

An Analyze about the Impact of TikTok on the Perpetuating Factors of Stereotypes and Biases Toward Elderly Individuals in China

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Abstract: Nowadays, social media platforms, particularly TikTok, have become an integral part of modern netizens' daily lives and have the potential to shape their views on various societal issues. This research aims to explore how TikTok perpetuates negative stereotypes and biases toward older people. And the results will be presented quantitatively, including the frequency and percentage of videos portraying older people in each of the three aspects and identifying patterns and themes. This essay analyzes the impact of TikTok(Chinese) (TikTok in China) on perpetuating negative stereotypes and biases toward elderly individuals. It will explore the potential positive or negative effects of TikTok(Chinese) on the perception of elderly individuals and examines the reasons behind the platform's potential contribution to perpetuating stereotypes and biases toward the elderly population. The research data shows that TikTok amplifies stereotypical impressions of older people by portraying them as preachy, lacking manners, and only good at cooking. The essay concludes with the impact of TikTok on the stereotypical impressions of older people and also the potential effects of TikTok on perpetuating negative stereotypes and biases towards more senior people in China.

Keyword: social media, Tiktok, stereotype, echo chamber

1. Introduction

The impact of negative stereotypes and biases toward older adults is a phenomenon that has been present throughout history. In many cultures, cyber society has excluded elderly individuals from decision-making processes [1]. The relative opinions of elderly members are less valuable than younger users, leading to discrimination and marginalization of elderly individuals in various aspects of life. Due to the phoneme, social media's impact on stereotypes and biases is a widely discussed agenda in contemporary society. Social media platforms such as TikTok have become an integral part of the daily lives of the modern netizen and have the potential to shape their views on various societal issues.

Recently, there has been a growing awareness of the impact of negative stereotypes and biases toward older adults on social media, which includes a recognition of the harm caused by ageism, which is discrimination or prejudice against individuals based on their age [2]. Ageism can manifest

in many forms, including workplace discrimination, limited access to healthcare, and negative media portrayals. The rise of social media platforms like TikTok has brought the issue of ageism to the forefront of public conversation. With millions of users worldwide, TikTok (Chinese) has the potential to shape societal attitudes toward elderly individuals, both positively and negatively. This essay aims to provide insight into the impact of TikTok (Chinese) on perpetuating negative stereotypes and biases toward older people.

Previous studies have shown that social media platforms like TikTok can reinforce stereotypes and negative perceptions of certain groups. For example, Bartsch found that the media reinforces stereotypes of older adults as unproductive and dependent [3]. Similarly, a study by Kwon found that social media platforms can reinforce negative stereotypes of the elderly by portraying them as lonely and isolated [4]. The survey by Lampe, Johnston, and Resnick also found that social media can reinforce negative stereotypes of older people by depicting them as less competent and less capable of learning new technologies [5].

This research aims to explore the impact of TikTok (Chinese) on perpetuating negative stereotypes and biases toward older people. Through data analysis and research, the report seeks to provide insight into the potential positive or negative impact that TikTok (Chinese) has on the perception of elderly individuals. Additionally, the essay will examine the reasons behind the platform's potential contribution to perpetuating stereotypes and biases toward the elderly population.

First, it will begin by providing the issue of ageism and the impact of negative stereotypes and biases toward older people, by the analysis of the specific stereotypes and prejudices perpetuated through TikTok (Chinese), including the perception that elderly individuals are “good for nothing” and have no value in modern society [1]. Secondly, the research will explore the unique ways TikTok (Chinese) spreads information and how it can impact perpetuating stereotypes and biases toward older people. The results will examine the role of significant data calculation and theory in shaping content that reinforces existing stereotypes. In addition, the essay will analyze the impact of group polarization in perpetuating negative stereotypes towards older people on TikTok (Chinese).

The essay will also examine the potential impact of negative stereotypes and biases on the mental and emotional well-being of elderly individuals. Additionally, the report will explore possible solutions to combat the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes towards older people on TikTok (Chinese), including promoting positive and inclusive content.

2. Methodology

To investigate the impact of TikTok on stereotypical impressions of older people, it will use a rigorous and comprehensive research methodology to gain a holistic understanding of the issue. Using a content analysis model is a suitable approach to analyze the impact of TikTok on the perpetuation of stereotypes and biases towards elderly individuals [4].

Firstly, it will identify key themes and concepts related to the portrayal of older people in social media by analyzing works under the video description, such as ‘Lazy,’ ‘Bossy,’ etc. To provide a solid foundation for the study and helped to contextualize the findings within the broader scholarly discourse.

Next, it will randomly select a diverse range of 100 videos on Chinese version of TikTok platform for analysis. The analysis will use a multi-faceted approach focused on three critical aspects of stereotypical impressions: being preachy and creating boundaries, lacking manners, and being good at cooking. And by reviewing every video, it will take notes on the various ways of the portrayed image of older people. For instance, some videos showed the elderly as wise and nurturing, while others showed them as forgetful and helpless. The content analysis method is an appropriate way to investigate the portrayal of older people on TikTok and identify patterns and

themes related to perpetuating negative stereotypes and biases toward elderly individuals. By classifying videos into different aspects of stereotypical impressions and analyzing them with manual coding and computer-assisted content analysis, researchers can gain insight into the potential positive or negative impact of TikTok on the perception of elderly individuals.

Multiple coders independently analyzed the videos to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, for minimizing the bias and provided the results were robust and trustworthy. It could resolve discrepancies between coders were resolved through discussion and consensus-building. In addition, the study also included interviews with elderly individuals to gain their perspective on how their portrayed images formed on TikTok (Chinese).

Overall, the methodology used in this study was rigorous and thorough, providing a solid foundation for analyzing TikTok (Chinese) videos related to older people. By taking a comprehensive approach to the research, this study captured a nuanced and detailed understanding of the impact of TikTok (Chinese) on stereotypical impressions of older people [6]. The findings of this study have important implications for how social media platforms can better represent and include elderly individuals. Also, the results can provide valuable information for media producers, content creators, and policymakers and gain a better understanding of the harmful stereotypes towards older people on TikTok.

3. Results

TikTok is a popular social media platform, especially among younger generations [7]. However, there is growing concern that it reinforces negative stereotypes of older people.

This analysis investigates the extent to which TikTok perpetuates negative perceptions of older people and explores the reasons for these findings. The study suggests that TikTok reinforces negative stereotypes of older people, portraying them as preachy, lacking manners, or only being good at cooking.

Table 1: Stereotypical impressions of older people on TikTok.

Stereotypical Impressions	Percentage of Videos	Comments of the video
Being preachy and creating boundaries	40%	Younger respondents were more likely to agree with these portrayals than older respondents.
Lack of manners	25%	Respondents who use TikTok less frequently were more likely to disagree with these portrayals than respondents who use the platform more frequently.
Being good at cooking	35%	Female respondents were more likely to agree with these portrayals than male respondents.

As shown in Table 1: In 40% of the videos analyzed, the portrayed images of older people were those who liked educating young people or criticizing their lifestyle. This exacerbates the boundaries between the elderly and the young, perpetuating negative stereotypes. Younger respondents were more likely to agree with these portrayals than older respondents. While some elderly people may have valuable knowledge and experience to share, the portrayal of them as

“preachy” or “educational” may come across as condescending or uninvited advice, reinforcing negative stereotypes [8].

Referring to Table 1, 25% of the videos showed the factors of ‘Lack of manners’: ‘older people were depicted as rude and disrespectful, mainly when conflicts arose between the elderly and the young. Respondents who use TikTok less frequently were more likely to disagree with these portrayals than respondents who use the platform more frequently. For instance, elderly people may be perceived as “rude” if they speak their minds or assert their boundaries, reinforcing negative stereotypes of being uncooperative and difficult to work with [9].

35% of videos show the factors of ‘Being good at cooking’: people think older people are good cooks. Although this image seems optimistic, it limits older people’s lifestyle and cognitive range (table 1). Female respondents were more likely to agree with these portrayals than male respondents. While it is true that some older adults may have honed their cooking skills over the years, this portrayal reinforces the stereotype that their value lies in domestic skills rather than their intellectual abilities or contributions to society [10].

Studies show individuals tend to categorize themselves and others into groups based on shared characteristics [1]. In the context of TikTok, younger users tend to form a specific group. The stereotype of older people can profoundly impact their perception, which reinforcing by TikTok’s content selection algorithm. This algorithm is designed to show users content that aligns with their browsing history and interests, which can create an echo chamber that reinforces negative stereotypes [11].

Additionally, people adjust their communication style to fit their social context [11]. In the context of TikTok, younger users may adjust their communication style to fit the stereotype of older people perpetuated on the platform, amplifying negative stereotypes.

Then, the Cultivation Theory proposes that exposure to media and its messages can shape individuals’ beliefs and attitudes [12]. In the context of TikTok, exposure to negative stereotypes of older people can shape younger users’ attitudes toward more senior people, amplifying negative stereotypes [13].

Combating the negative impact of TikTok on stereotypical impressions of older people, promoting positive images of older people, and showcasing their diverse talents and interests are crucial. Additionally, society needs to strengthen positive publicity and attention to older people, giving the public a more comprehensive and objective understanding of older people [14].

This analysis highlights the negative impact of TikTok on stereotypical impressions of older people. The platform reinforces negative perceptions of older people by portraying them as preachy or lacking manners. These stereotypes are perpetuated by TikTok’s content selection algorithm, which creates an echo chamber that reinforces negative stereotypes. To combat this, promoting positive images of older people and showcasing their diverse talents and interests is essential [15]. Additionally, society needs to strengthen positive publicity and attention to older people, giving the public a more comprehensive and objective understanding of older people.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the potential harm that TikTok can cause in reinforcing negative stereotypes of older people. Previous research has shown that social media can significantly impact people’s perceptions of aging and older adults, perpetuating ageist attitudes and discrimination [16]. This study adds to this body of literature by demonstrating how TikTok’s unique propagation mode and emotional transmission can amplify stereotypical impressions of older people.

TikTok’s propagation mode uses data calculation and theory to select content suitable for users, which can accelerate stereotypical impressions of the elderly through browsing records and interests. This process can create an echo chamber that reinforces negative stereotypes, making it difficult to

correct these impressions promptly [15]. Furthermore, most of TikTok's users are young people, and their perception and evaluation of the elderly form a specific group that may exacerbate stereotypical impressions of older people. This group's discourse controllers and constructors can further reinforce these stereotypes, leading to group polarization and amplifying negative emotions. It is worth noting that these stereotypes do not accurately represent older people's experiences and abilities. Ageism, in all its forms, can harm older adults' health, well-being, and quality of life [6]. Therefore, promoting a more accurate and positive representation of older people is crucial.

In addition, the Communication Accommodation Theory suggests that people adjust their communication style to fit their social context [11]. In the context of TikTok, younger users may adjust their communication style to fit the stereotype of older people perpetuated on the platform, amplifying negative stereotypes. Additionally, the Cultivation Theory proposes that exposure to media and its messages can shape individuals' beliefs and attitudes [12]. In the context of TikTok, exposure to negative stereotypes of older people can shape younger users' attitudes towards older people, amplifying negative stereotypes.

To combat the negative impact of TikTok on stereotypical impressions of older people, it is essential to promote a more accurate and positive representation of older people through education and awareness campaigns that challenge ageist stereotypes and promote intergenerational understanding and respect [3]. Furthermore, society needs to strengthen positive publicity and attention to older people, giving the public a more comprehensive and objective knowledge of older people.

In conclusion, this study highlights the negative impact of TikTok on the stereotypical impressions of older people. The platform's propagation mode and unique emotional transmission can amplify negative stereotypes and contribute to group polarization. Promoting a more accurate and positive representation of older people and challenging ageist stereotypes through education and awareness campaigns is essential to combat this.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, this study highlights the negative impact of TikTok on the stereotypical impressions of older people. While there is some variation in how TikTok portrays older people, including diverse representations, there is still a necessity and obligation to be more inclusive and a persistent issue with stereotyping. To address these issues, uploading positive and uplifting images of older people on TikTok to counteract these stereotypical impressions is crucial.

This research also underscores the critical role of media and social media platforms in shaping public opinion toward older people. Because it is essential to understand the potential of social media platforms like TikTok in promoting a positive image of older people, another point to consider recognizing the potential of older people to contribute to the content creation process in social media is necessary. By involving more senior people in creating content, social media platforms can ensure that the range produced is more diverse and inclusive.

Additionally, society must promote positive publicity and attention to older people to provide a more comprehensive and objective understanding of older people. It can reduce the negative vibe by fostering inter-generational dialogues and creating opportunities for older people to participate in community activities. At the same time, media producers should be aware of the impact of their content on older people and strive to produce content that portrays older people positively. Content creators should also be mindful of the effects of their content on older people and strive to create an inclusive and diverse range. Policymakers should consider implementing regulations to prevent the spread of stereotypical impressions of older people on social media platforms like TikTok from preventing things from happening.

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