

# How Libraries in Indonesia Use TikTok: A Content Analysis of Library Accounts on the Platform

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine Indonesian libraries' TikTok accounts. The research was carried out on 12 TikTok accounts with a total of 688 posts to gain a better understanding of TikTok content, the type of information published, and follower engagement on posts. Data was collected by observing all TikTok accounts and posts. The result showed that most libraries began using TikTok

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in 2020, in response to the growing number of TikTok users and the shift during the pandemic. The most common types of published data are library collection information and other information. Announcements, services, and library facilities are the three types of information that receive the most engagement. This study has practical implications for libraries that use TikTok as a social media alternative. TikTok will allow them to reach younger audiences, boost creativity, spread joy, and save libraries' money. Based on the findings of this study, librarians can consider the format of published information. This study offers insights on the social media platform TikTok as a new opportunity to promote libraries. It emphasizes the enormous potential for using social media platforms such as this to gain more attention and bring libraries closer to patrons.

**Keywords:** Content analysis; Library; Social media

### **Cómo las bibliotecas en Indonesia utilizan TikTok: Un análisis de contenido de las cuentas de bibliotecas en la plataforma**

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El objetivo de este estudio es examinar las cuentas de TikTok de bibliotecas en Indonesia. La investigación se llevó a cabo en 12 cuentas de TikTok con un total de 688 publicaciones para obtener una mejor comprensión del contenido de TikTok, el tipo de información publicada y la interacción de los seguidores en las publicaciones. Los datos se recopilaron observando todas las cuentas y publicaciones de TikTok. Los resultados mostraron que la mayoría de las bibliotecas comenzaron a utilizar TikTok en 2020, en respuesta al creciente número de usuarios de TikTok y el cambio durante la pandemia. Los tipos más comunes de información publicada son información de la colección de la biblioteca y otra información. Los anuncios, servicios y espacio de la biblioteca son los tres tipos de información que reciben más interacción. Este estudio tiene implicaciones prácticas para las bibliotecas que utilizan TikTok como una alternativa de redes sociales. TikTok podrá llegar a una audiencia más joven, impulsar la creatividad, difundir la alegría y ahorrar dinero a las bibliotecas. Basándose en los hallazgos de este estudio, los bibliotecarios pueden considerar el formato de la información publicada. Este estudio ofrece perspectivas de

la plataforma de redes sociales TikTok como una nueva oportunidad para promocionar las bibliotecas. Se enfatiza el enorme potencial de utilizar plataformas de redes sociales como TikTok para llamar más la atención y acercar las bibliotecas a los usuarios.

**Palabras clave:** Análisis de contenido; Biblioteca; Redes sociales

## INTRODUCTION

In the modern digital age, many media and communication tools have been developed. Various positive impacts of the development of media and communication tools have begun to be adopted by organizations. This allows organizations or individuals to disseminate information promptly and connects people in remote locations. Social media is a platform where people connect and share information and/or feelings (Haenlein and Kaplan, 2010). Kapoor *et al.* (2018) defines social media as a variety of user-based platforms that facilitate the dissemination of exciting content, the creation of dialogue, and the user's communication to a larger audience. It is more broadly defined as a digital space created by people for people, providing a conducive environment for interaction and networking at a personal, professional, business, marketing, political, or social level.

The fast-paced nature of social media users encourages this medium to be more diverse. Social media has evolved over time from a tool for uploading and exchanging information and content to a platform for sharing information with the general public (Aichner *et al.*, 2021). This means that social media has been identified as a strategic tool for organizations to reach a large number of users. Many organizations use social media to disseminate information to patrons or customers because social interaction is becoming increasingly easier to do digitally. Social media is also widely used in government, health care, education, and even non-profit organizations. Libraries are also beginning to use social media as marketing tools. Taylor & Francis (no date) stated that more than 70% of libraries use social media tools for a variety of purposes, one of which is promotion.

For library promotion, the library has used various social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Chan, Lam and Chiu, 2020; Rahmawati and Rahmi, 2021). According to the findings of these studies, social media is an effective tool for bringing libraries closer to their patrons. This means that the library can also increase patron engagement by collecting quick feedback from patrons of the services provided. As a result, social media is an appropriate and effective tool for connecting libraries with potential patrons. Besides,

the use of social media enhances the interactivity of library services, enables patrons to contribute to the creation of content, fosters a sense of community, and facilitates the sharing of information with the library's audience (Çakmak and Eroğlu, 2020).

The development of social media over time has also changed the pattern of social media usage in society. Libraries also need to adapt to meet the needs of their patrons. One of the growing forms of social media today is TikTok. China's video platform was launched in September 2016 to share short videos. TikTok is the social network of the moment. This app is based on the concept of short format video, and it provides patrons with a diverse selection of sounds and music, as well as the option to apply special effects and filters. The high demand for video sharing on online social networks has also led to a shift in organizational promotion through social media.

Tik Tok has also been used by libraries as a marketing tool. TikTok is a new platform that allows users to share information, interact with other users and libraries, and share flexible content with other accounts (Stephens, 2022). The value of TikTok lies in teaching, learning, and marketing library services and resources through short video content. This application can significantly help libraries use TikTok as an advocacy tool (Mashiyane, 2022). Furthermore, TikTok's existence can specifically target younger users. TikTok can also be used for outreach and marketing to introduce the library and its services (Anderson, 2020).

This study advances knowledge on how libraries use TikTok, a social media platform, for marketing and information tool purposes. Thus, this study proposes the following research questions:

- RQ 1. Which is the overview of the library's TikTok account?
- RQ 2. How is information disseminated by the library's TikTok account?
- RQ 3. How is the library's and users' response and engagement?

## METHODS

This study uses a descriptive analysis approach and content analysis to identify, describe, and analyze how libraries use TikTok as a medium of information and promotion. The object of the study is the libraries' TikTok accounts in Indonesia. A total of 486 posts by 12 library accounts in Indonesia were examined. The first step in conducting this study was to locate the libraries' TikTok accounts that would serve as the research sample. The following criteria were used in this study:

1. The library is a representative of the national, public, special, school, and academic libraries.
2. The minimum number of account followers is 100.

As a result, 14 library accounts in Indonesia were found that meet the criteria. However, two accounts were excluded from the analysis because, in addition to sharing library information, they were also used for personal purposes. The study's data collection is organized around the research question. In consequence, the data collected consists of a description of the general condition of the TikTok account, the disseminated information on each post, and the engagement of followers with the library.

The sample was described using statistical descriptive analysis in the second stage. The data described refers to the study's research question. Data is collected by identifying each post on each library's TikTok account. Posts are then coded and categorized using Microsoft Excel. The code is determined by reviewing the information or messages contained in them and then used to categorize the posts. The process of observing content is repeated several times in order to reduce inaccuracy. The data collection was conducted in January 2023, with a posting cutoff date of January 28th, 2023.

The clustering is based on groupings adapted from Al-Daihani and AlAwadhi (2015), Suharso and Muntiah (2020), and Rachman, Mutiarani and Putri (2018). The three previous studies categorized social media content on Twitter and Instagram. However, due to the increasing variety of information shared on TikTok, changes were made in this study. The following table summarizes the clusters identified in this study:

1. Announcements include content that disseminates important information about the library, for example, regulations or hours of operation.
2. News and events include content regarding documentation of activities carried out by the library or disseminating library activities to be carried out by the library or parent organization. For example: posters; library visits by students; seminars held in the library.
3. Entertainment includes content that aims to entertain users without any other purpose.
4. User greetings include content that greets or interacts with users.
5. Collection includes promoting or recommending the collection to the users.
6. Services include promoting and informing the public about the library's services.
7. Facilities encompass library tours and new facilities, as well as promotion and information about the library's spaces.
8. How-to videos involve content that instructs users on how to do something, such as borrowing materials, using the digital collection, or visiting the library during the pandemic.

9. Commemoration days, which include content acknowledging specific holidays.
10. Others may include content outside the context of the library, for example, reading tips, educationally themed content such as English lessons, or user testimonials.

Each piece of content is assigned to a single category. If a single piece of content includes information from multiple categories, the researcher groups them based on the piece’s specific purpose. These twelve categories are used as a reference for clustering TikTok posts published by the library.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### ***RQ. 1 Overview of the Library’s TikTok account***

In the first stage, the researcher identified each chosen library’s TikTok account between December 2022 and January 2023. The following is a general description of the libraries’ TikTok accounts:

No	Account	Followers	Posts	Type	First Post
1	perpusnas_ri	12.500	220	National Lib	December 10, 2021
2	perpustakaan.adisutjipto	1002	63	Academic Lib	July 5, 2021
3	unairlibrary	499	62	Academic Lib	August 5, 2020
4	uinsaizulibrary	406	27	Academic Lib	November 27, 2020
5	uhwperbanaslib	264	54	Academic Lib	January 29, 2021
6	ui_library	217	10	Academic Lib	March 25, 2021
7	perpustakaan_ummy	179	60	Academic Lib	July 28, 2021
8	perpus.balpem	413	4	Public Lib	November 18, 2020
9	balai_yanpus	312	123	Public Lib	November 3, 2020
10	perpus.banjarkab	236	28	Public Lib	March 15, 2021
11	perpustakaanmansabdg	303	22	School Lib	June 11, 2021
12	perpustakaannetral	128	15	School Lib	October 5, 2022

*Table 1. Overview of Library TikTok Account  
Data per January 28, 2023*

According to *Table 1*, there is one National Library (NL) account, two school library accounts (16.67%), three public library accounts (PL) (25%), and five academic library (AL) accounts (50%). This figure contrasts sharply with the number of libraries in Indonesia, which includes 164,610 public, school, university, and special libraries. Only 0.0072% of Indonesian libraries have TikTok accounts, according to the study's criteria.

Using TikTok as a promotional medium for library information can present these institutions with a new challenge. Libraries can use the latest social media to get closer to potential and regular patrons, receive feedback more swiftly, and brand their libraries. Although the library already has social media, libraries must follow the trend of using social media based on generational characteristics. In the same way that many organizations and communities in the health sector provided health education during a pandemic, TikTok can also be used by libraries to connect with patrons and share library information.

The national library account had the most followers, with around 12.500 adherents. Meanwhile, other libraries continue to have numbers of followers ranging from 100 to 1000. According to Rachman, Mutiarani and Putri (2018), one of the most important aspects of social media use is the number of followers. With so many followers, the library has an outstanding opportunity to disseminate information in a way that enables patrons to comprehend its messages. Social media marketing has advantages over other forms of marketing.

Furthermore, the national library account has the most posts compared to other accounts. This is because the National Library of Indonesia has a service unit that focuses on community and social media. As a result, it outperforms other libraries in terms of content preparation. One of the challenges in the context of the library is the lack of social management personnel. According to Jones and Harvey (2019), one of the challenges for library staff is a lack of knowledge and willingness to invest time in managing social media. As a result, staff must be trained to use the tools to provide content tailored to the needs of patrons.

This study also identified the first post for each library's TikTok account. Since 2020, four libraries have started using their TikTok accounts, with the first being @unairlibrary on August 5, 2020 while the rest began in 2021 and 2022. These findings suggest that libraries used TikTok as one of the new informational and promotional media innovations during the pandemic. The existence of TikTok during the pandemic was translated in its being used for a variety of purposes, including disseminating health information, optimizing distance learning and deploying campaigns or facilitating education.

### RQ.2 Information types shared by the library's TikTok account

This study determined the number of posts across the libraries' TikTok accounts in response to the second research question. All posts published by each library's TikTok account are counted. The following is the outcome of grouping posts according to the researcher's clusters.

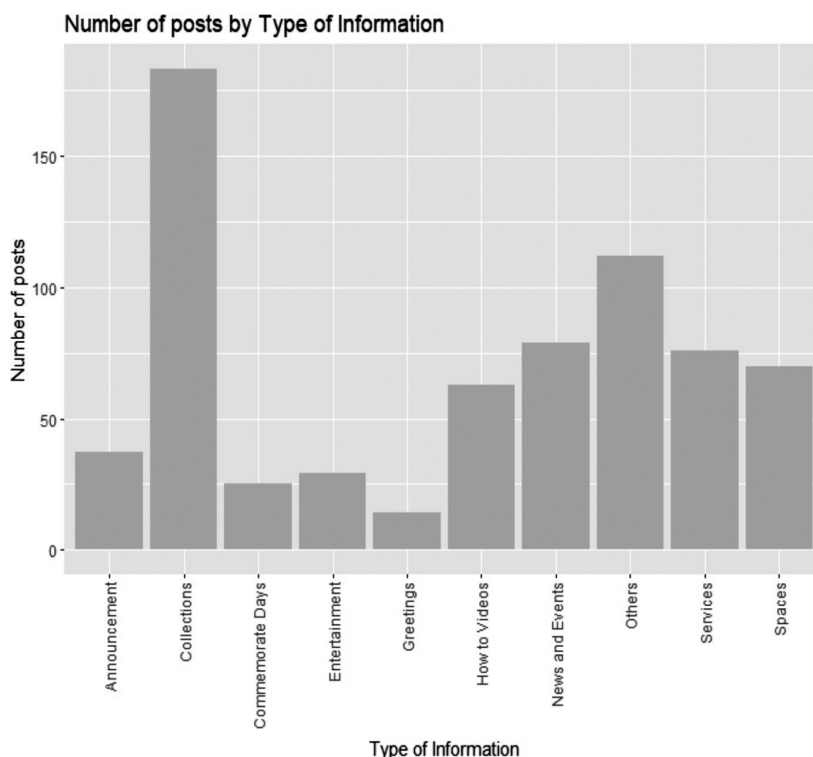


Figure 1. Type of information shared.

According to *Figure 1*, the most common type of information in the libraries' TikTok content is Collection information, which accounts for 183 posts (26.60%). The library promotes new books and reading recommendations to followers via short videos. In this study, content about collection information is presented in a variety of ways, among them displaying book covers, giving book reviews, promoting books that are currently being discussed, citing book quotes, and posting on specific anniversaries. These findings are consistent with those of Vaaler and Brantley (2016) and Wu and Yang (2021), who showed



how libraries can use social media to promote information sources owned by them. The distribution of information about the collections makes the user more aware of their existence. Furthermore, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of a previous library TikTok study conducted by Alley and Hanshew (2022), who discovered that information about collections is one type of information frequently highlighted by library TikTok accounts in the United States.

Furthermore, the second-most shared category of information is other types of information, with a total of 112 posts (16.28%). The library provides educational content such as reading tips, tips on visiting the library during the pandemic, and other content outside the library context such as English lessons, tips for a healthy lifestyle, and environmental care campaigns. These findings emphasize that libraries can provide other types of information besides those strictly within the library context through social media platforms like TikTok, such as educational content, so that the information shared is also useful for library followers. However, libraries must also pay attention to the presentation of published information, including its quantity, because it is only secondary, not primary, information.

Libraries play a fundamental role in optimizing their social media platforms in order to disseminate information to their followers. Libraries use social media to spread information in order to increase their popularity and recognition (Quadri and Adebayo Idowu, 2016). As a result, information dissemination via library social media accounts must consider the balance of published information. According to Okike (2020), librarians should educate users by disseminating information through existing physical and digital media platforms. He goes on to say that, if the context of the information conveyed is outside the context of the library, librarians must establish working relationships with other organizations or agencies.

In this study, librarians needed to collaborate with related organizations or experts to package information for some of TikTok's content, notably educational content, especially on non-library topics. As a result, the information's validity and quality are preserved. The same is true for the subject of the library itself. Librarians must consult with related parties or service departments when disseminating information to ensure that it is not misleading. Therefore, each library is expected to be able to optimize its use of social media. This step is carried out by disseminating information on various topics.

### ***RQ 3. The library's and users' reactions and engagement***

Engagement with social media content is defined as a psychological state of mind experienced by consumers/audiences when perusing social media content which they absorb and enjoy. This condition causes interactive behavior such as

likes, shares, and comments in response to social media content (Syrdal and Briggs, 2018). In this context, patron engagement is classified as viewing/watching videos, liking, commenting on, and sharing posts.

No	Library	Average			
		View	Like	Comment	Share
1	perpusnas_ri	13,041.54	1,030.18	29.16	27.2
2	perpustakaan.adisutjipto	150.03	9.57	1.04	1.30
3	unairlibrary	965.03	41.22	1.22	3.38
4	uinsaizulibrary	146.77	8.77	0.55	0.96
5	uhwperbanaslib	156.81	3.67	0	0.29
6	ui_library	1,129.9	38.9	1.4	6
7	perpustakaan_ummy	231.48	6.36	0.11	0.28
8	perpus.balpem	253.5	14	0	1
9	balai_yanpus	245.91	6.26	0.48	1.04
10	perpus.banjarkab	107.5	7.78	0	0.10
11	perpustakaanmansabdg	802	42	0.90	4.04
12	perpustakaannetral	755.86	42.06	1.13	1
<b>Average</b>		<b>1,498.86</b>	<b>104.23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.88</b>

Table 2. Engagement based on library account.

According to *Table 3*, National Library accounts have the highest average engagement across all metrics: views, likes, comments, and shares. The National Library has the highest engagement in relation to its large number of followers (over 12,500). The average number of views on each account is 1,498.86. This figure is extremely high due to the large view numbers of the large national library account. If views on National Library accounts are excluded from the calculation, the average number of views per account is 449.52. The number of views indicates how many times the audience has watched a short video. As a result, this determines the extent to which content can reach both followers and non-followers.

This study also focuses on the patron engagement in terms of likes. The number of likes on National Library accounts contribute significantly to the average, which is 1,030.13 likes per post. If the National Library account is excluded from the calculation, the average of the eleven accounts is only 20.05 likes per post. This finding is also directly proportional to patron engagement in terms

of comments and shares: engagement at the National Library has a significant impact on the average comment and share. Other than the National Library, the level of engagement in libraries is very low, ranging from 0 to 1.4 comments per post and 0.1 to 4.04 shares per post. This study discovered that patrons/followers were more likely to follow or be exposed to information through the posts of the library’s TikTok account, but did not respond significantly through commenting or sharing.

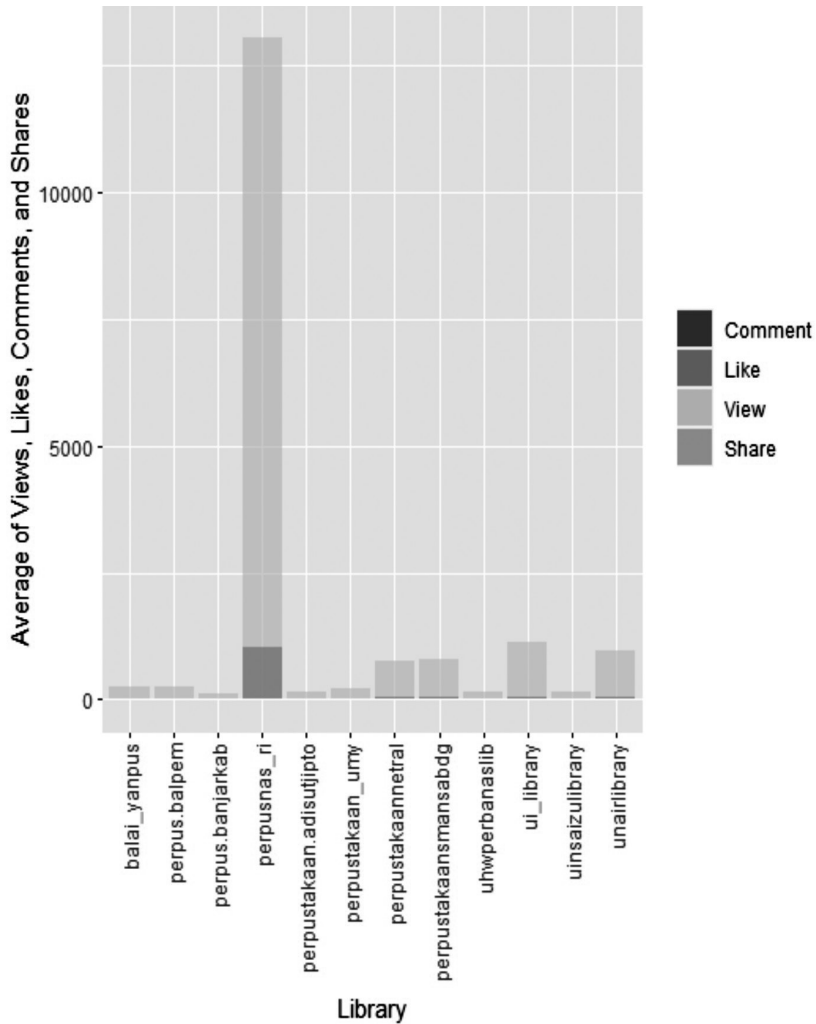


Figure 2. Engagement based on library account.

Social media allows patrons to participate and interact with their content in a variety of ways. Participation variations include likes, dislikes, comments, shares, and others. It is emphasized that it becomes a part of the patron's response and feedback to information shared through social media. Brands/organizations will benefit more from engagement, such as likes or reactions, because it indicates consumer affinity with the brand, thereby strengthening brand-consumer relationships. Likes, comments, and shares by social media followers/patrons are not the only ways to gauge the level of social media engagement. However, this must be a library concern in terms of disseminating information and developing relationships with followers.

The type of information in TikTok publications is then used to determine engagement. The outcome is as follows:

No	Type	Average			
		View	Like	Comment	Share
1	News and Events	694.92	27.58	0.84	1.75
2	Announcement	17,260.89	1,434.21	48.64	53
3	Collections	1,577.98	55.19	1.83	2.08
4	Spaces	1,3487.4	1,312.18	41.14	35.22
5	Services	4,938.28	253.38	7.94	7.71
6	How to Videos	2,905.01	172.38	4.9	8.78
7	Greetings	1,330.21	48	3.28	4
8	Commemoration Days	136.68	7.44	0.12	0.08
9	Entertainment	2,617.82	163.55	6.62	5.1
10	Others	4,076.53	363.29	4.07	3.04
<b>Average</b>		<b>4,902.57</b>	<b>383.72</b>	<b>11.93</b>	<b>12.07</b>

Table 3. Engagement based on type of information.

According to *Table 3*, posts with “announcement” type content receive the most engagement. The content types “spaces” and “services” come next, while the posts with the type of content that commemorates holidays are the lowest-engagement content. These results clearly show what type of content the library's social media followers prefer. Thus, libraries can use social media to disseminate information about announcements to followers, as well as to promote library services and spaces.

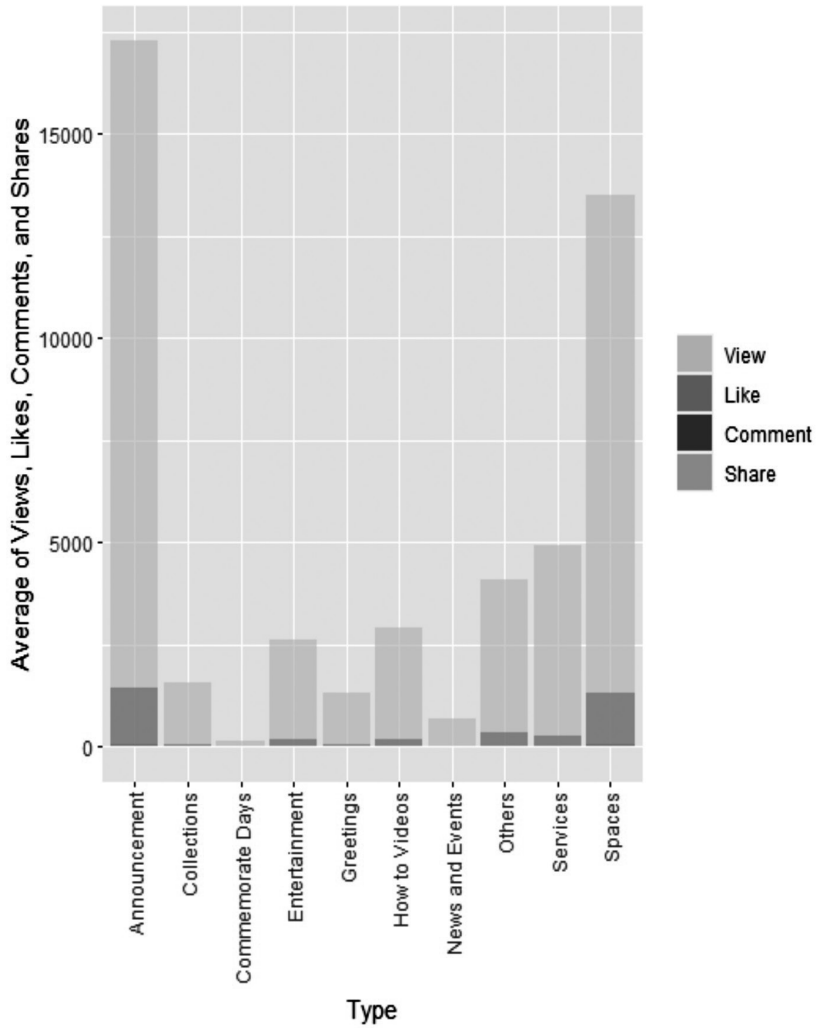


Figure 3. Engagement based on type of information.

Information should be packaged attractively in the form of a short video to make it easier for patrons to learn about the library. There were many changes and shifts in library services provided to patrons during the pandemic and post-pandemic. This, of course, must be quickly disseminated and published to followers. As a result, followers who are library patrons are aware of the most recent changes or information from the library via their social media accounts.

The size of the audience's contribution to the content indicates that social media users, particularly followers, were drawn to the library's content. That is, announcements, services, and library space are the types of information sought and responded to by library followers. However, follower engagement cannot be used as the sole criterion for assessing behavior. Syrdal and Briggs (2018) revealed that consumers who are engaged with content do not necessarily perform any measurable behavior such as sharing, commenting or even "liking".

Libraries that use social media should be concerned about patrons' interaction. This is done not just to draw followers' attention but also to gather feedback on the knowledge that the library disseminates. The number of followers does not necessarily translate into a high degree of engagement with the shared content. According to Idris (2018), there is a lack of interaction in campaign communication, particularly that which is focused on social media. Further explanation was provided, including the fact that organizations should be concerned about the high number of buzzers and phony followers while disseminating information on social media.

## CONCLUSION & FUTURE STUDIES

The data obtained in this study provides valuable insights into the use of TikTok by libraries in Indonesia. A total of 688 posts from 12 library TikTok accounts in Indonesia were subjected to content analysis. Content analysis may evaluate the extent to which different types of libraries use social media platforms such as TikTok as well as the efficient methods employed by libraries to effectively disseminate content. This research also provides a summary of follower interaction on each post and popular themes that libraries can post about.

According to this study, library TikTok accounts in Indonesia were only established in 2020, reflecting the application's growing popularity with a large number of users and short videos shared on the platform. Also, it suggests that libraries are adapting to the changing technological landscape and exploring new ways to engage with their audiences. The restrictions on library visits and access during a pandemic are thought to have encouraged libraries to develop new information-technology-based innovations by utilizing popular platforms.

The main library resources, such as collections, facilities, and services, are the types of information commonly published on TikTok. Outside of the library context, videos that are entertainment/fun or educational. The content analysis revealed that libraries on TikTok mostly publish information about their main resources, such as collections, space, and services. However, libraries also distribute videos that are educational or entertainment/fun, which suggests that they

are trying to reach a wider audience and engage with them in different ways. In this study, the type of announcement pertaining information receives the most engagement. Announcements are relevant because they provide important and timely information to the audience. This finding suggests that libraries should consider the type of information that they publish on social media platforms and focus on providing important and timely updates to their followers. This study suggests that libraries consider the type of information that will be published through social media.

Overall, this study highlights the potential of social media platforms like TikTok for libraries to reach out to their audiences and disseminate information. It also highlights the need for libraries to consider the type of content they publish on social media and to explore new ways to engage with their followers. However, it is important to note that this study only analyzed 12 library TikTok accounts in Indonesia and further research is needed to explore the use of TikTok by libraries in other countries and contexts. Further research is suggested to learn more about the demographics of the library account followers. It also necessitates further investigation into the reactions of followers, particularly comments on any information shared. Finally, it will be more beneficial for library managers to develop social media development strategies.

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