the importance of respecting older generations."* This indicates that TikTok can serve as a platform for children to engage with and express respect for their cultural heritage, provided that they are supported by their families in navigating the content they consume (Sophie, Page, Wei, Apu, and Franziska, 2024)

On the other hand, some parents highlighted the negative influences of TikTok on their children's learning and behavior. One parent remarked, *"Yes, she has copied the poor learning habits exhibited on TikTok,"* suggesting that exposure to certain content can lead to the adoption of undesirable behaviors. Furthermore, concerns were raised about the impact of TikTok on family dynamics, with one parent stating, *"Family bonding to an extent has been affected as children spend more time on their phones."* This reflects a growing concern that while TikTok can enhance cultural engagement and collaboration—evidenced by parents noting that their children participate more in community events and collaborate with family members on content creation—it can also detract from direct family interactions and communal ties. As highlighted by Guo (2021), the challenge lies in balancing the benefits of digital engagement with the preservation of traditional values and family cohesion. TikTok played a non-negligible impact on teenagers in three aspects---TikTok can be used as an educational tool, it can satisfy teenagers' mentality but it does contain over-exaggeration content that shapes teenager's value in a misleading way.

Verification of Hypothesis

Ho: Tiktok does not significantly affect African core values among High school students in Mefou Et Afamba and Mefou Et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon.

Ha: Tiktok significantly affects African core values among High school students in Mefou Et Afamba and Mefou Et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon

The chi-square was used to test hypotheses for this study. The interpretation of the hypotheses according to the Chi-Square is based on two points which are: Accept the null hypothesis (Ho) and reject the alternative hypothesis (Ha) if the calculated Chi square is less than (<) the critical value of the chi square on the chi square statistical table. Accept the Ha and reject the Ho if the calculated chi square value is greater than or equal to ($\geq$) the critical value of chi square on the chi square statistical table.

Table 5: The effect of Tiktok on African core values among High school students

	Effects of Tiktok on African core values among High school students	Explanatory power of effect in terms of percentage (Nagelkerke statistics)
Chi-Square	552.270	42.1%
Df	399	(0.421)
P-value (Sig.)	.000	
R-Square Value	.421	
N	1020	
Decision	H _a accepted	

The hypothetical statistics showed that Tiktok significantly affects African core values among High school students in Mefou Et Afamba and Mefou Et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon (*Chi-Square* = 552.270, *R-Square Value* = 0.421, *p-value* < 0.000 < 0.05). The R-Square Value of 0.421 value implies that the more students use Tiktok the more African core values among High school students is affected as supported with an explanatory power of 42.1% (Nagelkerke statistics= 0.421). This suggests that TikTok usage correlates with a noticeable shift in cultural values, supporting Marshall McLuhan's Technology Determinism Theory, which posits that the medium through which information is conveyed fundamentally shapes societal values and behaviors. McLuhan (1964) argued that "the medium is the message," emphasizing that the characteristics of a medium can influence how individuals perceive and interact with their world. As students engage with TikTok, they may internalize trends and behaviors that challenge established norms, thus transforming their understanding of cultural identity and communal values. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis which states Tiktok significantly affects African core values among High school students in Mefou Et Afamba and Mefou Et Akono of the Center Region of Cameroon was accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, the findings of the study reveal that while TikTok is a popular communication channel, its influence on African core values among high school students in Mefou Et Afamba and Mefou Et Akono is largely perceived as negative. While 51.8% of students disagreed that TikTok positively influences these values, a notable 48.2% acknowledged its influence. This duality is mirrored in the opinions of teachers, who recognized that, despite some negative impacts on traditional values such as respect for elders and communalism, TikTok also serves as a platform for cultural education and community bonding.

As noted by Okwu (2020), social media can play a crucial role in shaping cultural narratives, suggesting that TikTok may simultaneously challenge and reinforce important African values through its content. Furthermore, parents observed notable changes in their children's behaviors and attitudes towards traditional values since engaging with TikTok. Many reported increased cultural engagements, shifts in dressing, and enhanced family conversations, alongside some negative effects such as confusion about cultural identity and reduced family interaction. The statistical analysis supports these findings, indicating that TikTok significantly affects African core values, with an R-Square value of 0.421 demonstrating a strong explanatory power regarding its influence. This aligns with Heang (2024)) assertion that the medium shapes societal perceptions, emphasizing the need for ongoing dialogue about the role of digital platforms in preserving and evolving cultural identities. Thus, while TikTok presents both opportunities for cultural expression and challenges to traditional values, its overall impact necessitates careful consideration by educators, parents, and policymakers alike.

In this regard the researcher generally recommended that stakeholders, including educators, parents, and policymakers, adopt a balanced approach to managing TikTok's influence on

African core values among high school students. Educational programs should be developed to enhance media literacy, helping students critically assess the content they engage with on platforms like TikTok. This will empower them to navigate modern influences while preserving traditional values such as respect for elders and communalism.

Additionally, parents should actively participate in discussions with their children about the cultural implications of the content they consume, fostering an environment of open communication that encourages cultural engagement and expression. Schools could also implement community-oriented activities that leverage TikTok to promote African heritage, thereby reinforcing family bonds and communal ties. Lastly, ongoing research should be conducted to monitor the evolving impact of TikTok and similar platforms on cultural values, ensuring that strategies remain relevant and effective in promoting a harmonious balance between modernity and tradition.

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