



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TIKTOK USE AND KNOWLEDGE OF CURRENT EVENTS

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Hypothesis



Students who spend more time on TikTok will have higher pop culture knowledge.

students who spend more time on TikTok will have lower political knowledge

Perceptions of social media influence will be related to differences in knowledge scores.

Participants



- N= 40 college students
- Enrolled in Sociology 413 at Bowie State University
- Majority African American, consistent with HBCU context

Measures

Pop-culture knowledge
multiple choice questions about entertainment events,celebrity,news,award shows,etc

Political knowledge
multiple choice questions about recent political events and major policy decisions

Correct answers = 1 point
higher scores= greater knowledge

Results

Pop culture Knowledge

T(21)=1.34,P=.195



not significant

Political Knowledge

T(21)-1.01,P=.325



not significant

There were no significant differences in pop culture or political knowledge based on beliefs about social media influence.

procedure

Cross-sectional survey design

- One online questionnaire created from class-generated survey items
- Included measures of TikTok usage, political knowledge, and pop culture knowledge
- Participation was voluntary and confidential
- Survey completion time: approximately 15-20 minutes



Discussion

Interpretation

- Hypothesis was not supported
- No significant difference in pop culture or political knowledge based on tik tok usage or perceived influence

Limitations

- small sample size
- limited measurement of content and engagement accuracy

Possible explanations

TikTok exposes users to both entertainment and political content

Future Research

Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples and measure the types of content consumed on TikTok to better understand knowledge outcomes