



Final Project 2

PMG 497

Project Template

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**TikTok and Anxiety:
Analyzing the Impact of TikTok Usage on Anxiety
Levels among its Users.**

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Dedication

Abstract

This research examines the impact of TikTok usage on user anxiety levels, given the platform's growing popularity among youth in the context of evolving social media trends. Employing an interpretive inductive approach, the study reviews literature and analyses data collected from TikTok users. Findings suggest a positive correlation between TikTok usage and heightened anxiety levels, attributed to factors such as comparative content, social pressure, and addiction. This underscores the importance of acknowledging the health implications of social media, particularly on platforms like TikTok, and calls for heightened awareness of the risks associated with excessive use. The research advocates for the development of strategies to mitigate social pressure and addiction, aiming to promote the mental well-being of users.

Purpose:

Methodology:

Findings:

Originality & Implication:

Keywords:

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1 Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Considering the rapid technological advancements, social media platforms have emerged as one of the most significant phenomena shaping our present and future. Among these platforms, the TikTok application stands out as one of the most popular applications, especially among the youth.

TikTok is a platform for sharing short video clips characterized by diverse entertaining content. While some view TikTok as a means of entertainment and communication, others raise questions about its impact on mental health, particularly concerning anxiety.

Anxiety is defined as a natural psychological condition characterized by feelings of tension or disturbance. While moderate anxiety is considered normal, it can escalate into a mental disorder that hinders an individual's ability to lead their daily life normally.

Some preliminary studies suggest a potential link between TikTok usage and increased levels of anxiety. Some factors that may contribute to this relationship include:

- **Comparative content:** TikTok encourages the sharing of video clips portraying an idealized life, which may lead users to feel inadequate and dissatisfied with their own lives.
- **Social pressure:** Users may face social pressure to garner a large number of views and likes, leading to feelings of anxiety and tension.
- **Addiction:** TikTok usage may become addictive, leading users to neglect their duties and responsibilities, thus increasing anxiety levels.

This research aims to study the impact of TikTok usage on the anxiety levels of its users in depth. This will be achieved through the analysis of social media data, including TikTok content, user behaviors, and interactions with the platform.

Through this research, we aim to:

- Better understand the relationship between TikTok usage and anxiety.
- Identify factors that contribute to increasing or decreasing TikTok's impact on anxiety.
- Provide recommendations on how to use TikTok safely and healthily.

This research constitutes an important scientific contribution to the field of social media studies and mental health. We expect that the results of this research will help in better understanding the impact of TikTok on its users and provide recommendations to help them use the platform safely and healthily.

1.2 Research Problem:

In an era characterized by technological advancement and the widespread use of social media, using social media platforms has become an integral part of many people's lives, especially the youth. Among these social media platforms, TikTok stands out as one of the most prominent, attracting users with its unique and diverse content, including short video clips covering a wide range of topics and subjects.

Despite the popularity and wide usage of TikTok, its usage raises some concerns and questions, particularly regarding its impact on mental health, specifically on users' anxiety levels. This problem entails studying the effect of TikTok usage on anxiety levels and analyzing potential factors that may increase or decrease anxiety levels among users.

1.2.1 Theoretical Gaps

The existing literature on social media and mental health primarily focuses on platforms like Facebook and Instagram, with limited research specifically addressing TikTok. There is a need for more empirical studies that investigate the unique features of TikTok, such as short video content and algorithm-driven feeds, and their potential impact on anxiety levels. Understanding these theoretical gaps is crucial for developing a comprehensive framework to analyze TikTok's influence on mental health.

1.2.2 Practical Gaps

On a practical level, there is a lack of specific guidelines and recommendations for TikTok users to mitigate potential negative effects on mental health. While some general advice exists for social media use, tailored strategies addressing the unique dynamics of TikTok are scarce. Identifying practical gaps will help in formulating actionable recommendations for users, educators, and policymakers to promote healthier usage patterns and reduce anxiety associated with TikTok.

- **Problem Identification:**

The problem lies in understanding how TikTok usage affects users' anxiety levels and

identifying factors that may contribute to increasing or decreasing this impact. We need to understand how the published content on the platform, social sharing pressure, and elements of platform addiction shape users' experience and their anxiety levels.

- **Justification of the Problem:**

Studying this problem is important due to the increasing popularity of the TikTok platform and its growing influence on users' lives, especially the younger generation. Understanding the impact of this platform on anxiety levels is vital, as excessive anxiety can negatively affect individuals' quality of life, their ability to socialize, and perform their daily duties.

- **Primary Research Question:**

"What is the impact of using the TikTok platform on anxiety levels?"

This primary research question reflects the main objective of the study and focuses on understanding TikTok's impact on users' anxiety. Content and behaviors on the platform will be analyzed to explore how TikTok influences anxiety levels and identify potential factors that may contribute to this impact. This will help in developing recommendations and guidelines to ensure the platform's healthy and safe usage.

1.3 Research Significant

In the era of digital communication and continuous technological advancement, social media platforms have become significantly influential in individuals' and communities' lives. Among these platforms, TikTok emerges as one of the most popular applications currently, especially among the youth. TikTok offers a platform for sharing short video clips that vary between entertaining, educational, and social content.

The importance of studying the impact of TikTok usage on the mental health of its users is increasing due to the widespread usage of this application across the globe. Understanding the effect of TikTok usage on users' anxiety levels is a key focus for comprehending the psychological and social challenges individuals may face as a result of their interaction with this platform.

From this perspective, the significance of this research lies in shedding light on the relationship between TikTok usage and users' anxiety levels. It contributes to enriching the scientific discussion regarding the impact of social media on mental health and provides a theoretical basis for guiding future research in this field.

Additionally, the research findings can contribute to the development of practical strategies and recommendations to mitigate the negative effects of TikTok usage on anxiety levels, thereby enhancing users' mental health and fostering healthy and sustainable communities.

In this way, research on the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety holds significant importance in both academic and practical realms and can have a positive impact on both individuals and society.

1.3.1 At the Theoretical Level:

Enriching Scientific Knowledge: By studying the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety levels, the research contributes to enriching scientific knowledge about the effects of social media on mental health. Researchers and academics can use the results and recommendations to enrich current theories on this topic and deepen their understanding.

Guiding Future Research: Through the study's conclusions, there will be a theoretical foundation for guiding future research in this field, contributing to identifying more aspects for research and advancing the understanding of psychological and social effects of social media.

1.3.2 At the Practical Level:

Practical Applications: The study will provide practical recommendations that can be used to develop policies and procedures to mitigate the negative effects of TikTok usage on users' health. This can have a positive impact on companies and organizations managing social media platforms who aim to promote their users' health.

Educational and Awareness Applications: The study may contribute to the development of educational and awareness programs targeting young users, parents, and educators to raise awareness about the best practices for using TikTok safely and healthily.

Public Health Applications: The results may guide public health policy efforts and awareness campaigns to mitigate the negative effects of excessive social media usage on individual and community mental health.

In summary, the study provides theoretical benefits by enriching knowledge and guiding future research, in addition to practical benefits through its applications in various social, health, and educational domains.

1.4 Research Questions

- **Main Research Question:**

What is the impact of using the TikTok platform on anxiety levels?

- a) **Sub-question 1:**

How does the content posted on TikTok affect the anxiety levels of users?

- b) **Sub-question 2:**

What is the role of social pressure in increasing anxiety levels among TikTok users?

- c) **Sub-question 3:**

How can addiction to TikTok usage lead to increased anxiety levels?

- **Main Research Question:**

What are the factors that contribute to reducing the impact of using the TikTok platform on anxiety levels?

- a) **Sub-question 1:**

How can the content posted on TikTok be improved to promote mental health and reduce anxiety levels?

- d) **Sub-question 2:**

What is the role of awareness and education about safe TikTok usage in reducing anxiety levels among users?

- e) **Sub-question 3:**

How can policies and procedures on TikTok be developed to prevent addiction and control social pressure, thereby reducing anxiety levels?

1.5 Research Objectives

- **Analyze the impact of using the TikTok application on anxiety levels among users.**

The focus is on exploring the extent to which using the platform and users' interactions with the available content on the TikTok application affect their anxiety levels.

- **Identify the relationship between the content posted on TikTok and anxiety levels among users.**

Different types of content posted on the platform will be analyzed, and their potential impact on users' anxiety levels will be evaluated.

- **Explore the role of social pressure in increasing anxiety levels among TikTok users.**

The impact of increasing social pressure on users' behaviors and psychological states will be analyzed.

- **Understand how addiction to TikTok usage leads to increased anxiety levels.**

The relationship between continuous application usage and anxiety levels will be explored, along with analyzing the psychological effects of addiction on users.

The research objectives are characterized by their clarity and specificity, directing efforts towards understanding the potential relationship between TikTok usage and anxiety levels, thereby contributing to achieving the specified objectives accurately.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

- **Main Research Hypothesis:**

The use of the TikTok platform is associated with an increase in anxiety levels among users.

Subsidiary Hypotheses:

- **First Subsidiary Hypothesis:**

The content posted on TikTok affects the anxiety levels of users, as content portraying an ideal or unrealistic life may be linked to an increase in anxiety levels among viewers.

- **Second Subsidiary Hypothesis:**

Social pressure on TikTok increases anxiety levels among users, as users may feel anxious and stressed due to pressure to gain a large number of views and likes.

- **Third Subsidiary Hypothesis:**

Addiction to using TikTok is associated with an increase in anxiety levels, as addiction can lead to neglect of daily duties and responsibilities, thereby increasing anxiety levels among users.

1.7 Reduction Hypotheses:

- **First Reduction Hypothesis:**

Improving the content posted on TikTok can reduce anxiety levels among users, as content focusing on realism and positivity may encourage reducing anxiety and promoting mental health.

- **Second Reduction Hypothesis:**

Awareness of the need to use TikTok safely and healthily can reduce anxiety levels among users, as knowledge of best practices and strategies can help reduce the negative effects of TikTok usage on mental health.

- **Third Reduction Hypothesis:**

Implementing policies and procedures to reduce addiction and social pressure on TikTok can reduce anxiety levels among users, as clear rules and guidelines can provide a healthier and more stable environment for users.

The proposed hypotheses in the research will be reflected in its conclusions and recommendations, and the importance of data analysis will lie in verifying the validity of these hypotheses and confirming the impact of using TikTok on anxiety levels among users.

1.8 Research Model

The Effect of TikTok Usage on Anxiety Levels

- **Independent Variable:** TikTok Usage
- **Dimensions:**
 - Frequency of TikTok usage (daily, weekly, monthly).
 - Duration of TikTok usage (hours per day).
 - Type of consumed content (entertainment, educational, social).
 - Interaction with other users (likes, comments, shares).
- **Mediating Variable:** Social Comparison
- **Dimensions:**
 - Comparison with influencers/celebrities.
 - Comparison with friends/followers.
 - Comparison with idealized self-images.
- **Dependent Variable:** Anxiety Levels
- **Dimensions:**
 - General anxiety symptoms (stress, worry, distress).
 - Social anxiety symptoms (fear of judgment, fear of negative evaluation).
 - Performance anxiety symptoms (fear of failure).

- **Moderating Variable:** Coping Mechanisms
- **Dimensions:**
 - Problem-focused coping (problem-solving, seeking information).
 - Emotion-focused coping (seeking emotional support, relaxation techniques).
 - Avoidant coping (denial, distraction).

In this research model, TikTok usage is considered the independent variable, assumed to affect anxiety levels. Social comparison acts as a mediating variable, influencing the relationship between TikTok usage and anxiety levels. Anxiety levels are measured through various dimensions to capture different aspects of anxiety. Additionally, coping mechanisms serve as a moderating variable, which may influence how TikTok usage affects anxiety levels. Each variable and its dimensions contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the relationships within the research model.

1.9 Scope of The Study

The scope of this study is confined to examining the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety levels among users, with a particular focus on young adults aged 18-30. The study will be conducted using a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Surveys and interviews will be used to gather data from TikTok users to provide a comprehensive understanding of their experiences and the associated anxiety levels. The study will analyze the frequency, duration, and type of content consumed on TikTok, as well as user interactions and social comparisons. The geographic scope is limited to a specific region to ensure a manageable and focused research sample.

1.10 The Project Structure

The structure of the project is organized into five main chapters, each addressing different aspects of the research:

1. Chapter One: Introduction

- Research Background
- Research Problem
- Theoretical Gaps
- Practical Gaps
- Research Significance
- Theoretical Level
- Practical Level
- Research Questions
- Research Objectives
- Research Hypotheses
- Reduction Hypotheses
- Research Model
- Scope of the Study
- Project Structure

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

- Introduction
- Independent Variable
- Dependent Variable
- Relationship Between Variables
- Conclusion

3. Chapter Three: Research Methodology

- Introduction
- Operational Definitions for Research Variables
- Research Design (Research Onion)
- Research Population & Sampling Methods and Techniques
- Data Collection Method
- Types of Data
- Statistical Analysis Procedures
- Conclusion

4. Chapter Four: Statistical Analysis & Findings Discussion

- Introduction
- Sample Profile (Descriptive Statistics)
- Validity & Reliability Tests
- Descriptive Statistics (Research Variables)
- Testing Hypotheses & Discussion
- Conclusion

5. Chapter Five: Research Limitations, Recommendations & Conclusion

- Research Limitations & Future Research
- Research Recommendations
- Conclusion

The project structure provides a clear roadmap for the research, ensuring a logical flow and comprehensive coverage of all relevant aspects of the study.

2 Chapter Tow: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the existing literature related to the impact of social media usage, specifically TikTok, on anxiety levels among its users. The review aims to identify gaps in the current research, explore theoretical foundations, and set the context for the present study. It covers the independent variable (TikTok usage), the dependent variable (anxiety levels), and the relationship between these variables.

2.2 The Independent Variable

TikTok Usage

TikTok is a social media platform where users create and share short videos. Its unique features include an algorithm-driven feed, a wide variety of content genres, and strong social interaction elements such as likes, comments, and shares. The literature on social media usage generally highlights the following dimensions of TikTok usage that are relevant to this study:

- **Frequency of Use:** How often users access TikTok.
- **Duration of Use:** The amount of time users spend on TikTok per session.
- **Type of Content Consumed:** The genres of content (entertainment, educational, social) that users engage with.
- **User Interaction:** The level of engagement users have with content through likes, comments, and shares.

These dimensions are critical for understanding how different usage patterns may influence users' mental health, particularly anxiety.

2.3 The Dependent Variable

Anxiety Levels

Anxiety is a psychological condition characterized by feelings of tension, worry, and nervousness. It can manifest in various forms, including general anxiety, social anxiety, and performance anxiety. The literature on anxiety identifies several symptoms and contributing factors:

- **General Anxiety Symptoms:** Stress, worry, and general distress.
- **Social Anxiety Symptoms:** Fear of judgment, fear of negative evaluation, and discomfort in social interactions.
- **Performance Anxiety Symptoms:** Fear of failure and pressure to succeed.

Understanding these symptoms and how they relate to social media usage is essential for evaluating the impact of TikTok on mental health.

2.4 The Relationship Between the Independent and the Dependent Variables

Linking TikTok Usage to Anxiety Levels

The relationship between TikTok usage and anxiety levels can be influenced by several mediating and moderating factors. Key theories and findings from the literature include:

- **Social Comparison Theory:** Users may compare themselves to influencers or peers on TikTok, leading to feelings of inadequacy and increased anxiety.
- **Social Pressure:** The need to gain views, likes, and followers can create stress and anxiety.
- **Addiction:** Excessive use of TikTok can lead to addictive behaviors, neglect of responsibilities, and heightened anxiety.

The literature also explores how coping mechanisms, such as problem-focused coping (e.g., seeking information) and emotion-focused coping (e.g., seeking emotional support), can moderate the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety levels.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the existing literature on TikTok usage and its potential impact on anxiety levels. It has identified key dimensions of both the independent and dependent variables and discussed the theoretical underpinnings of their relationship. The gaps highlighted in the literature justify the need for this study, which aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of how TikTok usage affects anxiety among its users. The next chapter will detail the research methodology used to explore these relationships empirically.

3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

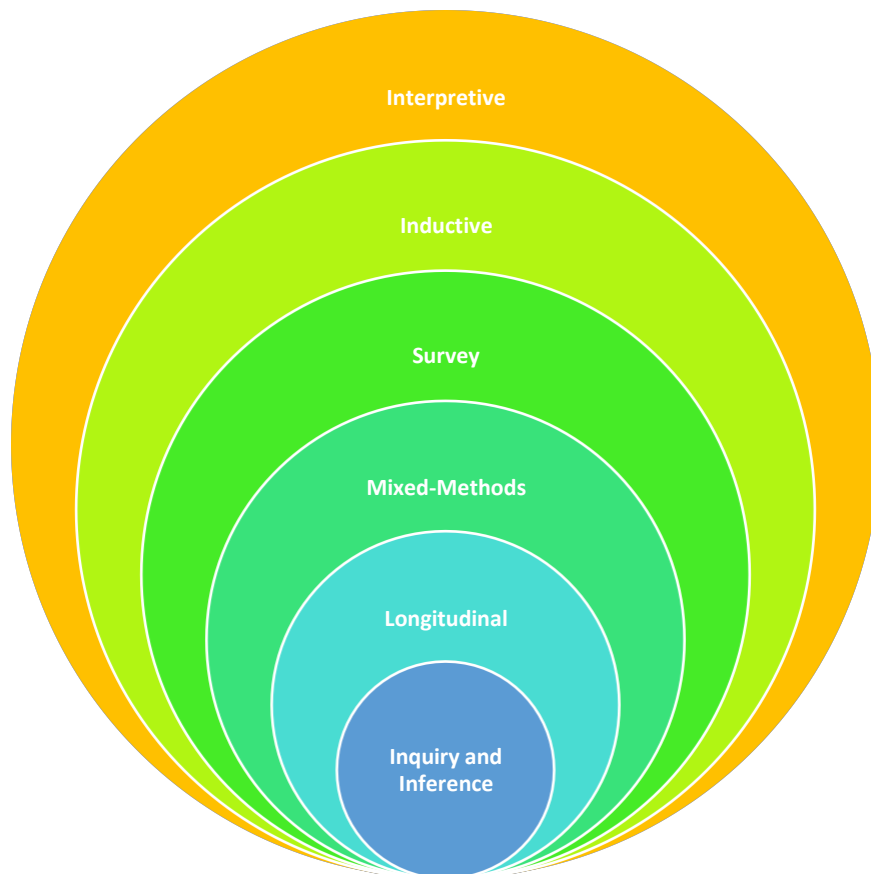
This chapter outlines the research methodology used to investigate the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety levels among its users. It covers the operational definitions for research variables, the research design based on the Research Onion framework, the research population and sampling methods, data collection methods, types of data, statistical analysis procedures, and concludes with an overview of the methodology's relevance to the study's objectives.

3.2 Operational Definitions for Research Variables

- **TikTok Usage:** Measured in terms of frequency (daily, weekly, monthly), duration (hours per day), type of content consumed (entertainment, educational, social), and level of user interaction (likes, comments, shares).
- **Anxiety Levels:** Assessed through symptoms of general anxiety (stress, worry), social anxiety (fear of judgment), and performance anxiety (fear of failure).
- **Social Comparison:** The extent to which users compare themselves with influencers, friends, and idealized self-images on TikTok.
- **Coping Mechanisms:** Strategies used by users to manage anxiety, including problem-focused coping (problem-solving), emotion-focused coping (seeking support), and avoidant coping (distraction).

3.3 Research Design (Research Onion)

1. **Research Philosophy:** Interpretive
2. **Research Approach:** Inductive
3. **Research Strategy:** Survey
4. **Research Type:** Mixed-Methods (combining qualitative and quantitative approaches)
5. **Time Horizon:** Longitudinal (observing changes over time)
6. **Data Collection and Analysis Methods:** Inquiry (surveys and interviews) and Inference (statistical analysis)



3.4 Research Population & Sampling Methods and Technique

- **Research Population:** TikTok users aged 18-30.
- **Sampling Methods:**
 - **Sampling Technique:** Stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different user demographics.
 - **Sample Size:** Determined based on power analysis to ensure statistical significance.

3.5 Data Collection Method

- **Surveys:** Structured questionnaires distributed online to collect quantitative data on TikTok usage patterns and anxiety levels.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews conducted with a subset of survey respondents to gather qualitative insights into their experiences and coping mechanisms.
- **Data Collection Tools:** Online survey platforms and interview recording software.

3.6 Types of Data

- **Quantitative Data:** Numerical data collected through surveys, including frequency and duration of TikTok usage, and self-reported anxiety levels.
- **Qualitative Data:** Descriptive data collected through interviews, providing deeper insights into user experiences, social comparisons, and coping strategies.

3.7 Statistical Analysis Procedures

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Used to summarize and describe the main features of the data (e.g., means, medians, standard deviations).
- **Inferential Statistics:**
 - **Correlation Analysis:** To examine the relationship between TikTok usage and anxiety levels.
 - **Regression Analysis:** To assess the predictive power of TikTok usage on anxiety levels, considering social comparison and coping mechanisms as mediators/moderators.
 - **Validity and Reliability Tests:** To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the survey instruments.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the research methodology, including the operational definitions of variables, research design, population and sampling methods, data collection techniques, types of data, and statistical analysis procedures. These methods are designed to rigorously examine the impact of TikTok usage on anxiety levels, providing a comprehensive framework for the study. The next chapter will present the statistical analysis and discuss the findings in detail.

4 Chapter Four: Statistical Analysis & Findings Discussion

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Sample profile (descriptive statistics for research sample)

4.3 Validity & reliability tests for the questionnaires

4.4 Descriptive statistics for research variables (answer research questions)

4.5 Testing Hypotheses & Findings Discussion

4.6 Conclusion

Numbers

There has been a significant increase in the number of TikTok users worldwide in the past couple of years, and this table illustrates the difference in the number of TikTok users worldwide from 2017 to 2023.

TikTok Users	Year
100 M	2017
133 M	2018
381 M	2019
700 M	2020
902 M	2021
1466 M	2022
1677 M	2023

Element	Value
Number of TikTok users in Saudi Arabia	26.39 million
Reach of TikTok ads in Saudi Arabia, regardless of age	72.7% of the local internet user base
TikTok users who are females	34.2% (9.01 million users)
TikTok users who are males	65.8% (17.38 million users)

- **Number of TikTok Users in Saudi Arabia:** The user base is quite substantial, with 26.39 million users. This is a significant segment of the population, given Saudi Arabia's estimated total population of around 35 million. The size of the user base underscores the platform's popularity and its social significance.
- **Reach of TikTok Ads in Saudi Arabia, Regardless of Age:** TikTok ads have a reach of 72.7% of the local internet user base. This figure indicates TikTok's extensive penetration among internet users in the country, suggesting that the majority of the online population is exposed to TikTok content, making it a valuable channel for digital marketing.
- **TikTok Users Who Are Females:** Female users constitute 34.2% of the TikTok audience in Saudi Arabia, totaling approximately 9.01 million users. This proportion reflects the platform's gender distribution and hints at the kinds of content and engagement strategies that may resonate with this demographic.
- **TikTok Users Who Are Males:** Males make up a larger proportion of TikTok's user base in Saudi Arabia at 65.8%, translating to about 17.38 million users. The dominance of male users could influence the platform's content trends and the cultural context of social interactions.

TikTok application by gender and age: Females aged 18-24 account for 21% of TikTok users worldwide, while male users from the same age group make up only 17.5% of users on this platform.

Age Group	Females (%)	Males (%)
18-24	20.9%	17.5%
25-34	17%	15.5%
35-44	8.1%	7.5%
45-54	4.3%	3.7%
55+	3.1%	2.4%

5 Chapter Five: Research limitations, Recommendations & Conclusion

5.1 Research Limitations & Future Research

5.2 Research Recommendations

5.3 Conclusion

Reference

[Instagram users in Saudi Arabia Facebook users in Saudi Arabia DIGITAL 2023: SAUDI ARABIA](#)
[+ TikTok Statistics In 2023 \(Users, Revenue & Trends\)](#)

Appendix