College students' attitudes & privacy literacy knowledge on TikTok

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the privacy literacy and attitudes of college students towards TikTok, a platform deeply embedded in their daily social interactions. With the growing concerns over data privacy, TikTok's rising influence, and state-level actions such as Florida State University's ban on its use, this study seeks to fill a critical gap in understanding how undergraduate students engage with and manage their privacy on social media. This research analyzes the relation between privacy and behavior among students, studying, for instance, how well they are aware of risks about their privacy context and how it would change their behavior on TikTok. Also, the study examines how students responded to the university's policy on the ban as well as how they perceived TikTok's privacy settings.

In order to provide an overview of privacy literacy levels among young students, the study uses a mix of quantitative (Survey) and qualitative (Interview) approaches. Lastly, it uses the Theory of Information Worlds (Burnett & Jaeger, 2011) to conceptualize the attitude toward privacy derived from social norms, information behavior, and interactions within the same boundaries.

Initial findings from a pilot study suggest skepticism about the effectiveness of institutional policies, with limited changes in students' use of TikTok despite the university's ban. The full study aims to deepen our understanding of these behaviors and contribute to the broader discourse on privacy in the digital age.