

Culture of Speed on TikTok: Temporal Compression in Information Consumption among Indonesian Youth

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Abstract:

This study examines how temporal compression in short-form TikTok videos shapes a culture of speed in the information consumption practices of Indonesian youth. The study employed an interpretive qualitative approach with a digital ethnographic orientation. This study collected data by analyzing 25 TikTok videos, conducting semi-structured interviews with 25 users aged 18–24, and examining seven-day digital-use diaries. The study analyzed the data through reflexive thematic analysis and qualitative content analysis. The findings show that temporal compression operates through pause removal and subtitle use (96% each), split-screen presentation (84%), rapid visual changes and high information density (68% each), and accelerated audio or video (56%). At the level of user experience, 80% of participants reported at least one form of temporal immersion, while 76% expected information to be delivered quickly and directly. The participants also demonstrated three patterns of information consumption: TikTok-only (36%), TikTok-first (28%), and cross-platform verification (36%). These findings highlight the need for digital literacy that also develops awareness of information rhythm, depth, and verification. The study's originality lies in the concept of platformized temporal compression, which extends Social Acceleration by explaining the relationship among content compression, platform acceleration, users' temporal adaptation, and the transformation of information practices.

Keywords: Culture of Speed; Platformized Temporal Compression; Tiktok; Information Consumption; Indonesian Youth.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana kompresi waktu dalam video pendek TikTok membentuk budaya kecepatan dalam praktik konsumsi informasi generasi muda Indonesia. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif dengan orientasi etnografi digital. Data diperoleh melalui analisis terhadap 25 video TikTok,

wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 25 pengguna berusia 18–24 tahun, dan digital-use diary. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik reflektif dan analisis konten kualitatif. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kompresi temporal berlangsung melalui pemotongan jeda dan penggunaan subtitle (masing-masing 96%), split-screen (84%), pergantian visual dan kepadatan informasi tinggi (masing-masing 68%), serta percepatan audio atau video (56%). Pada tingkat pengalaman pengguna, 80% informan mengalami sedikitnya satu bentuk keterlarutan temporal, sedangkan 76% menunjukkan ekspektasi terhadap informasi yang cepat dan langsung. Praktik konsumsi informasi selanjutnya terbagi menjadi TikTok-only (36%), TikTok-first (28%), dan cross-platform verification (36%). Penelitian ini menegaskan perlunya literasi digital yang juga mencakup kesadaran terhadap ritme, kedalaman, dan verifikasi informasi. Orisinalitas penelitian terletak pada konsep kompresi temporal terplatformisasi (platformized temporal compression) yang memperluas Social Acceleration dengan menjelaskan hubungan antara kompresi konten, akselerasi platform, adaptasi temporal pengguna, dan transformasi praktik informasi.

Kata Kunci: Budaya Kecepatan; Kompresi Temporal Terplatformisasi; Tiktok; Konsumsi Informasi; Generasi Muda.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has positioned the internet and social media as integral parts of everyday life in Indonesia. Data from Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS]) show that 72.78% of Indonesia's population accessed the internet in 2024, an increase from 69.21% in 2023 (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2025). Digital connectivity has become even more pronounced among younger age groups. A survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia [APJII]) reported that internet penetration among Generation Z reached 87.8% in 2025, confirming the high level of youth engagement in the digital ecosystem (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia [APJII], 2025). Within the social media landscape, TikTok has assumed an increasingly significant position. DataReportal, using data from TikTok's advertising tools, reported that the platform's potential advertising reach in Indonesia reached approximately 180 million users aged 18 years and older by the end of 2025; this figure represents the advertising audience and should not be interpreted directly as the number of monthly active users (Kemp, 2025). This scale of connectivity indicates that TikTok can no longer be understood solely as an entertainment medium (Dodan & Negru-Subtirica, 2026). Instead, the platform has become part of a social environment in which young people interact, allocate their time, and obtain information (Langlais et al., 2025). Therefore, researchers need to examine the expansion of TikTok as part of broader changes in the social practices of young people within an increasingly digitalized society.

This expanding digital connectivity has also transformed TikTok's role in the lives of young people (Conte et al., 2025; Bossen & Kottasz, 2020; Vaterlaus & Winter, 2025). The platform no longer functions solely as a space for entertainment and the production of popular trends; it has also developed into a space where users encounter news, knowledge, opinions, health information, educational content, political issues, and various forms of everyday information (Montag et al., 2021). A review of 49 studies shows that TikTok has developed into an information space in which platform design and recommendation systems influence how users search for, discover, evaluate, and share information (O'Brien et al., 2025). Among young users, information acquisition often occurs incidentally because they encounter information while scrolling rather than through deliberate searches. Hendrickx (2025) shows that young users experience TikTok and Instagram as spaces where they encounter news quickly and conveniently and can more easily integrate news consumption into their daily routines than they can through conventional news media. These conditions indicate that digital transformation has not only shifted information sources but has also changed how users discover, select, and consume information. Therefore, the increasingly important question concerns not only how extensively young people use TikTok but also how the platform's characteristics shape information consumption practices in everyday life.

These changing information consumption practices cannot be separated from the temporal characteristics of short-form videos, which place users within high-speed information flows (Owens, 2026). TikTok allows creators to compress information through jump cuts, rapid visual transitions, simultaneous text and audio, split-screen presentations, accelerated video, and content switching through swipe mechanisms (Southerton & McLean, 2025). The central issue does not lie solely in increasingly shorter content duration but also in a consumption rhythm that enables users to move continuously from one unit of information to the next. Yang et al. (2024) show that short-form video use relates to distortions in duration perception, meaning that viewing experiences can lead users to estimate elapsed time differently from its actual duration. Chiossi et al. (2023) also found experimentally that the combination of short videos and rapid context switching can reduce users' ability to remember and execute

intentions in prospective memory tasks. Nguyen et al. (2025) provide broader evidence through a meta-analysis of 71 studies involving 98,299 participants, showing that higher levels of short-form video use are associated with lower cognitive performance, particularly in attention and inhibitory control; however, these associations remain correlational and do not independently establish causal relationships. These findings suggest that the relevant social issue extends beyond the decreasing duration of videos to the possible formation of new temporal expectations toward information, in which users increasingly expect information to appear quickly, concisely, immediately capture attention, and remain easily replaceable by subsequent information. Thus, the central issue surrounding TikTok concerns not only video duration but also the formation of a culture of speed in information consumption.

Research on TikTok has developed along several major trajectories. The first trajectory conceptualizes TikTok as an algorithmic platform whose affordances shape users' experiences, routines, and patterns of engagement. Through an ethnographic study of young users in the United Kingdom, Schellewald (2023) shows that the For You Page and scrolling practices have become established components of everyday routines; active relationships among users, algorithmic personalization, and the social contexts of use shape these experiences. Zhao and Wagner (2023) reinforce this finding by showing that perceived effortlessness, recommendation accuracy, and recommendation serendipity contribute to users' flow experiences on TikTok, while video duration also influences users' responses to these technological affordances. At a more conceptual level, Lin, Swart, and Zeng (2023) describe TikTok culture as participatory, platform-dependent, and algorithmically inscribed, in which interactions between users and recommendation systems generate distinctive temporal experiences. This first research trajectory therefore provides strong explanations of how platform design and algorithms condition user experiences. However, this literature has not specifically conceptualized temporal compression as a social process that shapes the rhythms and practices of everyday information consumption.

The second research trajectory focuses on the temporal and cognitive consequences of short-form video consumption, particularly regarding time perception, attention, memory, and the ability to sustain focus. Yang et al. (2024) show that short-form video use relates to distortions in time perception, as users estimate the duration of an activity differently after exposure to short-form videos. Chiossi et al. (2023) reinforce this finding through an experiment demonstrating that rapid context switching within short-form video streams can reduce prospective memory performance, or the ability to retain and execute previously planned intentions. At the level of user experience, Alruwaili (2025) found that greater scroll immersion and short-form video use were associated with attentional difficulties, perceived memory problems, and cognitive fatigue. Nguyen et al. (2025) provide broader evidence through a systematic review and meta-analysis showing that higher short-form video use correlates with poorer cognitive outcomes, particularly in attention and inhibitory control. An eye-tracking study by Cole et al. (2025) also found that exposure to TikTok before reading news was associated with lower sustained attention to news text than in the comparison condition. Although these studies provide important evidence, they predominantly explain the issue at the level of individual psychology and cognition. Therefore, the present study moves beyond the question of whether short-form videos affect attention and shifts the analysis to the social level by examining how the repeated temporal rhythms of the platform shape habits, expectations, and emerging norms of everyday information consumption.

The third research trajectory examines TikTok as a new arena for searching, discovering, and consuming information, particularly among young users. Through a scoping review, O'Brien, Davoudi, and Nelson (2025) show that TikTok has developed into an information space that influences how users search for, discover, evaluate, and share information. Their findings confirm that information behavior on TikTok cannot be separated from recommendation systems and platform design, which shape the types of content that appear, the order in which they appear, and the information that users perceive as relevant. In the context of younger generations, Hendrickx (2025) shows that Instagram and TikTok have become important spaces where young people encounter news in fast, visual, practical, and often incidental ways. The study also demonstrates that young users distinguish their news experiences on TikTok from those provided by conventional news media because TikTok offers a more dynamic experience that integrates more closely with everyday social media routines. These conditions indicate a shift from more scheduled and structured forms of information consumption toward fragmented patterns of information discovery within continuous scrolling flows. Although this literature explains changes in where and how young people obtain information, it has not adequately positioned speed and temporal experience as sociological mechanisms that connect platform structures with changes in everyday information consumption practices.

The research gap emerges from the limited integration of these three bodies of literature, which have largely developed in parallel. Studies of platform affordances explain the roles of algorithms, recommendation systems, scrolling, and engagement; psychological studies emphasize time perception, attention, and memory; and information behavior studies examine changes in how young people discover and consume news. However, researchers have rarely integrated these three perspectives into a single framework that explains how the temporal structure of content and platform affordances jointly shape the social rhythms of information consumption. Moreover, studies of time distortion and attention continue to focus predominantly on the individual level, leaving the social dimensions of experiencing speed within everyday digital routines insufficiently examined. This limitation becomes particularly relevant in Indonesia, where TikTok use is extensive but research connecting the temporal compression of content, platform design, and young users' information consumption experiences remains limited. This study addresses this gap by conceptualizing temporal compression not merely as an audiovisual characteristic of short-form videos but as a social process that shapes the expectations, habits, and rhythms of information consumption among young people.

To explain the relationship between technological acceleration and changing information consumption practices, this study uses Hartmut Rosa's Social Acceleration theory as its primary theoretical framework. Rosa (2003) explains that modern society operates through three interrelated forms of acceleration: technological acceleration, acceleration of social change, and acceleration of the pace of life. In the context of TikTok, researchers can observe these forms of acceleration when short videos compress units of information, swipe mechanisms and infinite feeds accelerate transitions between content, and recommendation systems reduce the time users need to find subsequent information. This study does not treat platform affordances as a separate theory but instead uses them as a mechanism for explaining how TikTok's design enables these temporal experiences to emerge. Schellewald (2023) and Zhao and Wagner (2023) show that TikTok's features and recommendation systems shape routines, ease of use, and user engagement without deterministically dictating user behavior. Within this framework, the study examines whether Social Acceleration, which explains the acceleration of modern life at a broader level, can also explain the micro-temporality of platform-based information consumption. The study subsequently proposes the analytical concept of platformized temporal compression, which refers to a process in which content compression, recommendation systems, continuous scrolling, and user practices operate together to increase the number and turnover of information units consumed within a limited period. This concept extends Social Acceleration by demonstrating that social acceleration in the platform era also operates through the formation of temporal rhythms in everyday information consumption practices.

This study aims to analyze how temporal compression in short-form TikTok videos shapes a culture of speed in the information consumption practices of Indonesian youth. Specifically, the study identifies forms of temporal compression within video structures and scrolling practices, analyzes how young people experience and adapt their information consumption to these rhythms, and explains the relationship between the platform's temporal structure and the formation of a culture of speed through the perspective of Social Acceleration. Based on these objectives, the study addresses three research questions: (1) How do short-form video structures and TikTok use practices produce temporal compression? (2) How do Indonesian youth experience and interpret this speed in their everyday information consumption? and (3) How can these experiences extend the understanding of Social Acceleration in the context of digital platforms?

Based on these objectives, this study argues that TikTok's culture of speed does not emerge solely from short video duration but from the interaction among information compression, rapid content turnover, algorithmic recommendation, and users' scrolling routines. This interaction allows users to consume an increasing number of information fragments within a limited period while simultaneously shaping expectations that information should appear quickly, concisely, visually, and immediately capture attention. Within the Social Acceleration framework, this condition demonstrates that technological acceleration not only reduces the time required to obtain information but can also create new temporal standards in everyday digital life. As information becomes increasingly accessible and rapidly replaceable by subsequent content, users become more likely to adjust their consumption practices to this rhythm. On this basis, the study extends Social Acceleration by positioning micro-level temporal compression as part of the broader process of social acceleration through the ways individuals experience, select, and consume information on digital platforms. The study formulates this contribution through the concept of platformized temporal compression and empirically examines whether the findings confirm, modify, or add a new dimension to Social Acceleration.

METHOD

The primary unit of analysis in this study was the information consumption practices of Indonesian youth aged 18–24 who actively used TikTok. The study involved 25 participants selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: they used TikTok every day or almost every day, had used the platform for at least one year, and regularly accessed informational, educational, news, or podcast-clip content. The study examined how users discovered information, decided whether to watch or skip a video, moved between content, responded to longer videos, engaged in multitasking, and interpreted their experience of time while using TikTok. In addition to user experiences, the study analyzed TikTok videos as a supporting unit of analysis to identify the temporal structure of content, including duration, frequency of visual changes, use of text and audio, split-screen presentation, acceleration, and information density. Thus, the study examined two interrelated levels: the temporal structure of content and users' social experiences of information consumption.

This study employed an interpretive qualitative design with a digital ethnographic orientation to understand how users experienced, interpreted, and negotiated the speed of information consumption in their everyday digital practices. The study adopted this approach because usage frequency alone cannot adequately explain experiences such as perceived acceleration of time, tendencies to swipe, impatience with longer content, and preferences for concise information. Hine (2015) emphasizes that researchers should understand internet practices as embedded, embodied, and everyday experiences and should therefore examine digital activities in relation to users' broader social lives. In this study, Social Acceleration served as a sensitizing framework rather than a methodological approach. The framework guided the analysis of accelerated information consumption, changing temporal expectations, and the increasing number of experiences within a given period. This position allowed the analysis to remain open to empirical findings that could confirm, qualify, or extend Rosa's theoretical framework.

The study used three complementary sources of data. First, the researchers collected interview data from 25 TikTok users aged 18–24 to explore their experiences, interpretations, and responses to the speed of information consumption. Second, the researchers analyzed 25 TikTok videos across five categories: news and public issues, education and knowledge, podcasts and opinions, health and self-development, and practical and everyday information. The video analysis identified forms of temporal compression within the structure of the content. Third, the researchers collected data on users' experiences through a seven-day digital-use diary that recorded usage duration, situations in which participants opened TikTok, types of content consumed, experiences of duration, and tendencies to move between content. The combination of these three data sources enabled the study to connect content characteristics, platform mechanisms, and users' social experiences more comprehensively.

The researchers collected data through semi-structured interviews, non-participant digital observation, and a seven-day digital-use diary. They conducted the interviews both face-to-face and online for approximately 45–60 minutes. The interview guide explored participants' scrolling experiences, perceptions of duration, decisions to swipe, preferences for short or long content, multitasking practices, and habits of seeking additional information. The researchers conducted non-participant digital observations of the selected TikTok videos by recording their duration, frequency of visual changes, use of split-screen presentation, text, audio, acceleration, and information density. The participants also completed a seven-day digital-use diary to record their experiences close to the time of occurrence, including usage duration, the context in which they opened TikTok, the types of content they consumed, and their responses to the rhythm of information. The researchers designed all interview questions neutrally to avoid directing participants toward particular evaluations of TikTok and to allow different user experiences to emerge.

The researchers analyzed the data through reflexive thematic analysis combined with qualitative content analysis of the TikTok videos. The analysis of interview and digital-use diary data followed the stages of data familiarization, initial coding, theme development and review, theme definition, and interpretation, as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The researchers analyzed the audiovisual data using the categories of compression, fragmentation, simultaneity, rapid content turnover, information density, and scrolling continuity. They then triangulated findings from the interviews, videos, and diaries to identify both consistent and contradictory patterns across data sources. The analysis proceeded at three levels: a descriptive level to identify manifestations of the culture of speed, an interpretive level to understand users' experiences, and a theoretical level to assess the relationship between the findings and Social Acceleration. At the final stage, the researchers examined whether the findings confirmed, qualified, or extended Rosa's theory, particularly through the potential emergence of platformized temporal compression as a micro-level mechanism of acceleration in digital information consumption.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Temporal Compression in the Structure and Flow of TikTok Content

The analysis included 25 TikTok videos that were evenly distributed across five categories: news and public issues, podcasts and opinions, education and knowledge, health and self-development, and practical and everyday information. Each category consisted of five videos. The videos ranged in duration from 18 seconds to 3 minutes. Twelve videos (48%) lasted no more than 60 seconds, 9 videos (36%) lasted more than 1 minute but no more than 2 minutes, and only 4 videos (16%) lasted more than 2 minutes. Thus, 21 of the 25 videos (84%) delivered information within a duration of no more than two minutes. The corpus shows that TikTok presents information across various domains of everyday life but predominantly packages it into relatively short temporal units. This characteristic provides a basis for examining how TikTok compresses, segments, and simultaneously presents information within short-form video structures.

Information compression emerged as a dominant pattern across the 25 analyzed videos. Twenty-four videos (96%) used subtitles, and 24 videos (96%) removed pauses in speech, which created a relatively dense delivery pace with minimal empty intervals. In addition, 14 videos (56%) accelerated the audio or video, while 17 videos (68%) displayed high information density. In terms of content, 21 videos (84%) presented at least two ideas within a single video, with an average of 2.6 information points and a range of one to six points. These patterns show that TikTok compresses information not only by shortening video duration but also by removing pauses, presenting text simultaneously with speech, accelerating delivery, and combining several ideas within a single video unit. Thus, creators use limited video duration to maximize the amount of information that users can receive within a short period.

Table 1. Characteristics of Temporal Compression in the Analyzed TikTok Videos

Characteristic	Number of Videos	Percentage	Observed Form
Removal of pauses	24	96%	The videos minimized pauses in speech and created a denser delivery pace
Rapid visual changes	17	68%	The videos displayed frequent and intensive changes in images or visual presentation
Subtitles/simultaneous text	24	96%	The videos accompanied verbal information with subtitles or on-screen text
Split-screen presentation	21	84%	The videos presented two or more visual displays simultaneously on one screen
Audio/video acceleration	14	56%	The videos presented audio or visuals at an accelerated pace
High information density	17	68%	The videos delivered several ideas or pieces of information within a relatively short duration

Note: Percentages were calculated based on the total number of analyzed videos (N = 25).

Table 1 shows a strong pattern of temporal compression. The removal of pauses and the use of subtitles represented the most dominant characteristics, with each appearing in 96% of the videos, followed by split-screen presentation in 84% of the videos. In addition, 68% of the videos displayed rapid visual changes and high information density, while more than half of the corpus (56%) used audio or video acceleration. These findings show that temporal compression in TikTok videos does not depend on a single technique. Instead, it emerges through a combination of denser speech delivery, layered text and visuals, simultaneous screen presentation, and an accelerated delivery rhythm.

Information fragmentation appeared in the tendency of videos to divide messages into several ideas and present them sequentially within a limited duration. Among the 25 analyzed videos, 21 videos (84%) contained at least two ideas or information points, with an average of approximately 2.6 points per video. V01 clearly illustrates this pattern by presenting four ideas within 48 seconds through 12 cuts, while V06 presented five ideas within 1 minute and 13 seconds through four cuts. Within the practical information category, V21 presented six points within two minutes by combining subtitles, split-screen presentation, additional visuals, and audiovisual acceleration. These findings show that TikTok tends to structure information as concise segments of ideas rather than as extended and continuous explanations. Therefore, videos achieve information density not only by shortening their

duration but also through temporal and narrative fragmentation that enables creators to present several points within a single video unit.

The simultaneous presentation of stimuli emerged as another prominent characteristic of the analyzed video structures. Twenty-one of the 25 videos (84%) used split-screen presentation, while most videos also combined additional visuals with subtitles, audio, or narration at the same time. V01 clearly illustrates this pattern. This 48-second podcast video combined a speaker, full subtitles, split-screen presentation, additional visuals, and 12 cuts within a single video. V07 displayed a similar pattern by combining a podcast clip, subtitles, split-screen presentation, additional visuals, and audiovisual acceleration within one minute. These findings show that TikTok compresses information not only by shortening duration but also by presenting several stimuli simultaneously within the same visual space. Users can therefore receive verbal, textual, and visual information at the same time, which allows a single unit of time to contain more than one form of informational stimulus.

Figure 1. Simultaneity of Stimuli in TikTok Video Structure



Source: Research documentation, V01, 2025.

Figure 1 shows that the simultaneity of stimuli in TikTok videos emerges not only through screen division but also through the layering of visual and textual elements at the same time. In V01, the main speaker, supporting visuals, highlighted text, graphic symbols, and platform interface appear simultaneously within a single frame. This structure exposes users to several layers of information at the same time without requiring one element to end before another appears. The finding shows that TikTok produces temporal density not only by shortening video duration but also by combining several stimuli simultaneously within the same visual space. Thus, a single unit of time within a video can contain more than one form of information and can direct users to shift their attention rapidly among multiple elements displayed at the same time.

TikTok consumption does not end with the relatively short duration of each individual video but continues through uninterrupted transitions between content. Interview data show that 18 of the 25 participants (72%) described TikTok sessions that they initially intended to keep brief but that later extended beyond their original plans. In addition, 20 participants (80%) reported at least one form of temporal immersion while scrolling, such as feeling that time passed quickly, perceiving that they had only recently started using TikTok, finding it difficult to stop because videos continued to change, or losing awareness of how many videos they had watched. This pattern reveals a temporal paradox: TikTok packages individual units of information into short durations, yet the overall consumption sequence can continue for much longer periods. Therefore, shorter video duration does not

necessarily reduce total usage time because continuous transitions between content allow users to enter successive units of information without a clearly defined endpoint.

Overall, the findings show that temporal compression on TikTok operates through two interrelated layers. At the intra-video level, creators produce compression by removing pauses, accelerating audio or visuals, fragmenting ideas, presenting multiple stimuli simultaneously, and increasing information density within a limited duration. At the inter-video level, compression operates through rapid and continuous transitions from one piece of content to the next within the scrolling flow. These two layers demonstrate that TikTok temporality depends not only on the short duration of individual videos but also on the combination of compressed information within content and continuous movement between content. Thus, users experience time on TikTok through both compressed video structures and consumption flows that can extend continuously over longer periods

“It Feels Brief”: Experiences of Time and Expectations of Speed

Participants' everyday use of TikTok showed a pattern that was largely spontaneous and closely connected to the management of free time. Based on interviews conducted from March 2 to 8, 2025, 18 of the 25 participants (72%) stated that TikTok sessions they initially intended to keep brief often developed into longer periods of use, while 7 participants (28%) primarily used TikTok to fill short intervals between activities. P03, for example, used TikTok to fill idle time between daily activities (P03, interview, March 2, 2025), while P19 similarly used the platform during periods of free time (P19, interview, March 6, 2025). In contrast, P01 explained that sessions initially intended to be brief often continued longer than planned (P01, interview, March 3, 2025), and P11 reported a similar pattern (P11, interview, March 5, 2025). These findings show that participants did not always allocate a specific period for TikTok use. Instead, they often incorporated TikTok into gaps within their daily routines, after which brief sessions developed into longer periods of consumption than they had initially intended.

The interviews also consistently revealed a mismatch between subjective time and actual usage experiences. Twenty of the 25 participants (80%) reported at least one form of temporal immersion while using TikTok. More specifically, 5 participants (20%) felt that time passed more quickly while scrolling, 5 participants (20%) felt that they had only been using TikTok briefly even when a longer period had elapsed, 5 participants (20%) found it difficult to stop because videos continued to change, and 5 participants (20%) often lost awareness of how many videos they had watched. P01, for example, described situations in which a session that felt brief had actually lasted longer than expected (P01, interview, March 3, 2025), while P14 reported that they often lost track of how many videos they had passed while scrolling (P14, interview, March 8, 2025). Nevertheless, 5 other participants (20%) reported no difficulty in stopping their scrolling activity. These findings indicate that most participants experienced some discrepancy between perceived duration and actual platform use, although this experience did not occur uniformly across all users.

Table 2. Patterns of Time Experience and Expectations of Speed among TikTok Users

Experience Pattern	Empirical Indicator	Participants (n)	Percentage	Data Source
Perception of shortened time	Participants felt that time passed quickly or believed that they had used TikTok only briefly even after a longer period had elapsed	10	40%	Interviews
Use exceeded the initial plan	Sessions initially intended to be brief developed into longer periods of use	18	72%	Interviews
Difficulty ending a session	Participants found it difficult to stop because videos continued to change	5	20%	Interviews
Loss of awareness of content flow	Participants lost track of the number of videos they had watched while scrolling	5	20%	Interviews
Expectations of content speed	Participants preferred content that went directly to the point, avoided lengthy delivery, or swiped away when they considered the content too slow	19	76%	Interviews
Tolerance for long-form content	Participants remained comfortable with longer-duration content	6	24%	Interviews

Note: Percentages were calculated based on 25 participants (N = 25). Several experience categories were not mutually exclusive; therefore, one participant could demonstrate more than one form of temporal experience.

Table 2 shows that users' temporal experiences involved not only their perceptions of usage duration but also their expectations regarding the pace of information delivery. The most dominant pattern appeared among 19 participants (76%), who preferred information that went directly to the point, avoided lengthy explanations, or tended to leave content when they considered its delivery too slow. In addition, 18 participants (72%) reported that their TikTok sessions lasted longer than they had initially planned, while 10 participants (40%) explicitly described time on TikTok as passing more quickly or feeling shorter than it actually was. In contrast, 6 participants (24%) continued to tolerate longer-duration content. These findings show that experiences of speed were relatively dominant but did not occur homogeneously across all users.

Participants' decisions to swipe indicate that they assessed the suitability of information partly according to the speed of its delivery. Nineteen of the 25 participants (76%) expected content to move quickly. This group included 7 participants (28%) who tended to skip content when they considered its delivery too slow, 6 participants (24%) who preferred information that immediately reached the main point, and 6 participants (24%) who disliked lengthy or indirect explanations. P02, for example, tended to skip videos immediately when the information progressed too slowly (P02, interview, March 4, 2025), while P03 preferred content that communicated its main point directly (P03, interview, March 2, 2025). P22 demonstrated a similar pattern by describing lengthy and indirect delivery as inconsistent with their usual consumption habits (P22, interview, March 2, 2025). In contrast, 6 participants (24%) stated that they remained comfortable with long-form content. These findings show that, for most participants, swiping functioned not only as a technical navigation tool but also as a temporal selection mechanism through which users determined how long a piece of information deserved their attention.

Most participants also consistently expressed expectations of informational immediacy. Nineteen of the 25 participants (76%) preferred rapidly delivered content. This group included 6 participants (24%) who wanted information to reach the main point immediately, 6 participants (24%) who disliked lengthy explanations, and 7 participants (28%) who tended to swipe when they considered the pace of information too slow. P03, for example, preferred content that communicated its main point immediately (P03, interview, March 2, 2025), while P22 considered lengthy delivery inconsistent with their consumption habits (P22, interview, March 2, 2025). P23 also tended to leave a video when it failed to deliver information quickly enough (P23, interview, March 3, 2025). In contrast, 6 participants (24%) remained comfortable with longer-duration content. These findings show that, for most participants, immediacy became one criterion for evaluating whether information felt comfortable and worthwhile enough to continue consuming, although this preference did not apply uniformly to all users.

Participants displayed varied responses to long-form content. Six of the 25 participants (24%) stated that they remained comfortable consuming longer content, while 4 participants (16%) explicitly acknowledged that their TikTok habits had influenced how they watched or read longer materials. In addition, 4 participants (16%) reported becoming more impatient when they encountered information delivered at a slower pace. P04, for example, remained comfortable with long-form content despite actively using TikTok (P04, interview, March 5, 2025), while P03 stated that habitual TikTok use had influenced their experience when engaging with content that required sustained attention (P03, interview, March 2, 2025). P01 also acknowledged becoming impatient when information progressed slowly (P01, interview, March 3, 2025). These findings show that preferences for speed did not operate universally. Some users adapted to rapid information rhythms, while others continued to remain comfortable with longer-duration content.

Users did not respond uniformly to TikTok's rapid rhythm because some participants demonstrated forms of control and resistance toward accelerated consumption. Three of the 25 participants (12%) explicitly stated that they limited their screen time, saved videos to watch later, or deliberately searched for more comprehensive sources, as P06 and P20 reported (P06, interview, March 7, 2025; P20, interview, March 7, 2025). In addition, 6 participants (24%) remained comfortable with long-form content, while 4 participants (16%) stated that they had not become more impatient with slowly delivered information. P04, for example, continued to accept longer content without treating its duration as a barrier (P04, interview, March 5, 2025), while P17 reported no increase in impatience toward information delivered at a slower pace (P17, interview, March 4, 2025). These findings show that TikTok's temporal environment tends to foster expectations of rapid and immediate information, but users retain

the capacity to regulate, negotiate, and slow the pace of their information consumption. Therefore, adaptation to platform speed does not occur homogeneously and does not fully determine user behavior.

Transformation of Information Consumption Practices among Young People

TikTok occupied an important position within the participants' information ecology, although their level of dependence on the platform varied. Based on interviews conducted from March 2 to 8, 2025, 9 of the 25 participants (36%) demonstrated a TikTok-only pattern, in which they accepted information without continuing their search through other sources. Seven participants (28%) followed a TikTok-first pattern, in which they used TikTok as an initial point of access before seeking additional information, while 9 participants (36%) demonstrated a cross-platform verification pattern by comparing information across other sources or platforms. Thus, 16 participants (64%) did not rely exclusively on information obtained from TikTok but instead incorporated the platform into a broader information consumption process. These findings show that TikTok functions not only as an entertainment space but also as a space for information discovery and as an entry point to further information, although the depth of consumption varies across users.

Most participants demonstrated a preference for concise and efficient information in the way they evaluated the convenience of information consumption on TikTok. Nineteen of the 25 participants (76%) preferred content that went directly to the main point, avoided lengthy explanations, or tended to leave content when they considered its pace too slow. In addition, 4 participants (16%) explicitly stated that TikTok helped them obtain information more efficiently. P11, for example, considered TikTok's format useful for obtaining information within a shorter period (P11, interview, March 5, 2025), while P18 reported a similar experience of using the platform to obtain information efficiently (P18, interview, March 5, 2025). These findings show that users did not necessarily interpret concise and rapid information delivery negatively. Instead, they could use these characteristics as an efficiency strategy for selecting and obtaining information amid the large volume of available content.

The analyzed content also demonstrated considerable informational heterogeneity. Of the 25 analyzed videos, 5 videos (20%) belonged to each of the following categories: news and public issues, podcasts and opinions, education and knowledge, health and self-development, and practical and everyday information. This composition shows that information consumption through TikTok does not focus on a single type of knowledge but instead covers various themes related to social life, education, health, opinion, and practical needs. In this context, the For You Page allows users to encounter different units of information within the same consumption flow, which creates a heterogeneous and shifting informational experience. These findings show that TikTok consumption involves not only rapid information delivery but also the possibility of encountering diverse types of information within a relatively brief sequence of consumption.

After encountering information on TikTok, participants demonstrated three different consumption patterns. First, 9 of the 25 participants (36%) followed a TikTok-only pattern, in which they accepted information encountered on TikTok without continuing their search through other sources, as demonstrated by P03 (interview, March 2, 2025) and P23 (interview, March 3, 2025). Second, 7 participants (28%) followed a TikTok-first pattern by using TikTok as an initial information source before continuing their search, as demonstrated by P01 (interview, March 3, 2025) and P11 (interview, March 5, 2025). Third, 9 participants (36%) practiced cross-platform verification by comparing or rechecking information through other sources, as demonstrated by P02 (interview, March 4, 2025) and P21 (interview, March 8, 2025). This distribution shows that young people do not follow a single pattern of information consumption. TikTok can function as a final source, an entry point to additional information, or one stage within a cross-source verification process. Consequently, the depth of information consumption varies across users.

Table 3. Typology of Information Consumption Practices among TikTok Users

Consumption Pattern	Characteristics	Action After Viewing	Participants	n (%)
TikTok-only	Participants considered the information obtained from TikTok sufficient	Did not continue searching through other sources	P03, P04, P12, P13, P14, P15, P23, P24, P25	9 (36%)
TikTok-first	Participants used TikTok as the initial point for obtaining information	Searched for additional explanations or information after encountering an issue on TikTok	P01, P05, P07, P08, P09, P10, P11	7 (28%)

Cross-platform verification	Participants did not immediately accept TikTok information as the final source	Compared or verified information through other sources or platforms	P02, P06, P16, P17, P18, P19, P20, P21, P22	9 (36%)
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Table 3 shows that information consumption practices among TikTok users were relatively balanced between users who stopped at information within the platform and those who expanded their searches to other sources. Nine participants (36%) followed the TikTok-only pattern, while 16 participants (64%) incorporated TikTok into a broader information process through either TikTok-first or cross-platform verification practices. Within this group, 9 participants (36%) specifically conducted cross-platform verification. These findings show that rapid access to information through TikTok does not always result in consumption that ends on the platform. For some users, TikTok instead serves as an entry point to more extensive information searches and verification.

The findings reveal a tension between speed and informational depth in TikTok consumption practices. On the one hand, 19 of the 25 participants (76%) preferred rapid and direct information delivery, while 4 participants (16%) explicitly stated that TikTok helped them obtain information more efficiently, as reported by P11 and P18 (P11, interview, March 5, 2025; P18, interview, March 5, 2025). On the other hand, participants did not always treat concise information as a final source. Sixteen participants (64%) followed either the TikTok-first or cross-platform verification pattern, indicating a need to continue searching or compare information with other sources. P02 and P21, for example, conducted cross-platform verification after encountering information on TikTok (P02, interview, March 4, 2025; P21, interview, March 8, 2025). In addition, 6 participants (24%) remained comfortable consuming long-form content. These findings show that speed provides efficiency for users, but most participants also maintain a need for more complete and in-depth information through additional searches and cross-platform consumption.

Overall, the findings show the emergence of a culture of speed in information consumption through a sequence of interconnected processes. Information compression within videos combines with continuous transitions between content, which subsequently creates an experience of shortened time and strengthens expectations for information that appears immediately, concisely, and directly reaches the main point. This pattern then appears in the majority of participants' preference for rapid and efficient information delivery. However, this tendency does not operate deterministically because some users continue to verify information across platforms, remain comfortable with long-form content, and develop strategies to control their consumption rhythms.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that TikTok's culture of speed emerges as a social pattern that connects content structure, temporal experience, and users' information consumption practices. First, among the 25 analyzed videos, 96% showed pause removal and subtitle use, 84% used split-screen presentation, 68% displayed rapid visual changes and high information density, and 56% used audio or video acceleration. Second, at the level of user experience, 20 of the 25 participants (80%) experienced at least one form of temporal immersion while scrolling, while 19 participants (76%) expected information to be delivered quickly, directly, and without unnecessary elaboration. P01, for example, described a session that felt brief even though it lasted longer than expected (P01, interview, March 3, 2025), while P02 tended to leave videos immediately when the delivery felt too slow (P02, interview, March 4, 2025). Third, the transformation of information consumption appeared through three patterns: TikTok-only (36%), TikTok-first (28%), and cross-platform verification (36%). These patterns reveal variations in the depth of information seeking after users encounter content on TikTok. Together, these findings confirm that the culture of speed does not simply represent a technical characteristic of short-form videos. Instead, it emerges through the relationship among content compression, platform continuity, users' experiences of time, and changes in everyday information consumption practices.

Four interconnected mechanisms explain the increasingly rapid experience of information consumption on TikTok. First, content compression reduces pauses, condenses messages, accelerates visual transitions, and presents multiple stimuli simultaneously, as reflected in the widespread use of pause removal, subtitles, split-screen presentation, and high information density in this study. Second, the continuity of the For You Page allows users to receive subsequent content immediately without actively searching for it. Schellewald (2023) shows that scrolling on the FYP can become an established part of young users' everyday routines. Third, users perform temporal selection through swiping when they perceive content as too slow or as failing to provide informational value quickly enough. Fourth, the continuous repetition of this pattern allows speed to develop from a technical characteristic of

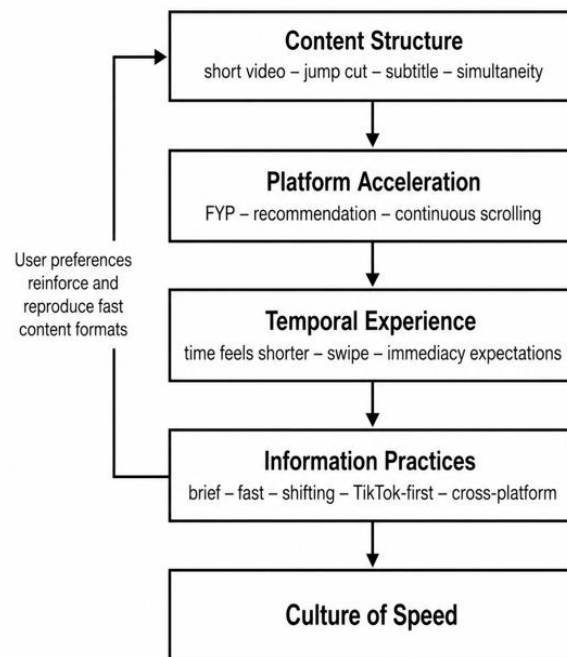
the platform into an expectation about how information should be delivered. This process aligns with Lin, Swart, and Zeng (2023), who conceptualize TikTok culture as participatory, platform-dependent, and algorithmically inscribed through the relationship between users and recommendation systems. Therefore, the resulting mechanism can be summarized as follows: content compression → ease of transition → scrolling repetition → habituation → expectations of information speed.

The findings both differ from and extend three major strands of previous research. First, the results support Schellewald (2023), who shows that the For You Page, algorithmic personalization, and scrolling practices have become integrated into the everyday routines of young users. However, the present study adds that these affordances not only shape user engagement but also regulate the temporal rhythm of information consumption, particularly through rapid and repeated transitions between content. Second, the findings regarding shortened perceptions of time, tendencies to swipe, and demands for information to reach the main point immediately align with Yang et al. (2024) on distortions in time perception and Chiossi et al. (2023) on the effects of rapid context switching on prospective memory. However, the present study shifts the analytical focus from individual psychological consequences toward the formation of social habits and expectations regarding information speed. Third, the findings also align with Hendrickx (2025), who shows that young people experience TikTok as a fast and practical information space that differs from conventional news media. This study contributes by integrating these three strands of research and demonstrating that platform structure, temporal experience, and information consumption practices operate interdependently in shaping a culture of speed.

Researchers can interpret these findings through the Social Acceleration framework, which explains modernity through the interaction among technological acceleration, acceleration of social change, and acceleration of the pace of life (Rosa, 2003). On TikTok, technological acceleration appears in the platform's capacity to compress, distribute, and replace units of information with almost no interval between them. Acceleration of the pace of life becomes visible when users can encounter more content and topics within the same period. Acceleration of social change appears in the rapid turnover of communication forms, trends, and standards of information presentation. An important finding of this study is that such temporal efficiency does not necessarily reduce overall usage time. Shorter videos can instead lead to longer scrolling sessions because each piece of content immediately gives way to the next. This pattern supports Rosa's argument that technological acceleration does not automatically expand leisure time because greater efficiency can coincide with an increase in the number of activities and experiences within a given period (Rosa, 2003). In this context, a culture of speed does not merely mean that information becomes available more quickly. It also reflects changes in users' temporal standards regarding how quickly information must appear before they consider it appropriate, comfortable, and relevant to consume.

The findings do not merely confirm Social Acceleration; they also extend the theory to the micro-temporal level of digital platform environments. Rosa (2003, 2013) explains modern acceleration through technological acceleration, social change, and the pace of life, but the framework does not specifically explain how platform architecture compresses temporal experience within everyday information consumption. Based on the findings, this study proposes the concept of platformized temporal compression, which refers to a process in which content compression, recommendation systems, continuous scrolling, and users' selection practices operate together so that users can consume and replace an increasing number of information units within a limited period. This mechanism operates through three layers: content compression, in which creators condense information within videos; platform acceleration, in which the platform makes subsequent content available almost without interruption; and user temporal adaptation, in which users adjust their expectations to the speed of information delivery. However, the findings on cross-platform verification, some participants' comfort with long-form content, and practices of limiting platform use show that acceleration does not operate deterministically. Therefore, the concept extends Social Acceleration by showing that social acceleration in the platform era occurs through negotiation between the temporal structure of technology and users' capacity to adapt to, accept, or resist accelerated rhythms.

Figure 2. Model of Platformized Temporal Compression in TikTok Information Consumption



Source: Author's elaboration based on research findings, 2025.

TikTok's culture of speed produces ambivalent consequences. On the functional side, concise information formats allow users to obtain key information quickly, identify more issues within a limited period, and use TikTok as an entry point to other sources. This pattern appears among the 64% of participants who followed either the TikTok-first or cross-platform verification pattern. However, information compression also creates several risks. Overly concise delivery can reduce contextual depth, while the 76% of participants who expected direct and rapid information indicate an expectation of immediacy that may encourage users to leave content before they fully understand its substance. Fragmentation may also produce knowledge that remains dispersed across disconnected pieces, particularly because 36% of participants followed the TikTok-only pattern without conducting further searches. Nevertheless, these consequences do not affect all users equally because some participants continued to verify information, selected long-form content, and controlled their usage rhythms. Therefore, the more significant social issue concerns not only how long young people use TikTok but also the quality of their relationship with information within an increasingly rapid, fragmented, and personalized digital ecology.

The primary implication of this study is the need to expand digital literacy toward digital temporal literacy, which refers to users' capacity not only to assess the accuracy and credibility of information but also to understand how platform design shapes consumption rhythms, attention, and the depth of information processing. In this context, schools and universities can integrate temporal awareness into digital literacy education through materials that address the evaluation of short-form content, attention management, and the need for cross-source verification. Government agencies and literacy organizations can develop campaigns that address not only the risks of misinformation but also the need to recognize excessively compressed information and seek additional context. Media organizations and educational content creators can connect short-form content with more comprehensive sources through links, extended explanations, or layered content formats. At the same time, young users need to develop reflective habits by managing scrolling, verifying information, and selecting sources that match the complexity of particular issues. Therefore, the development of a digital society cannot rely solely on expanding access to technology. It also requires citizens to develop the capacity to manage time, attention, informational depth, and verification within an increasingly accelerated platform ecology.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that TikTok's culture of speed does not emerge solely from short video duration but from the combination of information compression, rapid and continuous transitions between content, experiences of shortened time, and growing expectations for information that is concise, direct, and immediate. The findings also show that young people do not follow a uniform pattern of information consumption. Some users stop at the information they obtain on TikTok, some use TikTok as an entry point to other sources, and others conduct cross-platform verification. At the same time, users retain the capacity to regulate, postpone, or slow the rhythm of their information consumption. Therefore, the culture of speed results from the interaction among the temporal structure of content, platform logic, and users' social practices rather than from short video duration alone.

This study makes empirical, analytical, and theoretical contributions to research on digital media and information consumption. Empirically, the study shows how Indonesian youth experience temporal compression and adjust their information consumption practices to TikTok's rhythm. Analytically, the study connects three dimensions that previous studies have often examined separately: the temporal structure of content, users' experiences of time, and information consumption practices. Theoretically, the study extends Social Acceleration through the concept of platformized temporal compression, which explains the relationship among content compression, platform acceleration, users' temporal adaptation, and the transformation of information practices. However, this process does not operate deterministically because some users continue to verify information, choose long-form content, and regulate their usage rhythms. Thus, the study extends the understanding of social acceleration from changes in speed at the levels of technology and social life to the micro-level processes through which platforms shape temporal experiences and temporal standards in everyday information consumption.

However, this study has several limitations. The qualitative approach and the inclusion of 25 participants aged 18–24 limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of TikTok users, while the corpus of 25 videos represents only selected categories of information. The study also observed platform use over a limited period, while TikTok's algorithmic personalization exposes each user to different and continuously changing content configurations. In addition, the study did not experimentally measure changes in attention, memory, or cognitive functioning; therefore, the findings explain users' social experiences and practices rather than psychological causal relationships. Future studies can compare different generational groups and platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, employ mixed-method or longitudinal designs, and use experiments or eye-tracking to examine the relationship between content rhythm and attention. Researchers should also test the concept of platformized temporal compression across different social, cultural, and platform contexts to assess its broader explanatory capacity. Further research is therefore necessary to determine whether the culture of speed represents a specific characteristic of TikTok or forms part of a broader temporal transformation in digital society.

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