
Representation of Cultural Values in Digital Content Through a Grounded Theory Approach to Cultural Creators on Tiktok

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze how cultural values are represented and perceived in digital media content, particularly on the TikTok platform. Employing a qualitative grounded theory approach, the research involved nine observations of content creators who share representations of both local and transnational cultures. The data analysis process was conducted in stages using open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, facilitated by NVivo 15 software to support coding, conceptual relationships, and data visualization. The findings reveal that “Educational and Reflective Impact” emerged as the core category representing the main outcome of digital cultural content. This impact arises from the complex interaction of several supporting categories: Cultural Representation, Cultural Values and Tolerance, Presentation Strategies and Appeal, Audience Participation and Response, Consistency and Cultural Commitment, and Digital Communication Ethics. These findings suggest that digital cultural content serves not only as entertainment but also as a medium for social education and cultural reflection, especially when presented authentically, engagingly, and ethically. This study contributes to the field of digital cultural literacy and offers a systematic approach to understanding how culture is communicated, interpreted, and reimaged by global audiences through social media.

Keywords: *Digital Cultural Content, Cultural Values, Grounded Theory, Digital Ethnography*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought about fundamental changes in the way humans construct and represent culture. Social media, as part of the rapidly evolving digital infrastructure, has transformed the patterns of cultural production, distribution, and consumption in contemporary society. TikTok, one of the most popular social media platforms in the world today, has emerged as a highly dynamic space for cultural expression, particularly among younger generations. (Gyimah, 2024; Syam & Meldawati, 2022). Indonesia ranks among the top countries in global TikTok usage, with the majority of users coming from the productive age group, particularly teenagers and young adults. This phenomenon indicates that digital media is no longer merely a channel of communication but has become a discursive space where cultural identities are negotiated and reshaped (Lee & Abidin, 2023). Amid the widespread use of TikTok as a space for

cultural expression, critical questions arise regarding how local and global cultural values are represented in digital content and how they contribute to cultural learning.

Several previous studies have shown that social media holds significant potential in shaping cultural awareness (Moir, 2023), but at the same time, it carries the risk of cultural meaning distortion due to commodification processes and the algorithmic logic of the platform (Sadler, 2022). In the Indonesian context, where cultural complexity is high and social media penetration is widespread, it is important to further examine how content creators function as agents of cultural representation, both on local and transnational scales (Nayaka et al., 2024). The urgency of this study lies in the growing intensity of digital cultural content consumption among young people, which, on one hand, opens new opportunities for cultural preservation and non-formal education, but on the other hand, also carries the potential for reinterpretations of cultural values that may not align with their original contexts. However, despite the increasing body of research on social media and cultural awareness, there remains a notable gap in understanding how the everyday practices of cultural representation by digital creators actively construct educational and reflective effects on audiences, particularly in non-formal learning spaces. Existing studies often focus on content commodification or audience reception separately, leaving an insufficient exploration of the dynamic interplay between content creation, value transmission, and audience learning processes. This study addresses that gap by specifically examining the mechanisms through which digital cultural content fosters social education and reflection.

As patterns of literacy shift toward digital and visual forms, there is a growing need for a deeper understanding of how cultural narratives are constructed in digital spaces and how these narratives influence audience comprehension, attitudes, and reflection (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022). This study aims to identify and understand how cultural values are represented in social media content by Indonesian content creators and how such representations produce educational and reflective impacts on audiences (Literat & Kligler-Vilenchik, 2021). In other words, this research not only examines the forms of cultural representation but also investigates the cognitive and affective effects of digital cultural content consumption on users. The central research question addressed in this study is: How do cultural content creators on TikTok represent cultural values, and how does such content generate educational and reflective effects on audiences in Indonesia? To answer this question, the study employs a grounded theory methodological approach, which allows thematic categories to emerge inductively from field data. Analysis was carried out in sequential stages through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding of data collected from nine TikTok creators who actively share cultural narratives through short-form videos. The investigation focused on the content itself, modes of delivery, comment section interactions, and rhetorical strategies used by creators to convey their cultural messages.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the discourse on digital cultural literacy. Theoretically, it expands the understanding of the relationship between digital media, cultural representation, and the educational impact on audiences (Bryan & Alvin, 2023). Practically, the findings of this research are expected to provide a foundation for the development of digital culture-based educational policies and serve as a reference for content creators and educators in producing content that is not only visually engaging but also educationally and ethically impactful.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The literature on cultural value on TikTok reveals a multifaceted landscape where platform affordances, algorithmic curation, and participatory practices converge to redefine how cultural identities and discourses are constructed and circulated. This review synthesizes studies examining the mechanisms through which TikTok nurtures both local and global cultural expressions and how these processes not only reflect but also reshape societal norms.

A key dimension in this literature is how TikTok's algorithm and content recommendation features operationalize cultural identity formation. Sarwatay et al. (Sarwatay et al., 2022) illustrate that TikTok's unique algorithm facilitates the circulation of regional trends, enabling a localized virtual ecosystem where even young users negotiate their peer-group cultures despite parental mediation. Similarly, Liu Liu (Liu, 2023) demonstrates that the platform's design enables the export of local city images such as Chengdu to a global audience, providing a dynamic channel for cross-cultural communication and the dissemination of cultural identity. Both studies underscore the platform's role in interweaving localized cultural practices with global digital trends.

Cultural discourse on TikTok is examined through the lens of modality and identity politics. Maddox and Gill Maddox & Gill (Maddox & Gill, 2023) investigate BookTok, a sub-community that constructs its own cultural discourse, reflecting and reinforcing expectations within its membership through a lens of hegemony and identity negotiation. In parallel, Lee and Abidin Lee & Abidin (Lee & Abidin, 2023) explore how TikTok's creative affordances, powered by artificial intelligence, facilitate the development of identity politics among diverse groups, including the emergence of vernacular digital cultures among Indian children and LGBTQI+ users. These accounts highlight the interplay between digital interactions and broader cultural narratives that inform how community and identity are perceived on the platform.

Another strand of research focuses on narrative and storytelling as vehicles of cultural expression. Vizcaíno-Verdú and Abidin Vizcaíno-Verdú & Abidin (Vizcaíno-Verdú & Abidin, 2021) analyze cross-cultural storytelling approaches in TikTok's music challenges, emphasizing that the platform's audiovisual storytelling capabilities enable users to share cultural narratives in innovative ways. Zeng and Yan Zeng & Yan (Zeng & Yan, 2024) employ computational analysis to reveal how climate-related visual storytelling on TikTok is influenced by regional and cultural contexts, reflecting the nuanced interconnections between aesthetics, cultural identity, and political discourse. These studies underline that TikTok is not merely a medium for entertainment but also a space where cultural histories and values are continuously rearticulated.

The platform also serves as a site for playful activism and memetic performance that impact cultural memory and resistance. Cervi and Divon Cervi & Divon (Cervi & Divon, 2023) argue that TikTok challenges—especially those related to political and social resistance act as a repository for communal narratives in which users creatively reframe their identity and collective memory through humor and meme culture. Chafe Chafe (Chafe, 2023) discusses TikTok's dual nature as a repository of both challenging and affirming cultural artifacts, noting the importance of such digital archives in preserving cultural memory. Furthermore, Hautea et al. Hautea et al. (Hautea et al., 2021) focus on affective publics and ambivalent climate activism on TikTok, demonstrating that even ambiguous and semiotic performance within climate discourse significantly contributes to the cultural atmosphere on the platform.

Youth culture and the transformation of private identities into public narratives also emerge as significant themes. Leyn et al. (Leyn et al., 2021) illustrate how tweens' interactions on TikTok represent early engagements with digital public spaces, serving as crucibles for developing cultural norms and social behaviors. Kennedy (Kennedy, 2020) expands on this by discussing TikTok's role in recasting girlhood culture during periods of global crisis, where the platform provided a medium for young women to assert visibility and counter prevailing narratives of isolation. Literat and Kligler-Vilenchik (Literat & Kligler-Vilenchik, 2021) contribute to this discussion by evidencing how popular cultural content on TikTok stimulates youth collective political expression, bridging entertainment and civic engagement.

Lastly, broader socio-economic and cultural intersections are acknowledged through analyses that position TikTok as a potent influencer in the global cultural economy. Sharif et al. (Sharif et al., 2023) examine TikTok's impact on Pakistani society, noting that the platform transcends digital entertainment to become a significant socio-cultural and economic actor. By circulating cultural values that interconnect local traditions with contemporary market dynamics, TikTok is seen as both a mirror and an agent of social transformation.

While previous studies have comprehensively mapped TikTok's role in cultural circulation, identity negotiation, and socio-economic transformation, there remains limited attention to how cultural content specifically generates educational and reflective impacts on audiences through everyday digital interactions. Much of the existing literature focuses either on macro-level phenomena such as cultural commodification or political mobilization, or on micro-level identity performances, without sufficiently addressing the pedagogical potentials embedded in cultural representations. This study fills that gap by systematically investigating how the creative strategies of cultural creators, the transmission of inclusive values, and the participatory nature of audience interactions on TikTok collectively foster non-formal cultural learning and social reflection. By emphasizing the educational dimensions of digital cultural content, this research offers a nuanced contribution to the discourse on digital cultural literacy.

In conclusion, the reviewed literature collectively demonstrates that TikTok operates on multiple cultural dimensions from facilitating localized identity formation and fostering innovative narrative practices to enabling political and social resistance. By leveraging algorithmic personalization and creative affordances, TikTok not only mirrors existing cultural modalities but also generates new spaces for cultural expression and collective memory. Future research should continue to integrate interdisciplinary methods to further elucidate these dynamics in an increasingly complex digital media ecosystem.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a grounded theory design, which enables the researcher to develop thematic understanding inductively from field data. Grounded theory was chosen for its openness to the emergence of categories and relationships from the data itself, aligning with the study's objective to explore how digital cultural content is constructed, presented, and interpreted within the social media landscape by and for young people in Indonesia. The research focuses on cultural content produced by nine TikTok creators who actively engage with issues of local and cross-cultural (diasporic) identity. These creators were selected purposively based on the following criteria: a focus on cultural representation in their content, active engagement with audiences through interactions in the comment section, and consistent content uploads during the three-month period of January to March 2025.

Data were collected through non-participant observation of cultural videos uploaded by the selected creators. The observations were conducted systematically using a recording sheet designed to capture seven key aspects: cultural authenticity, alignment with cultural values, content appeal, audience interaction, consistency in conveying cultural values, ethics of digital communication, and the influence on audience understanding and appreciation. In addition to structured observation, narrative notes from the observers were also gathered to enrich the context and capture cultural expressions that may not be explicitly verbalized.

Data analysis was conducted through the three main stages of grounded theory: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. During the open coding phase, excerpts and observations from the coding sheets were identified and labeled to capture basic units of meaning. These units were then grouped and connected into broader thematic categories through axial coding. In the final phase, selective coding, one core category “Educational and Reflective Impact” was selected as the central theme that best encapsulated the overall meaning of the data. This category became the focal point for constructing conceptual relationships.

The coding and analysis processes were facilitated by NVivo 15 software, which was used to organize the data, create nodes, build relationships among categories, write analytical memos, and visualize findings through concept maps. With the aid of NVivo, the analysis process was more structured and transparent, and it enabled thorough documentation of the analytical trail, serving as a form of internal validation for the interpretations developed.

As grounded theory is inherently an interpretative methodology, the coding and categorization processes in this study were deeply influenced by the researchers’ perspectives, theoretical sensitivity, and reflexive engagement with the data. Rather than seeking objective truths, the analysis aimed to construct plausible and meaningful theoretical explanations grounded in the observed phenomena. Validity in this context was approached through maintaining an explicit and traceable analytical process, supported by detailed memoing and consistent comparison across data points. Reliability was addressed by ensuring transparency in coding decisions and by systematically documenting how emergent categories evolved through iterative analysis stages. Thus, the findings reflect not only the data itself but also the interpretative lenses through which cultural meanings were constructed and theorized.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The following project map illustrates the conceptual structure resulting from the grounded theory analysis, with “Educational and Reflective Impact” serving as the core category at the center of all relational pathways. Each element in the map demonstrates that the educational and reflective impact of digital cultural content emerges from the interaction among various dimensions.

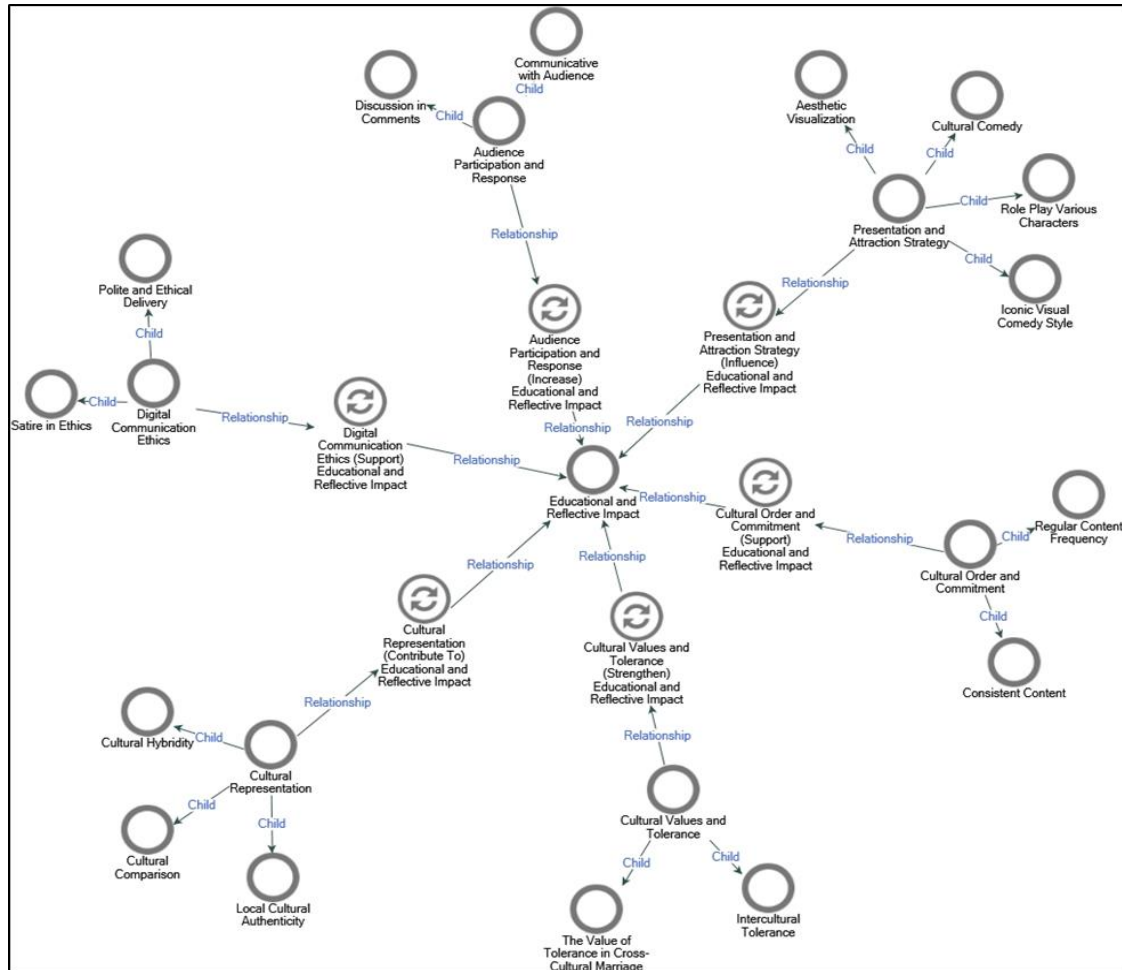


Figure 1 Research Map Project

The results of axial coding from nine observations of digital cultural content reveal that the expression of cultural values in digital media forms a web of interconnected relational patterns. From the grouping of open codes into axial categories, it becomes clear that cultural representation practices, presentation strategies, digital communication ethics, and audience responses play significant roles in shaping the educational impact of content.

The category “Cultural Representation” encapsulates how cultural identities both local and transnational are conveyed through language, dialects, clothing symbols, and everyday practices featured in digital content. These representations are not always entirely authentic; some content displays cultural hybridity as a result of globalization and the borderless nature of digital platforms. This phenomenon is crucial for understanding the extent to which content either represents or reconstructs culture.

Meanwhile, the category “Presentation Strategies and Appeal” highlights the communication techniques used by creators to attract audience attention. Humor, aesthetic visuals, distinctive personas, and storytelling are the dominant approaches. These strategies not only contribute to content popularity but also shape cultural perceptions for audiences who may not have direct access to the cultures being represented.

The category “Digital Communication Ethics” emerges as a balancing element in the delivery of cultural values. Some creators demonstrate skillful politeness and respectful language use, while others employ satirical humor that risks being misunderstood. This

is where the relationship with the category “Cultural Values and Tolerance” becomes vital content that promotes tolerance, openness to diversity, and intercultural empathy tends to foster healthy discussion spaces in the comment sections.

Next, “Audience Participation and Response” reflects how audiences are not merely passive consumers but active agents in extending the meaning of the content. Peer-to-peer discussions, replies to comments, and requests for follow-up videos illustrate a level of interactivity that positions digital media as a space for collective cultural learning.

All of these categories converge on “Educational and Reflective Impact” the degree to which cultural content enhances audience understanding, appreciation, and even attitudinal change toward the culture being presented. Content that is consistent, engaging, and well-communicated tends to have a stronger educational effect, particularly when supported by active audience interaction and inclusively presented cultural values. This is because nearly all other categories relate to it, whether directly (as causes, triggers, reinforcers) or implicitly (as consequences of cultural representation and content delivery).

Based on the axial coding and the narrative synthesis, Educational and Reflective Impact was established as the core category. The educational and reflective impact of digital cultural content does not emerge in isolation; rather, it is the result of complex interactions among elements within cultural representation and communication. When cultural representations are presented accurately, supported by compelling presentation strategies and respectful communication, audiences not only gain cultural knowledge but are also encouraged to reflect on it within their own social contexts. Active audience participation broadens the interpretive space and reinforces the process of shared cultural learning. The consistency of content creators in producing such content plays a vital role in sustaining and extending these educational effects.

Discussion

Table 1. Core Category, Supporting Category and Functions

Core Category	Supporting Category (Axial)	Logical Relation / Function
Educational and Reflective Impact	Cultural Representation	Provides foundational cultural information → influences audience understanding
	Cultural Values and Tolerance	Creates cultural meaning → triggers social reflection and empathy
	Presentation Strategies and Appeal	Makes content accessible and memorable → reinforces educational effects
	Audience Participation and Response	Shapes collaborative learning processes → broadens cultural perspectives
	Consistency and Cultural Commitment	Ensures continuity → strengthens the internalization of values
	Digital Communication Ethics	Maintains a healthy discussion space → enhances cultural meaning reception

The table presented illustrates the conceptual structure derived from the selective coding process, in which the core category Educational and Reflective Impact emerges from the integration of six supporting categories generated during the axial coding phase. Each supporting, or axial, category does not merely stand as an isolated theme identified from the data but also holds a logical and functional relationship to the formation of the study's central meaning. The Cultural Representation category, for instance, serves as the foundational layer in conveying cultural values through digital content. When culture is presented authentically and contextually, it provides a solid base of information that influences how audiences understand and internalize those cultural values.

The Cultural Values and Tolerance category plays a key role in shaping cultural meaning that prompts social reflection and fosters empathy. This occurs when noble values such as mutual cooperation, respect, or openness to diversity are embedded within the narratives or modes of delivery. Meanwhile, Presentation Strategies and Appeal are crucial for the success of cultural messaging in reaching audiences. Content delivered in creative forms such as humor, appealing visuals, or storytelling is more accessible and memorable, thereby enhancing its educational effectiveness.

The category Audience Participation and Response reflects the dialogical dimension of digital cultural content, where the active engagement of audiences through comments, discussions, or shared experiences facilitates collaborative learning processes that enrich cultural understanding on a social level. Consistency and Cultural Commitment indicates that content produced regularly builds credibility and strengthens the internalization of values over time. Finally, Digital Communication Ethics functions as an essential filter in maintaining a healthy interactive space, where respectful language use and thoughtful delivery enhance the acceptance and comprehension of cultural messages.

Taken together, these six categories work synergistically to form a process of digital cultural literacy that is not only informative but also transformative. This study finds that the digital cultural content produced by TikTok creators in Indonesia is not merely a space for visual expression, but also contains deep layers of meaning that touch on the educational, emotional, and social aspects of culture. Through the grounded theory approach, the exploration of nine cultural creators has resulted in a set of thematic categories that do not operate in isolation, but rather interconnect in constructing a shared understanding of cultural values. This section presents the core findings in a narrative and reflective manner, followed by a discussion in relation to previous literature and its broader social significance.

The final outcome of the grounded theory process is the formulation of a substantive theory:

“In digital spaces, cultural content becomes a medium for social learning when cultural representations are presented authentically, values are conveyed inclusively, and user interactions occur in a participatory and ethical manner”

The substantive theory formulated in this study asserts that in digital spaces, cultural content serves not only as a medium of information but also as an active and meaningful form of social learning. This process takes place when cultural representations are presented authentically, the embedded values are conveyed inclusively, and communication among users occurs in a participatory and ethical manner. These three components are interrelated conditions for creating content that goes beyond entertainment content that educates and fosters social reflection. Content that portrays culture honestly and in depth helps cultivate a sense of connection between audiences and

the cultures being presented. When values such as tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity are embedded in open and approachable narratives, audiences from diverse backgrounds become more engaged and find space to understand and appreciate other cultures.

More than simply presenting facts or cultural descriptions, digital content is performative it creates impact. Cultural representation in social media has the power to shape new perspectives, challenge existing stereotypes, and even prompt audiences to reflect on their own values. In some cases, such content ignites a sense of pride in one's cultural identity, while in others, it opens up opportunities to understand others' cultures more empathetically. This phenomenon reinforces the notion that social media especially TikTok has evolved into a new arena for practicing cultural literacy. Unlike formal institutions that are typically one-directional and structured, digital spaces offer horizontal, spontaneous, and fluid interaction, where anyone can be both an educator and a learner (Hadijah et al., 2023; Literat et al., 2021; Suryati et al., 2024). digital cultural content holds great potential as a medium for social education, shaping intercultural understanding in a more contextual, emotional, and human-centered way.

a. Cultural Representation as a Bridge Between Experiences

Cultural representation in digital content often does not appear in formal formats such as cultural speeches or historical documentaries, but rather emerges from everyday and seemingly simple acts. In the observed content, these representations were evident in the way a creator mimicked a regional dialect, wore traditional clothing while cooking local dishes, or compared life abroad with local values. Here, culture becomes fluid it is not always taught explicitly, but is instead performed, felt, and imitated.

Through this approach, audiences not only gain new knowledge about culture but also experience it as something alive and rhythmical in daily life. Authentic representations give power to narratives, while hybrid forms reflect the reality of a digital world that blurs cultural boundaries. This supports the view that cultural representation is not merely a repetition of tradition, but a process of re-creating meaning within a new social space.

b. Cultural values and Tolerance as the Emotional Core

Values such as tolerance, mutual cooperation, and respect for difference are often not conveyed through long speeches, but through subtle gestures, word choices, or interactions between characters in videos. In some content, these values were seen in how a creator respectfully appreciated cultural differences while living abroad; in others, they appeared as creators introduced minority cultural rituals with sincere admiration. Although not stated explicitly, these moments created emotional experiences that touched viewers. In the comment sections, many expressions of gratitude, personal stories, and even apologies from viewers who felt they had learned something new could be found. This indicates that digital content can be a powerful tool for moral learning, especially when presented with empathy and sincerity.

c. Presentation Strategies as a Key to Cultural Access

Presentation is the main entry point for audiences to understand cultural content. Creators who combine storytelling, humor, appealing visuals, and role-play can foster emotional closeness with their audiences. Video formats like “Do you know...” or “We don’t say..., we say...” serve as light yet effective ways to compare cultures without sounding patronizing. In the end, such strategies make cultural values easier to understand and more accessible to audiences from diverse backgrounds. When cultural messages are delivered in an enjoyable style, they do not lose their substance instead, they become more

inclusive. In this sense, good presentation bridges the complexity of cultural values and the limited attention span of digital audiences.

d. Audience Interaction as a Shared Learning Process

One of the strengths of social media is its ability to facilitate two-way interaction. In the context of cultural content, such interaction creates a collective learning ecosystem. Audiences do not merely comment; they also contribute additional cultural information, clarify meanings, or share personal experiences that resonate with the video.

For example, when a creator explained a particular mechanism in a foreign country, many Indonesian viewers compared it with their local context, sparking discussions about the importance of environmental education. Such interactions turn content consumption into a dialogical process. This reinforces the idea that digital cultural learning occurs not only within the content itself but also in the social spaces formed through user interaction.

e. Consistency and Cultural Commitment as a Form of Digital Perseverance

Creators who consistently publish culturally themed content build a kind of "digital presence" that earns the trust of their audiences. In the observations, some creators uploaded regularly and maintained a cultural focus in each video. This consistency demonstrates not only perseverance but also a form of commitment to the cultural values they represent. Sustainable content provides audiences with continuous opportunities to learn, follow narratives, and develop understanding over time. In a fast-paced digital world, consistency is not merely a matter of pleasing the algorithm it is a matter of cultural trust and credibility built over time.

f. Digital Ethics as a Determinant of Relational Quality

Ethics in digital cultural content do not always appear in the form of explicit rules but are reflected in word choices, facial expressions, and how differences are addressed. Creators who avoid hate speech, harsh sarcasm, or provocation tend to receive more positive responses from audiences. This suggests that despite the freedom of expression offered by social media, there remains an ethical expectation from audiences toward content creators.

Digital ethics are not only about politeness but also about responsibility for the impact of cultural representations. In a multicultural context such as Indonesia, ethics are a critical foundation for ensuring that digital spaces remain inclusive, safe, and productive for cultural exchange.

g. Digital Cultural Content as a Medium for Education, Dialogue, and Reflection

Across all the categories identified, a unifying thread emerges. Digital cultural content on TikTok plays a role far beyond visual entertainment. It serves as a platform for non-formal education, intercultural dialogue, and reflective engagement for audiences seeking to understand both their own cultures and those of others. When cultural representation is packaged through compelling presentation strategies, infused with values of tolerance, and delivered ethically, the content becomes not only accessible but also cognitively and emotionally impactful. Audience interaction reinforces these meanings, transforming the act of watching into a process of shared learning. The creators' consistency contributes to the continuity of this learning process, positioning social media as a participatory source of cultural literacy.

Thus, the "Educational and Reflective Impact" identified as the core category is not the result of a single element, but the accumulation of mutually reinforcing digital cultural practices. This affirms that in today's social media landscape, culture is not only displayed

it is negotiated, exchanged, and contemplated forming a learning process that is contextual, emotional, and profoundly human.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that digital cultural content produced by creators on the TikTok platform is not merely a form of visual entertainment; it has evolved into a space for active, interactive, and meaningful cultural literacy. Through a grounded theory approach, the research found that authentic cultural representation, inclusive value communication, and participatory and ethical interaction collectively generate an educational and reflective impact on audiences. This impact is not passive; rather, it arises from the complex interplay between presentation strategies, conveyed values, audience participation, production consistency, and digital communication ethics. These findings affirm that social media platforms like TikTok can serve as effective tools for social learning and cultural meaning-making, particularly outside the bounds of formal educational institutions.

However, this study also has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the data sources were limited to nine cultural content creators, who, although purposively selected, cannot fully represent the diversity of digital cultural content in Indonesia. Second, as the study relied solely on observational data without interviews or direct engagement with either the creators or audiences, the perspectives obtained are interpretive in nature and reflect the researcher's viewpoint rather than that of the content producers or consumers themselves. Third, the focus was restricted to TikTok, whereas cultural representation in digital spaces also occurs on other platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and online discussion forums.

Therefore, this study opens avenues for future research to broaden data collection by involving creators from more diverse backgrounds, employing data triangulation methods such as in-depth interviews or participatory studies, and comparing cultural representation dynamics across different social media platforms. Further studies could also explore how digital cultural content is consciously used within formal education settings or how audiences internalize the values they encounter through such content.

In conclusion, this research provides a foundational theoretical understanding of the role of digital cultural content in shaping cultural awareness, and it paves the way for further exploration of the digital cultural literacy ecosystem in the platform era. Digital cultural content is not merely a visual representation; it is a rich social learning field that resonates with the evolving dynamics of contemporary society.

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