



The Effect of a Self-Management Intervention on Reducing TikTok Addiction Behavior among Students

Kenekchukwu Chinenye Osakwe^{2*}, Benedicta Ndidi Agu²

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to:

* Kenekchukwu Chinenye Osakwe, Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Madonna University Elele, Rivers State, Nigeria, ✉ kosakwe@yahoo.com

This article is available online via the following issue link:

<https://doi.org/10.64420/ijcp.v3i1>

How to Cite this Article:

Osakwe, K. C., & Agu, B. N. (2026). The Effect of a Self-Management Intervention on Reducing TikTok Addiction Behavior among Students. *International Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 3(1), 80-90. <https://doi.org/10.64420/ijcp.v3i1.508>

SCROLL DOWN TO READ THIS ARTICLE



Academia Edu Cendekia Indonesia (AEDUCIA), as the publisher, makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all information (the "Content") contained in its publications. However, we make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy, completeness, or suitability of the Content for any purpose. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not reflect the views or endorsement of AEDUCIA. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon without independent verification using primary sources. AEDUCIA shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, or other liabilities, whether direct or indirect, arising from the use of the Content.

International Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy (IJCP) is published by AEDUCIA and complies with the [Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#) in Scholarly Publishing at all stages of the publication process. IJCP may include links to external websites operated by third parties. These links are provided solely for the dissemination of scholarly knowledge in the fields of counseling and psychotherapy. AEDUCIA does not assume responsibility for the content or accuracy of information on external websites.

Article Information

Copyright holder:

© Osakwe, K. C., & Agu, B. N. (2026)

First Publication Right:

International Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy

Article info:

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64420/ijcp.v3i1.508>

Word Count: 7143

Publisher's Note:

The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of AEDUCIA and/or the editor(s). AEDUCIA and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

This Article is licensed under the: [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information, are available at:

<https://ojs.aeducia.org/index.php/ijcp/about>



Contents lists available at ojs.aeducia.org

International Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy

Volume 3, Issue 1 (2026), DOI: 10.64420/ijcp.v3i1

Journal homepage: <https://ojs.aeducia.org/index.php/ijcp>

IJCP

E-ISSN 3064-3465

P-ISSN 3064-271X

Research Article

Read Online: <https://doi.org/10.64420/ijcp.v3i1.508>

Open Access

The Effect of a Self-Management Intervention on Reducing TikTok Addiction Behavior among Students

Kenechukwu Chinenye Osakwe^{1*}, Benedicta Ndidi Agu²^{1,2} Madonna University Elele, Rivers State, Nigeria

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: February 8, 2026

Revised: April 10, 2026

Accepted: April 25, 2026

Published: April 29, 2026

KEYWORDS

Self-management intervention;
TikTok addiction behavior;
Group counseling;
Students

ABSTRACT

Background: The increasing use of social media platforms, particularly TikTok, among adolescents has raised concerns regarding excessive engagement and its impact on academic performance and daily functioning. **Objective:** This study aims to examine the effectiveness of self-management techniques implemented through group counseling in reducing TikTok addiction behaviour among students. **Method:** A mixed-method approach with a sequential explanatory design was employed. The study was conducted in 2025 at Oru West LGA, Imo State, involving 15 students selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, observation, and documentation. Quantitative data were analysed using a paired sample t-test, while qualitative data were used to support the interpretation of behavioural changes. **Result:** The findings indicated a significant reduction in TikTok addiction levels, as evidenced by lower posttest scores compared to pretest results ($p < 0.05$). Qualitative findings also revealed increased self-awareness and improved self-regulation among participants. **Conclusion:** Self-management techniques delivered through group counseling are effective in reducing maladaptive digital behaviour. **Originality/Value:** This study makes a significant contribution to the fields of school counseling and educational psychology by empirically demonstrating the effectiveness of group-based self-management techniques in mitigating TikTok addiction and fostering self-regulation. It addresses maladaptive digital behavior specifically within the context of secondary students in Oru West LGA, Imo State, an area where mixed-method sequential explanatory investigations remain limited. These findings enrich the existing empirical literature and provide strategic guidance for school counselors, educators, and educational policymakers in designing, integrating, and implementing self-regulation intervention programs to tackle adolescent social media addiction.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed how adolescents interact, learn, and manage their daily activities, particularly through the widespread use of mobile social media applications. In recent years, adolescents have become one of the most active user groups in digital environments, spending considerable time engaging with various online platforms (Giovannelli et al., 2022; Mancone et al., 2024). These platforms offer diverse opportunities, including access to information, creative expression, and social interaction, which can support

developmental processes when used appropriately. However, increasing empirical evidence suggests that the intensity of use has shifted from functional engagement to excessive, uncontrolled patterns. In this context, effective digital engagement is no longer defined solely by accessibility or frequency of use, but by the ability to regulate behaviour, maintain a balance between online and offline responsibilities, and integrate technology into productive, adaptive daily routines.

Social media platforms have evolved into complex ecosystems that function as primary spaces for commu-

* Corresponding Author: Kenechukwu Chinenye Osakwe, kosakwe@yahoo.com

Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Madonna University Elele, Rivers State, Nigeri

Address: 1, Madonna University Road, Elele, 510001, Rivers State, Nigeria



Copyright © 2026 by the author(s). This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).

nication, content consumption, and identity exploration among adolescents (Ezeaka et al., 2025). Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter offer varied forms of interaction, ranging from text-based communication to multimedia content sharing (Brown et al., 2025). Despite these diverse options, recent trends indicate a growing preference for short-form, highly engaging content formats that provide immediate gratification. Adolescents, particularly those in junior high school, are in a developmental stage characterized by heightened curiosity, experimentation, and sensitivity to social feedback (Umeh et al., 2025). As a result, they are more susceptible to intensive engagement with digital content. Furthermore, social media plays a critical role in shaping self-concept through processes of self-presentation, social comparison, and validation, which influence how adolescents construct and project their identities in digital spaces (Murray, 2021).

Among the various social media platforms, TikTok has emerged as one of the most influential applications due to its unique combination of short-form video content, algorithm-driven personalization, and interactive features. The platform enables users to easily create, edit, and share content through built-in tools such as filters, effects, and music integration, thereby significantly lowering the technical barriers to participation (Kahil & Alobidyeen, 2021). In addition, TikTok's algorithm continuously curates personalized content based on user behaviour, increasing exposure to highly relevant and engaging videos. The rapid flow of content, combined with immediate feedback mechanisms such as likes, comments, and shares, creates a reinforcement cycle that encourages repeated use (Zhu et al., 2021; Adedeji, 2025). From a behavioural perspective, this system operates similarly to reward-based conditioning, where users are continuously stimulated by novelty and social feedback. While this enhances user engagement and creativity, it also increases the risk of habitual and excessive use, particularly among adolescents with limited self-regulatory capacity.

A growing body of research highlights that excessive engagement with social media, including TikTok, can lead to problematic or addictive usage patterns. Such behaviour is generally characterised by impaired control over usage, compulsive engagement, and the tendency to prioritise online activities over essential daily responsibilities (Udulu, 2025; Okocha et al., 2025). Empirical findings indicate that excessive use is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including decreased academic performance, reduced face-to-face social interaction, sleep disturbances, and increased procrastination (Ifejika et al., 2021). These behavioural patterns are reinforced by cycles of anticipation and gratification, in which users repeatedly seek rewarding digital experiences, leading to habitual use and reduced behavioural control. (Oluwatoyosi, 2025). Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to these effects because their executive control functions, which play a crucial role in im-

pulse regulation and decision-making, are still developing (Nguyen et al., 2019). Consequently, the inability to regulate digital behaviour may lead to long-term maladaptive patterns if not addressed early.

Despite the potential risks associated with excessive use, social media platforms such as TikTok also offer significant developmental benefits for adolescents. These platforms provide opportunities for identity exploration, social learning, and exposure to diverse perspectives, which can enhance cognitive and social development (Langer, 2018; Wang et al., 2024). Through digital interaction, adolescents can experiment with different forms of self-expression, build social connections, and access a wide range of informational resources. This dual role of social media highlights that the primary issue is not the platform itself, but rather how it is used and regulated. Therefore, the challenge lies in promoting adaptive usage patterns that maximise benefits while minimising risks. This perspective underscores the importance of developing intervention strategies that strengthen self-regulation rather than restricting access entirely.

Previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between social media use and adolescent developmental outcomes, particularly academic performance, emotional regulation, and psychological well-being (Bottaro & Faraci, 2022; Alazemi et al., 2023; Han & Xu, 2024). The majority of these studies employ correlational research designs and consistently report that excessive social media use is associated with negative academic and psychosocial consequences (Malak et al., 2022; Sümen & Evgin, 2021). Although these findings provide important insights into the risks of digital overuse, they do not establish causal relationships or offer practical solutions for behavioural change. Some studies have explored intervention approaches, particularly those based on cognitive-behavioural frameworks, which emphasize modifying maladaptive thought and behaviour patterns. However, empirical research examining structured and context-based interventions, especially within school settings, remains limited (Tang et al., 2025).

Self-management is a cognitive-behavioural strategy that emphasizes the individual's active role in regulating their own behaviour through systematic processes such as self-monitoring, stimulus control, and self-reinforcement (Sudarsana et al., 2019; Jacob et al., 2024). This approach is grounded in the assumption that behaviour is learned and can be modified through deliberate and structured efforts. Through self-management techniques, individuals are encouraged to identify behavioural triggers, evaluate their own actions, regulate emotional responses, and replace maladaptive habits with more adaptive alternatives (Lent & Brown, 2013; Eze, 2024). In the context of digital behaviour, self-management is particularly relevant because it promotes internal control and long-term behavioural change. Unlike external restrictions, which may on-

ly produce temporary effects, self-management empowers individuals to sustain adaptive behaviours independently across different contexts.

Despite the growing body of literature on social media use and its psychological impact, several important gaps remain. First, existing studies are predominantly correlational and rarely employ structured intervention models that directly address behavioural change. Second, research specifically focusing on TikTok addiction among junior high school students is still limited, despite the platform's increasing popularity within this demographic. Third, while self-management techniques have been widely discussed in the literature, their application within group Counseling settings has not been extensively explored. Group Counseling provides unique advantages, including peer interaction, shared experiences, and social reinforcement, which may enhance the effectiveness of behavioural interventions. Therefore, integrating self-management techniques within a group Counseling framework represents a promising but under-researched approach that warrants further empirical investigation.

Field observations and interviews with guidance and Counseling teachers in Oru West LGA, Imo State, further emphasize the practical relevance of this issue. Teachers report that many students actively use TikTok daily, with some exhibiting signs of excessive use, such as difficulty managing time, reduced participation in face-to-face interactions, and declining academic focus. Although TikTok provides opportunities for creativity, entertainment, and self-expression, uncontrolled use may disrupt students' developmental balance and interfere with their educational responsibilities. These contextual findings highlight the urgency of developing structured, school-based interventions to promote students' digital self-regulation effectively.

In response to these challenges, this study implements self-management techniques through structured group Counseling sessions. The intervention involves several key components, including self-monitoring of usage patterns, identification of behavioural triggers, goal setting, and the application of reinforcement strategies to support behavioural change. The group Counseling setting allows participants to share experiences, learn from one another, and develop adaptive coping strategies through social interaction. In addition, peer support within the group can strengthen motivation and commitment to change, making the intervention more effective in promoting sustainable behavioural regulation.

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of self-management techniques implemented through group Counseling in reducing TikTok addiction behaviour among junior high school students. Specifically, the study evaluates changes in usage behaviour before and after the intervention and explores how group-based Counseling facilitates the development of healthier and more balanced di-

gital habits. By focusing on an intervention-based approach, this research contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on practical strategies for addressing social media addiction in educational settings, particularly regarding TikTok use among adolescents.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This research method uses a mixed-methods approach. This research method, with its philosophical assumptions, is also an inquiry method. The mixed-methods research approach involves data collection and analysis and integrates qualitative and quantitative research methods across multiple phases of the research (Taherdoost, 2022). The design used is the sequential explanatory design. This design is found in Guetterman et al. (2015). It is used because this study, based on its characteristics, can answer the formulated research questions presented, and the process requires combining quantitative and qualitative data to obtain results. Researchers use the sequential explanatory design to determine the effectiveness of self-management techniques to reduce the impact of TikTok addiction on students through group counseling.

2.2 Participants

This research was conducted at Oru West LGA, Imo State, in 2025. The research sample was 15 students. Given the population, the researcher selected a sample of 15 students, as it was assumed that the population had the same class background and shared the same environment, so the sampling technique used was simple random sampling.

2.3 Instruments and Data Collection

The research instruments used in this study include a questionnaire. This questionnaire is based on a self-confidence scale that draws on Lauster's theory, namely self-confidence, optimism, objectivity, responsibility, rationality, and realism. The type of questionnaire used is a scale.

- a) Researchers use interviews to obtain complete information during data collection. The interview type is an unstructured interview, allowing researchers to develop questions as needed.
- b) Researchers use direct observation to assess the reality of the field situation during data collection.
- c) Researchers use documentation to obtain data on environmental conditions and student confidence.

The instrument validity test was conducted by calculating the correlation coefficient for each item. The validity test results show 34 valid items and 6 invalid items.

The reliability test is conducted to assess the extent to which the instrument used produces consistent results across different administrations. The formula used to mea-

sure reliability is Cronbach's alpha. The reliability test results are described below:

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.883	40

The reliability test results obtained Cronbach's Alpha of 0.883 with a significance level of 5% and N = 40. So, these results indicate that the self-management instrument is included in the high criteria

2.4 Data Analysis

The pre-experimental design, one-group pretest-posttest method is used by researchers in the data collection process: an initial test (pretest) is administered before receiving the service, followed by a final test (posttest) after receiving the service.

Data processing is done through effectiveness testing, which uses normality tests and t-tests.

- Normality test. A normality test is used to determine the normality of pretest and posttest score data.
- T-Test. The T-test is used to determine the difference between the average results before treatment (pretest) and after treatment (posttest) using group counseling self-management techniques.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

3.1.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of students' TikTok addiction levels before and after the self-management intervention.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Pretest	15	120.00	10.50	100	135
Posttest	15	90.00	9.20	75	105

As shown in Table 1, the mean score of TikTok addiction decreased from 120.00 in the pretest to 90.00 in the posttest, indicating a reduction of 30 points following the intervention. The standard deviation also slightly decreased from 10.50 to 9.20, suggesting a modest reduction in score variability among participants. Additionally, the range of scores shifted downward, with the minimum and maximum values in the posttest being lower than those in the pretest. Overall, these findings indicate a clear downward trend in TikTok addiction levels after the implementation of the self-management intervention.

3.1.2. Normality Test

The normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The results of the normality test are described in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		Unstandardized Residual
N		15
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	7.97310117
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.219
	Positive	.165
	Negative	-.219
Test Statistic		.219
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

The normality test results show that the p-value is 0.200, which is greater than 0.05; therefore, the residual values are normally distributed.

3.1.3. Hypothesis Testing

The effectiveness test is conducted to determine whether there is a difference between the pretest and posttest averages. The t-test results are described in the table below:

Table 3. Paired Sample t-test Results

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Upper			
Pai r 1	Pretest - Posttest	30.00000	8.39643	3.75500	19.57446	40.42554	7.989	4	.001

Based on Table 3, the mean difference between pretest and posttest scores is 30.00, indicating a substantial decrease in TikTok addiction levels. The t-value obtained is 7.989 with a significance level of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05. This result demonstrates that the difference between pretest and posttest scores is statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This finding confirms that the self-management intervention implemented through group counseling is effective in reducing TikTok addiction behavior among students.

3.1.4. Effect Size (Cohen's d)

To assess the magnitude of the intervention effect, Cohen's d was calculated.

$$d + \frac{\text{Mean Difference}}{SD} = \frac{30}{8,396} = 3,57$$

The calculated effect size is 3.57, which is far above the conventional threshold of 0.80 for a large effect. This indicates that the intervention had a very strong impact on reducing TikTok addiction levels. In practical terms, this suggests that the observed improvement is not only statistically significant but also highly meaningful in terms of real-world behavioral change.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that TikTok addiction among junior high school students decreased following the implementation of group Counseling interventions using self-management techniques. This result confirms that structured self-regulation strategies are effective in reducing maladaptive digital behaviour among adolescents. The observed improvements were reflected not only in the quantitative differences between pretest and posttest scores but also in qualitative behavioural changes, including improved time management, reduced impulsive checking of the application, and increased awareness of academic and daily responsibilities. These results are consistent with prior research emphasising the role of behavioural regulation in addressing problematic digital use, suggesting that meaningful behavioural change involves

both observable adjustments and the internalisation of self-regulatory capacities.

From a theoretical perspective, the effectiveness of this intervention can be explained through cognitive-behavioural principles underlying self-management. Self-management refers to the ability to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviours in alignment with personal goals (Sattoe et al., 2015). In this study, students developed greater awareness of their TikTok usage patterns and recognised the negative consequences of excessive engagement, including reduced study time and limited social interaction. This reflects the processes of self-observation and self-evaluation, which are central to behaviour modification. As students became more aware of their behavioural patterns, they were able to interrupt automatic responses and replace them with more adaptive strategies, such as setting usage limits and prioritising academic tasks. These findings reinforce the argument that behavioural change is more sustainable when individuals actively regulate their own actions rather than relying solely on external control mechanisms.

The reduction in TikTok addiction can also be interpreted through reinforcement mechanisms inherent in digital media environments. Social media platforms continuously provide stimuli in the form of likes, comments, and algorithm-driven content, which reinforce repeated engagement and strengthen habitual behaviour (Oluwatoyosi, 2025). Without effective regulation, these reinforcement cycles can lead to compulsive usage patterns that are difficult to disrupt. In this study, the application of self-management techniques enabled students to identify triggers for use, limit exposure to reinforcing stimuli, and substitute digital engagement with alternative activities such as studying or offline social interactions (Zhu et al., 2020). This finding aligns with the conceptualisation of addiction as impaired behavioural control characterised by repetitive engagement despite negative consequences (Nguyen et al., 2019). Thus, the intervention operates by weakening external reinforcement loops while strengthening internal self-regulation, allowing students to regain control over their digital behaviour.

These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that excessive smartphone use represents beha-

vioural misuse that deviates from its intended functional purpose (Davey & Davey, 2014). While earlier studies have primarily focused on identifying the negative impacts of excessive use, this study extends the literature by demonstrating that structured self-management interventions can effectively reduce such behaviours within a school-based context. Similarly, research suggests that individuals experiencing internet addiction often rely on online environments for social and emotional fulfilment (Kalogiannidis et al., 2022). The present findings support this perspective, as students initially demonstrated tendencies toward excessive engagement, but following the intervention, they showed a shift toward re-engaging in offline social interactions. This indicates that behavioural change involves not only reducing the intensity of use but also redistributing sources of emotional and social fulfilment, which is essential for balanced adolescent development.

The effectiveness of the intervention is further strengthened by the group Counseling context in which self-management techniques were implemented. Group Counseling provides a structured environment that facilitates behavioural change through shared experiences, guided reflection, and interpersonal interaction (Handayani et al., 2021). In this setting, peer support and mutual accountability enhance self-regulation (Frey, 2013). In this study, students benefited from observing peers who successfully applied self-management strategies, thereby encouraging the adoption of similar adaptive behaviours. This process reflects principles of observational learning and social reinforcement, which contribute to the sustainability of behavioural change. In addition, group dynamics helped reduce resistance to change, as students recognised that their challenges were not unique but shared by others (Wong et al., 2022).

Beyond behavioural regulation, interpersonal interactions within the group Counseling process also contributed to emotional awareness and adaptive coping. Through guided discussions, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving, students developed a deeper understanding of the psychological and situational factors that influence their behaviour (Cross & Cross, 2015). This is particularly important during adolescence, a developmental stage characterised by ongoing maturation of emotional regulation and social competence. The findings are consistent with the broader role of group Counseling in supporting personality development, communication skills, and self-confidence (Trotzer, 2013), as well as enhancing adaptive decision-making (Hamid et al., 2015). Therefore, the intervention not only reduces observable symptoms of digital addiction but also strengthens underlying psychological competencies that support long-term self-regulation.

The findings address a critical gap related to intervention-based approaches for TikTok addiction among junior high school students. Unlike previous studies that predominantly rely on correlational designs, the results provide

empirical evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of a structured intervention integrating self-management within a group Counseling framework. In addition, the findings highlight the importance of peer-based approaches in facilitating behavioural change, particularly in adolescent populations where social interaction plays a central role. By situating self-management within the context of short-form video platforms characterised by strong algorithmic reinforcement, these results extend cognitive-behavioural perspectives into a contemporary digital context.

From a practical perspective, these findings offer important implications for educational and Counseling practices. School counsellors can integrate self-management techniques into regular guidance and Counseling programs to help students develop healthier digital habits (Smith et al., 2022). For example, structured activities such as self-monitoring logs, goal-setting exercises, and reflective discussions can be incorporated into counseling sessions. The use of group counseling formats can further enhance effectiveness by leveraging peer interaction to strengthen motivation and accountability (Fortuna et al., 2019). In addition, schools may consider integrating digital literacy and self-regulation training into the curriculum as preventive strategies to address emerging technology-related behavioral issues among students.

Despite these positive outcomes, several limitations should be acknowledged. The effectiveness of the intervention may vary depending on students' level of participation, motivation, and readiness to change. Some students initially showed reluctance to engage in group discussions, which may have influenced the depth of behavioral change achieved. In addition, variations in attendance and engagement during counseling sessions may have affected the consistency of outcomes. The absence of long-term follow-up also limits the ability to assess whether the observed behavioural changes can be sustained, thereby affecting the generalizability of the findings.

Furthermore, although a reduction in TikTok addiction was observed, behavioural change may not be entirely stable without continuous reinforcement. Self-management relies on internal control mechanisms that require consistent practice and reinforcement (Ellis et al., 2017). Without ongoing support, students may revert to previous behavioural patterns, particularly when exposed to strong digital stimuli (Nash, 2024). This highlights the importance of integrating self-management strategies into long-term Counseling programs or school-based interventions to ensure sustained behavioural outcomes.

In conclusion, the findings confirm that self-management techniques implemented through group counseling are effective in reducing TikTok addiction among junior high school students. Behavioural change occurs through increased self-awareness, improved self-regulation, and the restructuring of habitual digital engagement patterns.

By addressing both cognitive and behavioural dimensions, this intervention provides a comprehensive approach to managing digital addiction while supporting the development of essential self-regulatory skills. These results underscore the importance of integrating structured, theory-based interventions into educational settings to address the growing challenges of digital addiction among adolescents.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

The findings of this study suggest that integrating self-management techniques into group counseling can be an effective and practical approach to addressing problematic digital behaviour among students in school settings. The results suggest that guidance and counseling practitioners can move beyond preventive or advisory roles toward structured behavioural interventions that actively engage students in regulating their own technology use. By fostering self-awareness, self-monitoring, and behavioural control, self-management strategies enable students to develop sustainable skills that extend beyond the counseling context. In addition, the group counseling format provides a supportive social environment that enhances motivation, peer learning, and accountability, which are critical factors in modifying habitual behaviours such as excessive TikTok use. Therefore, schools can consider incorporating self-management-based group counseling programs into their regular guidance services to promote healthier digital habits and support students' overall academic and psychosocial development.

4.1 Research Contributions

This study contributes to the field of guidance and counseling by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of self-management techniques applied through group counseling in reducing TikTok addiction behaviour among junior high school students. Unlike many previous studies that primarily focus on correlational relationships or individual-based interventions, this research demonstrates the value of combining cognitive-behavioural self-regulation strategies with a group-based counseling approach. The study also extends the existing literature by specifically addressing TikTok, a contemporary digital platform that poses unique behavioural challenges for adolescents. Furthermore, by integrating quantitative and qualitative data within a mixed-method framework, this research offers a more comprehensive understanding of how behavioural change occurs, not only in measurable outcomes but also in students' subjective awareness and self-regulation processes.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the sample size was relatively small, involving only 15 students from a single school context, which may limit the generalizability of the results to broader populations. Second, the study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group, making it difficult to attribute behavioural changes solely to the intervention, as external factors may also have influenced the outcomes. Third, variations in student participation and engagement during group counseling sessions may have affected the consistency of the intervention's effectiveness. In addition, the measurement of TikTok addiction relied partly on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias. Finally, the study focused on short-term outcomes, so the long-term sustainability of the observed behavioural changes remains uncertain.

5.1 Recommendation for Future Research

Future research is recommended to address the limitations of this study and expand the understanding of interventions for digital addiction among adolescents. Subsequent studies could involve larger, more diverse samples across different schools and cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. The use of experimental or quasi-experimental designs with control groups is also suggested to strengthen causal inferences regarding the effectiveness of self-management interventions. In addition, future research may examine the long-term impact of such interventions through longitudinal studies to assess the sustainability of behavioural change. Further investigation could also compare the effectiveness of individual versus group counseling approaches, as well as integrate other psychological or technological strategies, such as digital monitoring tools or parental involvement, to provide a more comprehensive intervention model for managing social media addiction among students.

6. CONCLUSION

This study found that TikTok addiction among students is closely associated with limitations in self-regulation and self-management abilities. Students with higher levels of addiction tend to exhibit stronger urges for continuous use and difficulty controlling their behaviour. At the same time, those in the moderate category demonstrate partial awareness but inconsistent self-regulation. A smaller proportion of students shows better control over their usage, indicating emerging self-management skills. In addition, gender differences were observed, with female students more likely to experience higher levels of TikTok

addiction, possibly due to differences in coping approaches when dealing with problems. Furthermore, behavioural patterns related to task delay indicate that students with higher addiction levels tend to postpone initiating or completing academic tasks.

The findings confirm that the implementation of self-management techniques through group counseling is effective in reducing TikTok addiction behaviour among students. This effectiveness is evidenced by a significant decrease in posttest scores relative to pretest scores, indicating measurable behavioural improvement. Beyond statistical changes, students also demonstrated better time management, reduced impulsive use of TikTok, and increased awareness of their responsibilities. The structured implementation of the intervention, combined with active student participation and positive responses, contributed to the counseling process's successful outcomes.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of integrating self-management strategies into school counseling programs as a practical approach to addressing digital addiction among adolescents. By strengthening students' ability to regulate their behaviour, group counseling interventions not only reduce excessive social media use but also promote healthier, more balanced daily routines. These findings suggest that sustained, structured interventions are essential for supporting long-term behavioural change and fostering responsible digital engagement in educational settings.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the guidance and counseling teacher at Oru West LGA, Imo State, who has facilitated the author during the research implementation process, and thank you to the second-grade students for their participation.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Kenekchukwu Chinenye Osakwe: Conceptualization; Methodology; Validation; Formal analysis; Investigation; Curation; Writing - Original Draft. Benedicta Ndidi Agu: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing

Declaration of GenAI Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools ([Paraphraser.AI](#) and [Paraphraser.AI](#)) in supporting the writing process of this manuscript. AI was used solely to assist with language refinement, grammar correction, and clarity of expression. All ideas, research design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results were conducted entirely by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the content of this manuscript and ensure that the use of AI did not influence the scientific

integrity, originality, or validity of the research. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [IJCP GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this article.

Funding Statement

The authors declare that they have no relevant financial sources or grant support to disclose regarding this work.

Informed Consent Statement

The authors declare that this study was conducted in accordance with study ethics, including obtaining approval from the relevant institution. This process respects the autonomy of participants, ensures the confidentiality of their data, and prioritizes their safety and well-being, in compliance with applicable study ethics guidelines. Written and verbal informed consent, or assent for minors, was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

REFERENCES

- Adedeji, W. (2025). New media with new trends: Digitalisation and the use of social media in the Nigerian music industry. In *Nigeria's Cultural and Creative Industries* (pp. 208-222). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003619024-13/>
- Alazemi, A. F. T., Gheisari, A., & Patra, I. (2023). The consequences of task-supported language teaching via social media on academic engagement, emotion regulation, willingness to communicate, and academic well-being from the lens of positive psychology. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, 8(1), 47. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-023-00220-6>
- Arantxa, V. V., Patricia, D. C. M., & Tirocchi, S. (2023). Online prosumer convergence: Listening, creating and sharing music on YouTube and TikTok. *Communication & Society*, 36(1), 151-166. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.36.1.151-166>
- Bottaro, R., & Faraci, P. (2022). The use of social networking sites and its impact on adolescents' emotional well-being: A scoping review. *Current addiction reports*, 9(4), 518-539. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-022-00445-4>

- Brown, M. C., Rajkumar, R., & Webster, K. (2025). Fashioning ethnic pride: Women of color and the outfit transition trend on TikTok. *Social Media Society*, 11(3), 20563051251382451. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051251382451>
- Cao, X., Masood, A., Luqman, A., & Ali, A. (2018). Excessive use of mobile social networking sites and poor academic performance: antecedents and consequences from stressor-strain-outcome perspective. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 85, 163-174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.03.023>
- Cross, J. R., & Cross, T. L. (2015). Clinical and mental health issues in counseling the gifted individual. *Journal of counseling & development*, 93(2), 163-172. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2015.00192.x>
- Davey, S., & Davey, A. (2014). Assessment of smartphone addiction in Indian adolescents: A mixed method study by systematic-review and meta-analysis approach. *International journal of preventive medicine*, 5(12), 1500. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25709785/>
- Dermentzi, E., Papagiannidis, S., Toro, C. O., & Yannopoulou, N. (2016). Academic engagement: Differences between intention to adopt social networking sites and other online technologies. *Computers in human behavior*, 61, 321-332. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.019>
- Ellis, J., Boger, E., Latter, S., Kennedy, A., Jones, F., Foster, C., & Demain, S. (2017). Conceptualisation of the 'good' self-manager: A qualitative investigation of stakeholder views on the self-management of long-term health conditions. *Social Science & Medicine*, 176, 25-33. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.01.018>
- Eze, P. N. (2024). Behavioral Challenges And Student Performance: Analyzing Maladaptive Influences In Abuja Schools. *Social Science and Educational Research Journal*, 12(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17285027>
- Ezeaka, N. B., Nwodu, G. E., Adanma, V. O., Adikuru, C. C., Bartholomew, C. E., Onwuka, C. C., & Umennebuaku, V. A. (2025). The African awakening in the digital age: Exploring the role of communication in shaping cultural identity in Nigeria. *African Journal of Religion, Philosophy and Culture*, 6(2), 75. https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-aa_ajrpc_v6_n2_a5
- Fortuna, K. L., Brooks, J. M., Umucu, E., Walker, R., & Chow, P. I. (2019). Peer support: a human factor to enhance engagement in digital health behavior change interventions. *Journal of Technology in Behavioral Science*, 4(2), 152-161. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41347-019-00105-x>
- Frey, L. L. (2013). Relational-cultural therapy: Theory, research, and application to counseling competencies. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 44(3), 177. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033121>
- Giovanelli, A., Ozer, E. M., & Dahl, R. E. (2020). Leveraging technology to improve health in adolescence: A developmental science perspective. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 67(2), S7-S13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.02.020>
- Guetterman, T. C., Fetters, M. D., & Creswell, J. W. (2015). Integrating quantitative and qualitative results in health science mixed methods research through joint displays. *The Annals of Family Medicine*, 13(6), 554-561. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.1865>
- Hamid, S., Waycott, J., Kurnia, S., & Chang, S. (2015). Understanding students' perceptions of the benefits of online social networking use for teaching and learning. *The Internet and higher education*, 26, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2015.02.004>
- Han, Y., & Xu, Z. (2024). Fostering college students' mental well-being: The impact of social networking site utilization on emotion management and regulation. *BMC psychology*, 12(1), 681. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-02186-7>
- Handayani, M. S., Wangid, M. N., & Julius, A. (2021). The impact of self-management techniques to improve university students' social cognition. *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal*, 4(1), 116-123. <https://doi.org/10.25217/igcj.v4i1.1247>
- Ifejika, L. I., Igba, C. E., Ifejika, P. I., Ozioko, P. C., & Umunna, M. O. (2021). Disruptive Tendency Of Social Media In Family Social Interaction Among Women In Borgu Local Government Area, Niger State, Nigeria. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 118(10), 180-186. <https://doi.org/10.18551/rjoas.2021-10.20>
- Iregbu, S., Spiers, J., Duggleby, W., Salami, B., & Schick-Makaroff, K. (2023). Nigerian health care providers and diabetes self-management support: Their perspectives and practices. *Qualitative health research*, 33(1-2), 92-105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323221143889>
- Eze, P. N. (2024). Behavioral Challenges And Student Performance: Analyzing Maladaptive Influences In Abuja Schools. *Social Science and Educational Research Journal*, 12(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17285027>
- Iregbu, S., Spiers, J., Duggleby, W., Salami, B., & Schick-Makaroff, K. (2023). Nigerian health care providers and diabetes self-management support: Their perspectives and practices. *Qualitative health research*, 33(1-2), 92-105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323221143889>
- Jacob, U. S., Adigwe, G. O., Pillay, J., Osisanya, A., & Olatunbosun, S. O. (2024). Prompt Response, Cues-Pause-Point Therapies and Gender on Management of Echolalia among Children with Autism Spectrum

- Disorder. *Journal of Intellectual Disability-Diagnosis and Treatment*, 12(3), 141-152. <https://doi.org/10.6000/2292-2598.2024.12.03.4>
- Kahil, B., & Alobidyeen, B. (2021). Social media apps as a tool for procedural learning during COVID-19: Analysis of Tiktok users. *Journal of Digitovation and information system*, 1(2), 81-95. <https://doi.org/10.54433/JDIHS.2021100007>
- Kalogiannidis, S., Chatzitheodoridis, F., Savvidou, S., Kagioglou, F., & Macedonia, W. (2022). The Impact of Online Communications on Different Users' Social, Emotional, and Moral Competence as a Potential Business Communication Tool. *Journal of System and Management Sciences*, 12(5), 359-373. <https://doi.org/10.33168/JSMS.2022.0521>
- Kostera, M. (2015). *Occupy management: Inspirations and ideas for self-organization and self-management*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/9780415703062>
- Langer, E. J. (2018). Rethinking the role of thought in social interaction. In *New directions in attribution research* (pp. 35-58). Psychology Press. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203780978-3/>
- Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2013). Social cognitive model of career self-management: Toward a unifying view of adaptive career behavior across the life span. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(4), 557-568. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033446>
- Malak, M. Z., Shuhaiber, A. H., Al-amer, R. M., Abuadas, M. H., & Aburoomi, R. J. (2022). Correlation between psychological factors, academic performance and social media addiction: model-based testing. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 41(8), 1583-1595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2021.1891460>
- Mancone, S., Corrado, S., Tosti, B., Spica, G., & Diotaiuti, P. (2024). Integrating digital and interactive approaches in adolescent health literacy: a comprehensive review. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 12, 1387874. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1387874>
- Murray, S. (2021). Domestic Snapshots: Female Self-Imaging Practices Then and Now. In *Visual Culture Approaches to the Selfie* (pp. 139-165). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780367206109-6/>
- Nash, B. L. (2024). Emotion, stimulation, habit, and criticality: Learning from teachers' multifaceted conceptions of digital reading. *Journal of research on Technology in educaTion*, 56(1), 7-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2023.2264979>
- Nguyen, T. D., Dadzie, C. A., Chaudhuri, H. R., & Tanner, T. (2019). Self-control and sustainability consumption: Findings from a cross cultural study. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 31(5), 380-394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08961530.2019.1576152>
- Okocha, D. O., Amaka, O. C., Zainab, O. O., & Faloseyi, M. (2025). Social Media Detoxification: Towards A Healthy Youth Population In Nigeria. *Namibian Journal of Linguistics, Literature & Communication Studies*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.59677/njlcs.v19i1.94>
- Oluwatoyosi, A. D. (2025). Social Media and Information Exchange among Nigerian Youths Considering Japa Syndrome. *Journal of Information and Knowledge*, 181-192. <https://doi.org/10.17821/srels/2025/v62i3/171407>
- Sattoe, J. N., Bal, M. I., Roelofs, P. D., Bal, R., Miedema, H. S., & van Staa, A. (2015). Self-management interventions for young people with chronic conditions: A systematic overview. *Patient education and counseling*, 98(6), 704-715. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2015.03.004>
- Smith, T. E., Thompson, A. M., & Maynard, B. R. (2022). Self-management interventions for reducing challenging behaviors among school-age students: A systematic review. *Campbell systematic reviews*, 18(1), e1223. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1223>
- Sudarsana, G. G. N., Sudarsana, G. N., Suarni, N. K., & Sari, U. (2019). Development of Self-Exhibition through Cognitive-Behavioral Counseling Models with Self-Management Strategies. In *5th International Conference on Education and Technology (ICET 2019)* (pp. 58-61). Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icet-19.2019.14>
- Sümen, A., & Evgin, D. (2021). Social media addiction in high school students: a cross-sectional study examining its relationship with sleep quality and psychological problems. *Child Indicators Research*, 14(6), 2265-2283. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-021-09838-9>
- Taherdoost, H. (2022). What are different research approaches? Comprehensive Review of Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method research, their applications, types, and limitations. *Journal of Management Science & Engineering Research*, 5(1), 53-63. <https://doi.org/10.30564/jmser.v5i1.4538>
- Tang, Y., Liu, Q., Liu, S., Yi, L., Zhang, R., Cheng, W., & Li, R. (2025). Self-management experiences and coping strategies of glaucoma patients: A meta-synthesis of qualitative research. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 109411. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2025.109411>
- Teepapal, T. (2025). AI-driven personalization: Unraveling consumer perceptions in social media engagement. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 165, 108549. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2024.108549>

- Trotzer, J. P. (2013). The counselor and the group: Integrating theory, training, and practice. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/9780415861175>
- Udulu, B. A. (2025). Prevalence and Determinants of Internet Addiction in Nigeria: A Review of Current Trends and Future Challenges. *Port Harcourt Journal of Public Health*, 1(2). <https://www.phjph.com/index.php/pjph/article/view/5>
- Umeh, K. C., Ihejirika, W., & Ihechu, I. P. (2025). Popularity of Social Media Platforms and Youth Preference of Digital Tools for Human Capital Development in South-East Nigeria. *International Journal of Sub-Saharan African Research*, 3(2), 289-303. <https://www.ijssar.com/paper/>
- Van de Velde, D., De Zutter, F., Satink, T., Costa, U., Janquart, S., Senn, D., & De Vriendt, P. (2019). Delineating the concept of self-management in chronic conditions: a concept analysis. *BMJ open*, 9(7), e027775. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-027775>
- Wang, S., Li, N., Liu, N., & Habes, M. (2024). Retracted Article: Transitioning from Information Sharing to Knowledge Services: Unpacking the Evolution of Rural Media Within the Context of Media Integration. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, 15(3), 12751-12782.
- Widyastuti, D. A., & Muyana, S. (2019). Group Counseling With Self-Management Techniques: Effective Strategies For Reducing Nomophobia Among Adolescents. *Psikopedagogia Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 8(2), 2528-2720. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12928/psikopedagogia.v8i2.20509>
- Wong, F. M. F., Kan, C. W. Y., & Chow, S. K. Y. (2022). From resistance to acceptance in small group work: Students' narratives. *Nurse Education Today*, 111, 105317. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2022.105317>
- Zhu, C., Xu, X., Zhang, W., Chen, J., & Evans, R. (2020). How health communication via Tik Tok makes a difference: A content analysis of Tik Tok accounts run by Chinese provincial health committees. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(1), 192. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17010192>
- Zhu, M., Bonk, C. J., & Doo, M. Y. (2020). Self-directed learning in MOOCs: Exploring the relationships among motivation, self-monitoring, and self-management. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 68(5), 2073-2093. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/s11423-020-09747-8>
- Zimmermann, E., & Tomczyk, S. (2025). Using social media to promote life skills among adolescents: a debate on opportunities, challenges, and implications for health and education. *Journal of Prevention*, 46(2), 201-211. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-025-00826-1>

Author Information

^{1*} **Kenekchukwu Chinenye Osakwe**, ✉ kosakwe@yahoo.com

Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Madonna University Elele, Rivers State, Nigeria
Address: 1, Madonna University Road, Elele, 510001, Rivers State, Nigeria

² **Benedicta Ndidi Agu**, ✉ benemdi@yahoo.com

Department of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Madonna University Elele, Rivers State, Nigeria
Address: 1, Madonna University Road, Elele, 510001, Rivers State, Nigeria