



The Production Logic and Platform Engagement of TikTok Poster Design Content: A Comparative Study Based on Content Type and Creator Type

OPEN ACCESS

Key Words

Short-video platforms, platform engagement, saving behavior, learning-oriented content, content type, cover cues, tiktok

Corresponding Author

Zhang Jimin,
The Design School, Taylor's
University, Selangor, Malaysia
zhangjimin@sd.taylors.edu.my

Received: 14th January 2026

Accepted: 16th February 2026

Published: 05th March 2026

Citation: Zhang Jimin and Yan Xuning, 2026. The Production Logic and Platform Engagement of TikTok Poster Design Content: A Comparative Study Based on Content Type and Creator Type. *The Social Sci.*, 21: 1-10, doi: 10.36478/maktss.2026.1.1.10

Copy Right: MAK HILL Publications

¹Zhang Jimin and ²Yan Xuning

¹*The Design School, Taylor's University, Selangor, Malaysia*

²*Faculty of Design and Architecture, University Putra Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia*

ABSTRACT

Engagement metrics on short-video platforms may reflect different user purposes rather than a single form of approval. Focusing on TikTok poster-design videos, this study examines saving as a signal of learning-oriented engagement and compares engagement structures across content types. We compiled a dataset of 150 publicly available videos and classified content into three types: Tutorial, Process-only, and Showcase. Publicly visible metrics (likes, shares, saves, and comments) were recorded, and cover cues were coded, including text density, readability, dominant visual type, layout structure, color contrast, and visual complexity. Results show that Tutorial content exhibits the most stable advantage in saves, significantly exceeding Process-only and Showcase content, suggesting that saving is more likely to reflect intentions of deferred use and reuse. Studio accounts outperform individual accounts across multiple engagement metrics, indicating differences in visibility rewards associated with organized production. Cover-cue comparisons reveal directional differences between Tutorial and non-Tutorial content in layout structure and visual complexity, providing supplementary evidence for how learning value may be signaled during rapid browsing. By decomposing engagement metrics and linking them to content types and cover cues, this study offers an empirical pathway for understanding the visibility mechanism of platform-based learning.

INTRODUCTION

Engagement on short video platforms is not the same as "liking" or "watching" in the traditional sense. In the context of continuously scrolling information feeds, users often complete browsing, judgment, and navigation in a very short time. Consequently, visible interaction metrics such as likes, shares, and saves (labeled as "Favorites" on TikTok) have gradually become important clues for understanding audience reactions within the platform's context. However, these metrics do not point to the same psychology or the same purpose of use. Likes are closer to immediate approval, shares are closer to dissemination and social transmission, while saves are more likely to correspond to needs such as delayed use, repeated viewing, and knowledge reuse. Especially in content fields centered on skills and tools, saves are often seen as a more purposeful form of engagement, reflecting not only current interests but also implying the user's judgment of the content's future value.

Poster design-related short videos provide a representative scenario for observing this difference. Compared to purely entertainment content, design content possesses both aesthetic expression and skill learning attributes. Creators may attract attention by presenting their work or by demonstrating the process or providing reusable information through tutorials. For viewers, viewing design works can be an aesthetic consumption or a learning activity involving acquiring methods and resources. Therefore, even with the same theme of "poster design," different content formats may trigger different types of participation. When content is presented in tutorial form, viewers are more likely to be motivated to save it for later use, thus showing a higher tendency to save it. In contrast, content that only shows the production process or the finished product, while potentially gaining immediate recognition or visual interest, may not necessarily trigger the same effective learning-oriented saving behavior.

Existing research has indicated that platform covers and thumbnails serve as entry cues in fast-browsing scenarios. Visual cues can influence whether users stay, click through, and interpret the category and value of the content. For learning-oriented content, the cover must not only attract attention but also quickly convey that "this is content that is learnable, usable, and worth saving." This means that the difference between content format and engagement behavior may not only be reflected in the teaching method but also in the cues presented on the cover. For example, tutorial content may emphasize the readability of

textual information and favor a clear layout structure to quickly convey the theme and learning value on a small screen. Conversely, work presentations may emphasize visual impact and stylistic expression, thus requiring different cover strategies. Analyzing engagement behavior in conjunction with cover cues helps to expand "platform engagement" from a single indicator into a functionally differentiated behavioral structure, thus better reflecting the actual context of platform-based learning and knowledge dissemination.

Against this backdrop, this paper focuses on learning-oriented engagement in short videos related to poster design, examining the differences in platform engagement across different content types, particularly the distribution characteristics of saving behavior. This paper uses a dataset constructed based on publicly available samples to analyze 150 short videos related to poster design on the TikTok platform. The dataset records the publicly visible engagement metrics for each piece of content and categorizes content types into Tutorial, Process-only, and Showcase, while retaining encoded variables for creator type and cover visual cues. The goal of this paper is not to evaluate which cover is "better," but rather to answer a more social science-oriented question: In the platform context, which content formats are more likely to yield rewards for learning-oriented engagement, how saves, as a signal of learning-oriented engagement, differs across content formats, and whether this difference matches the way cover cues are organized.

This paper's contributions are primarily threefold. First, it views platform engagement as a functionally differentiated set of behaviors, emphasizing that saving, liking, and sharing may correspond to different usage purposes, and uses poster design content as an observation scenario to provide empirical evidence. Second, it uses content type as the core variable, comparing the differences in engagement structure among Tutorial, Process-only, and Showcase content types, thus more concretely presenting the visibility reward mechanism of learning content on the platform. Third, it introduces cover visual cues as an explanatory supplement, discussing whether the advantage of saving tutorial content is accompanied by clearer value prompts, and thereby connecting engagement behavior analysis with visual communication research.

Research Question 1: In short videos related to poster design, do different content types exhibit systematic differences in platform engagement? In particular,

does the Tutorial format show a more prominent performance in terms of save metrics?

Research Question 2: Are there differences in engagement between individual and studio creators? Is this difference related to the distribution of content types?

Research Question 3: Do Tutorial and non-Tutorial content show differences in cover cues, such as readability, text density, or layout structure, thus matching learning-oriented saving behavior?

The structure of this paper is as follows. The next section will review relevant literature on platform engagement, learning content, and cover cues, thereby clarifying the analytical perspective of this paper. Following this, the data sources, variable definitions, and analytical methods will be introduced, then the main results will be presented and discussed, and finally, the research findings and their significance will be summarized.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Preservation and Saves as a Future-oriented Form of Participation: Platform engagement metrics are often broadly understood as audience liking and approval of content, but different engagement behaviors may correspond to different usage purposes. Saving is a future-oriented behavior that reflects deferred use, revisiting, and information retention. The number of saves provides an observable indicator of this tendency on the platform. In research on YouTube science videos, adding to playlists is considered a deeper level of engagement than simply watching and sharing; users often save content because they cannot watch it immediately but hope to revisit it later^[1].

Research on health information diaries further defines saving as a typical follow-up behavior, used for future reference or personal use, and has found that saving is one of the most common behaviors among respondents after encountering health information; while sharing and discussion are more inclined towards extroverted social responses^[2]. In research on TikTok usage motivation, archiving motivation has been identified as an important usage driver, predicting multiple behaviors such as watching, engaging, and creating; users save and organize content they have watched, interacted with, or even created themselves^[3]. These studies collectively suggest that saving can be understood as a more purposeful and future-oriented form of engagement, which is not equivalent to immediate likes or shares, providing a conceptual basis for this paper to consider saving as a signal of learning-based engagement.

Learning-oriented Content is More Likely to Trigger Saving Behavior: If saving and saves reflect the intention to postpone use and reuse, then this form of engagement should be more prominent in knowledge and skills-based content. A study on TikTok ophthalmology content, breaking down engagement metrics by content type, found that educational videos performed significantly better in saves and saving than other types, while patient experience videos were more likely to receive likes and comments^[4]. This result provides direct evidence of the link between saving and learning utility and illustrates that different engagement behaviors correspond to different content functions.

In line with this, educational technology and learning research generally agrees that actual use and interaction with social media can promote learning and satisfaction. However, many studies have not further subdivided the differences in specific behaviors such as saving and liking^[5,6]. This means that while saving as a signal of learning-oriented engagement is reasonable at the empirical level, it still needs to be observed and described more meticulously in specific content contexts. This paper chooses short videos of poster design as the research object precisely because they possess both aesthetic presentation and skill learning attributes. Different content formats exhibit predictable differences in learning value and reuse motivation, thus providing a suitable context for examining the learning orientation of saving behavior.

How do Information Clues and Cover Prompts Influence Quick Judgment and Participation?: In the scrolling browsing context of short video platforms, users often need to rely on limited clues to make quick judgments. Besides the content itself, cover images and titles are important entry points. Related research shows that images and titles can influence users' behavioral intentions through credibility, usability, and value expectations. In a scenario experiment in a social shopping community, the authenticity and aesthetics of the cover image can increase users' product awareness and content reading intentions, and its effect is related to expectations of credibility and usefulness^[7]. In app store research, title wording and framing influence installation adoption, indicating that title clarity and tag selection can shape users' judgments about content^[8].

In more general social media content research, factors such as video titles and text style, and sentiment bias can predict views and interactions^[9]. Brand content analysis also shows that media richness and explicit calls to action

increase various types of interactive behaviors^[10]. These studies emphasize the role of informational cues in triggering rapid judgment and engagement, but they tend to focus on overall interaction or click intent and rarely explain the use of saves as a separate outcome variable.

From a learning perspective, the design of visual cues not only influences whether content is accessed but may also affect the motivation for delayed reuse. Multimedia learning research indicates that when decorative images form a semantic association with the learned concept and appear as retrieval cues in tests, they can improve recall performance, while purely decorative images may have a distracting effect^[11].

Another study on video teaching cues found that cognitive visual cues help with comprehension and information integration, while social cues may increase cognitive load, especially in text processing tasks^[12].

While these studies do not directly discuss platform save-up behavior, they suggest from a learning mechanism perspective that the clarity of cues and their consistency with learning objectives may influence users' judgments about whether content is worth saving and reusing. This paper will offer explanations within this research framework when discussing cues such as cover readability, text density, and layout structure.

Research Gaps and the Positioning of this Paper:

Existing short video research exhibits a clear tendency in its treatment of engagement metrics: merging likes, shares, comments, and saves into a single comprehensive engagement indicator, or prioritizing more explicit, immediate responses such as likes and comments. Studies focusing on Douyin (TikTok) define engagement as the sum of likes, shares, saves, and comments, and discuss the impact of audiovisual cues on overall engagement, but do not separately explain saves behavior^[13]. Furthermore, related reviews also point out that studies directly treating saves or bookmarks as independent dependent variables and establishing relationships with fine-grained features at the cover level, such as text density, layout structure, visual complexity, and color contrast, are still rare.

This paper makes two advances based on existing research. First, it treats saving as a core indicator of learning-oriented engagement and compares differences across three content types thus reframing engagement as a functionally differentiated behavioral structure rather than a single composite score. Second, it introduces manually coded cover cues as an explanatory supplement to examine why Tutorial content is

more likely to trigger saving and how covers convey learning value during rapid browsing. By combining engagement decomposition with cover-cue analysis, this paper builds a closer empirical link between platform engagement research and visual communication research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design: This paper employs a content-analysis-based quantitative research design to focus on the functional differences in various engagement behaviors within short videos related to poster design, using "saving" as a core indicator of learning-oriented engagement. The study uses content type as the primary explanatory variable, comparing the differences in engagement metrics such as saves among Tutorial, Process-only, and Showcase content. Additionally, this paper introduces creator type and cover cues as supplementary explanatory variables to discuss whether learning-oriented content is accompanied by clearer content cues and how these cues align with saving behavior. This research design aligns with the principle of verifiable classification and sample comparison emphasized in quantitative content analysis, making it suitable for presenting stable structural differences in medium-sized samples^[14,15].

Data Sources and Samples: The data comes from poster design content on TikTok's public pages. The study focuses on short videos with a clearly defined poster image on the cover or first frame, recording publicly visible engagement metrics. To reduce traceability and the risk of individual identification, the data table does not retain identifiable links; the URL field is empty, and only the sample number and cover file number are used for internal verification. The final sample size is 150 entries, covering the period from May 25, 2022, to January 14, 2026. The content-type distribution is as follows: Process-only 101 entries, Tutorial 31 entries, and Showcase 18 entries; creator types include individual creators (119 entries) and studio creators (31 entries).

Variables and Measurement: This paper records four publicly available engagement metrics: likes, shares, saves, and comments. Given that this paper focuses on learning-oriented engagement, saves are used as the primary dependent variable. Likes and shares are used for supplementary comparisons to distinguish between immediate recognition and diffusion tendencies. Engagement data in platform research often exhibit significant skewness; therefore, this paper uses the median and

interquartile range as the primary reporting methods in descriptive statistics and employs nonparametric methods in between-group comparisons to improve robustness.

Content type is the core explanatory variable in this paper. Tutorial videos contain reusable production information, such as clear steps, parameters, operating instructions, or system explanations. Process-only videos primarily showcase the production process, often through time-lapse or screen recording, but lack explicit instructional information. Showcase videos mainly display finished products or compilations of works, with less emphasis on process and explanation. Creator type serves as a supplementary explanatory variable, distinguishing between individuals and studios, and is used to examine whether organized production is related to participation structure or content type distribution.

To explain the differences in learning-oriented saving behavior, this paper further introduces cover cue variables. All cover cues are derived from manually coded results of the cover or first frame, including text density, readability, dominant visual type, layout structure, color contrast, and visual complexity. Text density is rated as 0, 1, and 2; readability is rated as good, medium, and poor; dominant visual type includes photo-dominant, typography-dominant, abstract graphic-dominated, illustration-dominated, and 3D rendering-dominated; layout structure includes centered, top-bottom, left-right, and freeform; color contrast is rated as medium and high; and visual complexity is rated as simple, medium, and complex. This paper does not use these cover cues as the primary research object but rather uses them to compare the differences in cover cues between tutorial and non-tutorial content, thus providing an explanation for saving differences that is closer to the level of dissemination cues.

Coding Process and Quality Control: Content type and cover cue variables employed a two-researcher review coding process. The first researcher completed the initial coding for all samples according to the coding rules. The second researcher reviewed the coding results, focusing on variables where category boundaries were easily confused, such as content type determination, dominant visual and layout structure, and ordinal variables such as readability and complexity. For items with disagreements, the two researchers returned to the original cover image and coding rules for discussion and determined the final code through consensus. The coding rule table and judgment examples were retained for review,

thereby reducing the interpretive flexibility problem common in content analysis^[14,15].

Data processing and analysis strategies

During the data processing phase, this paper standardized the format of engagement metrics and checked for outliers, confirming that all four-engagement metrics were numerical and without missing values. The analysis first describes the distribution characteristics of engagement metrics under three content types and two creator types, focusing on the median and interquartile range of saves, using likes and shares as references. Then, it compares the differences in engagement between different content types. Given the skewed distribution of engagement metrics, this paper uses the Kruskal-Wallis test for three-group comparisons and performs post-hoc pairwise comparisons when necessary. For the differences between the individual and studio groups, the Mann-Whitney test is used for comparison. Finally, this paper presents the differences in cover cue variables between tutorial and non-tutorial content through cross-tabulation and proportion comparisons to help explain the possible mechanism of saves as a learning-based engagement signal. The significance threshold is set at 0.05, and the analysis results are primarily directional and structural, avoiding the presentation of correlations as causal relationships.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study included 150 short video samples related to poster design. The content types were divided into three categories: Tutorial, Process-only, and Showcase. For ease of reference, these will be referred to as Tutorial, Process-only, and showcase respectively below. Of the samples, 101 were Process-only, 31 were Tutorial, and 18 were Showcase. Creator types were divided into individuals and studios, with 119 individual creators and 31 studios. Engagement metrics included likes, shares, saves, and comments, with saves being considered the core metric for learning-oriented engagement.

Differences in Engagement Across Different Content

Types: Descriptive statistics reveal the most significant differences in content saves among the three content categories. Tutorial content had a median of 6475 saves, with an interquartile range of 1384.5 to 10500. Process-only content had a median of 2388 saves, with an interquartile range of 540 to 7344. Showcase had a median of 1175 saves, with an interquartile range of 373.5 to 2512.8. Overall, tutorial content is more likely to be collected, and its saves distribution is generally

Table 1: Distribution of participation by content type (median and interquartile range)

Content type	n	Save (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Like (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Shares (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Comments (Median, Q1 – Q3)
Tutorial	31	6475 (1384.5 – 10500)	26000 (3385 – 40000)	355 (118.5 – 1063)	48 (25.5 – 105.5)
Process- only	101	2388 (540 – 7344)	6901 (1631 – 37000)	191 (36 – 920)	41 (12 – 141)
Showcase	18	1175 (373.5 – 2512.8)	3557.5 (1013 – 29167.5)	108 (46.8 – 237)	34 (15.5 – 135.2)

Table 2: Distribution of participation by different creator types (median and interquartile range)

Creator Type	n	Save (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Like (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Shares (Median, Q1 – Q3)	Comments (Median, Q1 – Q3)
Individual	119	1917 (488 – 7252)	4175 (1577 – 35500)	147 (42.5 – 610.5)	35 (12 – 93.5)
Studio	31	7000 (1446.5 – 11000)	28000 (3535.5 – 44000)	862 (167 – 1354)	107 (30.5 – 193)

Table 3: Comparison of key cover cues between tutorials and non-tutorials (proportion)

Index	Category	Tutorial %	Non-Tutorial %
Layout	Centered	35.5	47.9
Layout	Top-bottom	38.7	32.8
Layout	Left-right	6.5	2.5
Layout	Freeform	19.4	16.8
Visual complexity	Complex	38.7	25.2
Visual complexity	Simple	32.3	38.7
Dominant Visual	Photo-dominant	67.7	63.9
Dominant Visual	Typography-dominant	9.7	21.8
Dominant Visual	Abstract-graphic-dominant	12.9	13.4
Readability	Good	54.8	56.3
Text density	Moderate	25.8	27.7

upward. In contrast, Showcase has the lowest saves rate, and its distribution is more concentrated. The number of likes, shares, and comments also shows a higher trend for tutorial content, but the difference is not as stable as the number of saves.

After three sets of nonparametric comparisons, significant differences were found in saves among the three content categories, with a Kruskal-Wallis test result of $H=6.81$, $p=0.033$. Further pairwise comparisons showed the most significant difference between tutorials and presentations, with tutorials having significantly more saves than presentations. A higher trend was also observed between tutorials and processes only, but this difference was less stable under more conservative multiple comparison correction. Table 1 summarizes the median and interquartile range for the four-engagement metrics across the three content categories.

This result supports the first research question of this paper, namely that tutorial content is more likely to trigger the motivation to save and reuse, and that saves as a signal of learning-oriented engagement shows structural differences among the three types of content.

Differences in Creator Types and Participation: At the creator type level, studio accounts outperformed individual accounts in all four-engagement metrics, with relatively consistent differences. The median number of saves for studio accounts was 7000, with an interquartile range of 1446.5 to 11000; for individual accounts, the median number of saves was 1917, with an interquartile range of 488 to 7252. Similarly, studio

accounts also had significantly higher medians of likes and shares, demonstrating stronger platform visibility and dissemination capabilities. Nonparametric tests for both groups showed statistical significance for studios compared to individuals in likes, shares, saves, and comments, with p-values of 0.042, 0.009, 0.024, and 0.016, respectively. Table 2 summarizes the engagement distribution for the two creator types.

In terms of content type distribution, studio accounts account for a slightly higher proportion of tutorial content than personal accounts, but the sample size is small, and there is only one sample of display content from studio accounts. Therefore, this paper emphasizes the participation structure itself when explaining the differences among creators and uses content type and cover clues as supplementary directions for discussion, rather than taking "production type preference" as the main conclusion.

Differences in Cover Cues Between Tutorial Content and Non-tutorial Content: To answer the third research question, this paper further compares the differences in cover cues between tutorial and non-tutorial content. Overall, there is little difference in text density and readability between tutorial and non-tutorial content; their text density distributions are similar, and the proportion of content with good readability is also roughly the same. More significant differences lie in layout structure, complexity, and dominant visual type. Compared to non-tutorial content, tutorial covers use fewer centered structures, and more often employ top-bottom or left-right structures; tutorial content also tends to be more visually complex,

while non-tutorial content tends to be simpler. Regarding dominant visual type, tutorial content has a slightly higher proportion of photos, but a significantly lower proportion of text, indicating that tutorial covers do not necessarily rely solely on the main title as a clue, but may rely more on a concrete main visual combined with structured information cues.

Table 3 summarizes the proportions of several key cover clues to illustrate the more interpretable differences between tutorials and non-tutorials. It is important to emphasize that these differences primarily support the interpretive framework that the collectability advantage of tutorial content may stem not only from the teaching method but also from the organization of cover clues. Due to the small sample size for some subcategories, this paper maintains a descriptive and interpretive approach in its conclusions regarding cover clue differences.

The results above show that the more learning-oriented act of saving exhibits clear differences across different content types, with tutorial content showing the most consistent advantage in terms of savings. At the creator type level, studio accounts generally have higher participation rates, suggesting that organized production may be related to platform visibility and rewards for participation. Comparison of cover cues indicates a certain tendency in the structural organization and complexity of tutorial content, providing concrete visual evidence for why tutorials are more likely to trigger learning-oriented savings.

This study aims to examine whether there is functional differentiation in participation behavior on short video platforms and further determine whether "saving" can serve as a participation signal indicating learning and reuse orientation in the context of creative skills content. The results show that tutorial content has the most stable advantage in save metrics, studio accounts generally have higher participation rates across multiple metrics, and tutorials and non-tutorials exhibit directional differences in some cover cues. The following sections will discuss, in conjunction with relevant research, the functional implications of saving, the visibility of learning value in different content formats, the participation advantages of organized creation, and the value prompting mechanism of cover cues during rapid browsing.

The Future-oriented Nature of Saving and Learning-oriented Participation: The dominance of tutorial content in the save metrics provides direct evidence for understanding the function of save

behavior. Unlike likes and comments, which are more immediate responses, save behavior is often interpreted as a future-oriented form of engagement, reflecting the intention to delay viewing, revisit, or retain information. Research on YouTube educational videos indicates that adding videos to playlists can be seen as a deeper form of engagement, with users often saving them because they cannot watch them now but hope to revisit them later^[1]. In the context of health information, saving is explicitly defined as retaining information for future reference and is one of the more common follow-up behaviors^[2]. In research on TikTok usage motivation, archiving motivation is also considered an important driving factor, predicting viewing and interaction behaviors, indicating that saving and organizing have a stable purposeful basis in platform use^[3]. These studies collectively support the conclusion that saves are not a substitute for likes but are more likely to reflect users' expectations of the future value of content.

In the context of poster design, where skills and aesthetics intertwine, this expectation is more easily linked to "learning and reuse." The significant advantage of tutorial content in terms of saving suggests that, at least in this context, users do respond to "reusable information" through saving. Therefore, saving can be considered a more sensitive indicator of learning-oriented engagement, rather than being merged with likes and shares into a single overall engagement measure.

The Visibility Mechanism of Content Format Differences and Learning Value: Tutorials, process-only content, and Showcase content suggest that learning value is not evenly distributed across all design content. It's unsurprising that tutorials are more likely to trigger saves compared to Showcase content, as they typically provide clear steps, parameters, or reusable techniques, supporting later use. Similar differentiation is observed in research on educational short videos. A study of TikTok ophthalmology content found that educational videos performed better in saves and shares, while other types were more likely to receive likes and comments^[15]. This difference supports a more nuanced understanding: platform engagement is not a simple matter of strength or weakness, but rather a structure that matches the content's function. Learning-oriented content is more likely to be rewarded in saves, while experiential or emotional content is more likely to receive more direct feedback in likes and comments.

Process-only content occupies a position between tutorial and demonstration is also

noteworthy. While process-only videos lack explicit explanations, the presentation of the process may provide implicit learning cues, such as the order of tool usage and the production rhythm, thus still triggering some motivation to save. This result suggests that platform-based learning does not entirely rely on explicit instruction; process presentation can also constitute learning, but its learning effectiveness depends more on the viewer's prior knowledge and interpretation methods, making its return on investment less stable. Based on this, future research could further differentiate whether process videos include key step prompts, provide materials and parameters, and form reproducible operational paths, thereby more precisely explaining the boundary conditions of "process as learning."

Possible Mechanisms of Creator Type and Engagement Advantage: Studio accounts generally outperformed in likes, shares, saves, and comments, indicating a stronger advantage for organized entities in platform engagement. This paper does not interpret this result as studios being "superior," but rather as a structural difference in visibility rewards. A more robust inference is that studio accounts may possess a more stable content production rhythm, a more consistent presentation style, or a clearer audience positioning, thus placing them in a more advantageous position in platform distribution and user decision-making. Existing research shows that video content characteristics and dissemination cues systematically influence engagement; titles and content structure, expression style, and emotional cues can all affect viewing and interaction^[9]. In the context of brand communication, media richness and clear calls to action have also been found to enhance various types of engagement behaviors^[10]. This evidence suggests that overall engagement is more likely to increase when content is more structured and cues are clearer. The studio advantage may partly stem from this structuring capability, but this mechanism requires richer account-level data for verification, such as follower size, posting frequency, cross-video consistency, and account positioning strategies.

At the same time, caution is needed because the number of studios featured in this sample is very small, so it is inappropriate to directly attribute the studio's advantages to a particular content preference. A more reasonable approach is to treat creator type as a contextual structural variable, suggesting that platform engagement rewards may be related to organized production, while the specific mechanisms will be explored in future research.

Cover Clues and Learning Value Hints: While there were no significant differences in text density and readability between tutorials and non-tutorials, there were directional differences in layout structure, complexity, and dominant visual elements. This finding suggests that cover cues may convey learning value more through "structural organization" than simply the amount of text. Evidence supports the role of covers as quick judgment cues across various fields. Research has found that the authenticity and aesthetics of cover images can influence reading intentions through credibility and usefulness expectations^[7], while title wording and information cues also influence adoption and selection^[8]. Applying this idea to the context of this paper, tutorial covers need to indicate not only the content theme but also "whether it's worth saving." Tutorials often use top-bottom or left-right structures, possibly indicating a greater tendency to organize key information blocks spatially to convey value during rapid browsing on small screens.

Meanwhile, a more complex tutorial cover does not necessarily equate to greater effectiveness. Multimedia learning research emphasizes that visual enhancements only have a positive effect when aligned with learning objectives; purely decorative information can be distracting^[11]. Research on video instructional cues also indicates that different types of cues may have varying impacts on comprehension and cognitive load^[12]. Therefore, increased tutorial cover complexity can be understood as a "cue-increasing" strategy, but its effectiveness depends on whether the cues truly support learning and reuse. The similar readability ratios of tutorials and non-tutorials in this study suggest that increased complexity does not necessarily lead to a significant decrease in readability in this sample, but this is insufficient to support the notion that higher complexity is always better. A more conservative conclusion is that tutorial covers may require more cues to highlight learning value, and the organization and hierarchical control of these cues determine whether they are transformed into comprehensible information.

Finally, this paper also addresses a common approach in engagement research. Some studies tend to combine likes, shares, comments, and saves into a single engagement metric, thus downplaying the functional differences in saves^[14]. This paper, by using saves as a core indicator and incorporating cover cues into the explanatory framework, provides a more granular empirical explanation of the "visibility mechanism of learning-oriented engagement." This paper does not claim to have found a single visual formula for determining saves but rather proposes a more

reusable analytical path: separating saves from overall engagement and then combining content format and cover cues to explain their differences. This provides a methodological foundation for future research to be extended to more topics and platforms.

CONCLUSION

This paper takes short videos related to poster design as its research object, distinguishes between three content formats: tutorial, process-only, and showcase, compares their differences in platform engagement metrics, and analyzes the core signal of learning-oriented participation through saves. The results show that saves is not simply "more interaction" like likes and shares, but more likely corresponds to the intention of delayed use and reuse. Tutorial content shows the most stable advantage in saves, indicating that when content provides reusable information, users are more inclined to express their future value judgments through saves. Consistent with existing research on the motivations for saving, playlists, and archiving, this paper further provides empirical support in the context of creative skills content, making the "future-oriented nature of saves" more concrete evidence in the context of platform-based learning^[1-3].

This paper also found that studio accounts generally outperformed individual accounts in metrics such as likes, shares, saves, and comments, suggesting that organized production may be related to platform visibility rewards. Since this paper did not incorporate account-level data such as follower size and posting frequency, this result is more suitable as a structural phenomenon rather than a causal explanation. Meanwhile, tutorial and non-tutorial content showed directional differences in cover cues, particularly in layout structure and visual complexity. This suggests that the value proposition of learning content may rely more on structured cue organization than simply increasing text volume. This paper thus provides a more reusable analytical path for understanding learning-oriented engagement: separating saves from overall engagement and explaining their differences in conjunction with content format and cover cues.

From both theoretical and practical perspectives, this paper's main contribution to platform engagement research lies in emphasizing the functional differentiation of engagement behavior and validating the explanatory power of saves as a signal of learning-oriented engagement within the context of design skills content. For the dissemination of design knowledge on platforms, this means that the value of tutorial content lies

not only in its immediate popularity but also in its potential for preservation and reuse. For creators, if the goal is to foster learning-oriented engagement, in addition to the content explanation itself, they need to more clearly indicate learnability and usability on the cover and maintain a clear hierarchy even with a high information load.

The limitations of this paper are mainly reflected in three aspects: sample scope, indicator interpretation, and variable coverage. First, the sample comes from a single platform and focuses on the theme of poster design. The participation structure and content type distribution may be influenced by both platform mechanisms and the characteristics of the creator group. Therefore, the conclusions need to be further tested in a broader platform and thematic context. Second, this paper uses publicly available participation indicators as behavioral signals, which cannot directly observe users' actual learning outcomes and saves motivations. Therefore, the learning orientation regarding saves remains an evidence-based inference. Finally, the cover clues in this paper mainly serve an explanatory and supplementary function. The correlation between clues and saves has not been further examined, nor have other content features such as video length, audio tracks, and subtitles been included.

Future research can proceed along two lines: expanding the sample size and refining the mechanisms. On one hand, the research can be extended to more topics and platforms to examine whether learning-based participation structures exhibit cross-platform consistency and to observe differences in content type distribution across different platform mechanisms. On the other hand, more granular content features and account-level variables can be introduced, such as explanation density, subtitle structure, fan base size, and posting rhythm, to more accurately explain the participation advantages of organized subjects. Simultaneously, combining questionnaires or experimental methods to directly measure saves motivation and learning outcomes will help examine whether different cover cues can enhance learning value judgments and subsequent reuse behavior in a rapid browsing context, thereby more closely linking participation signals with learning mechanisms.

REFERENCES

1. Yang, S., Brossard, D., Scheufele, D. A., and Xenos, M.A. 2022. The science of YouTube: What factors influence user engagement with online science videos? *PloS One*, 17: e0267697. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0267697>

2. Fallatah, K. U., Harvey, M. A., and Rutter, S. 2024. Health information post-encountering behaviours on social media platforms. *Information Research*, 29: 253-274. <https://doi.org/10.47989/ir292826>
3. Omar, B., and Dequan, W. 2020. Watch, share or create: The influence of personality traits and user motivation on TikTok mobile video usage. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (IJIM)*, 14: 121. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i04.12429>
4. Sampige, R., Rodgers, E. G., Huang, A., and Zhu, D. 2024. Education and misinformation: Exploring ophthalmology content on TikTok. *Ophthalmology and Therapy*, 13: 97-112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40123-023-00834-6>
5. Alalwan, N. 2022. Actual use of social media for engagement to enhance students' learning. *Education and Information Technologies*, 27: 9767-9789. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11014-7>
6. Sarwar, B., Zulfiqar, S., Aziz, S., and Ejaz Chandia, K. 2019. Usage of social media tools for collaborative learning: The effect on learning success with the moderating role of cyberbullying. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 57: 246-279. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735633117748415>
7. Jin, X.-L., Chen, X., and Zhou, Z. 2022. The impact of cover image authenticity and aesthetics on users' product-knowing and content-reading willingness in social shopping community. *International Journal of Information Management*, 62: 102428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2021.102428>
8. Huang, H.-Y., and Bashir, M. 2017. Users' adoption of mental health apps: Examining the impact of information cues. *JMIR mHealth and uHealth*, 5: e83. <https://doi.org/10.2196/mhealth.6827>
9. Munaro, A. C., Barcelos, R., Francisco Maffezzoli, E. C., Rodrigues, J. P., and Paraiso, E. 2021. To engage or not engage? The features of video content on YouTube affecting digital consumer engagement. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 20: 1336-1352. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1939>
10. Moran, G., Muzellec, L., and Johnson, D. 2019. Message content features and social media engagement: evidence from the media industry. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 29: 533-545. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jpbm-09-2018-2014>
11. Schneider, S., Nebel, S., Beege, M., and Rey, G. D. 2020. The retrieval-enhancing effects of decorative pictures as memory cues in multimedia learning videos and subsequent performance tests. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112: 1111-1127. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000432>
12. Moon, J., and Ryu, J. 2021. The effects of social and cognitive cues on learning comprehension, eye-gaze pattern, and cognitive load in video instruction. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 33: 39-63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-020-09255-x>
13. Yang, Q., Wang, Y., Wang, Q., Jiang, Y., and Li, J. 2025. Harmonizing sight and sound: The impact of auditory emotional arousal, visual variation, and their congruence on consumer engagement in short video marketing. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 20: 69. <https://doi.org/10.3390/jtaer20020069>
14. Coe, K., and Scacco, J. M. 2017. Content Analysis, Quantitative. In *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* pp: 1-11. John Wiley and Sons, Inc
15. Sampige, R., Rodgers, E. G., Huang, A., and Zhu, D. 2024. Education and misinformation: Exploring ophthalmology content on TikTok. *Ophthalmology and Therapy*, 13: 97-112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40123-023-00834-6>