



#MentalHealth on Tiktok: An Inductive Content Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

- In the modern age of online information, adolescents' exposure to mental health content comes primarily from social media
- Tiktok is the trending app for adolescents and was the most downloaded app of 2022
 - 1 billion active users
 - 63% of tiktok users are 12-17
- Gap:** Tiktok is a relatively new and understudied platform. It should be explored to understand adolescents, their relationship with mental health, and how they use social media for their mental health
- Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to *investigate the culture and identify themes surrounding mental health on tiktok*. This is done to better understand how adolescents are using tiktok for mental health awareness/venting and the type of mental health content teenagers are consuming

METHODS

Design: Content Analysis was used to distinguish themes existing on Tiktok

Subjects: This study analyzed the top 100 videos with the hashtag "mental health"

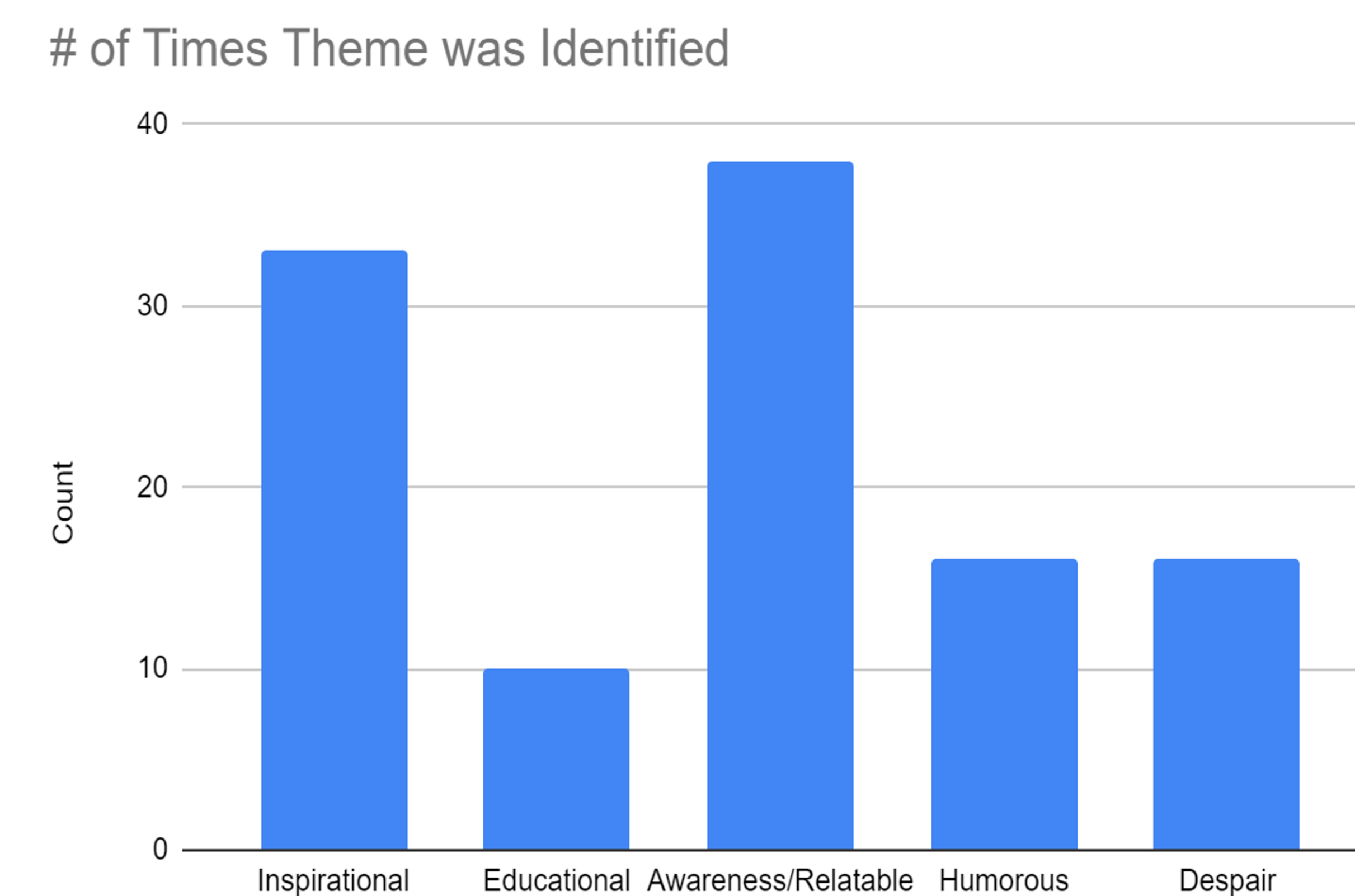
Data Collection: Data collection was conducted via an inductive codebook

- First, emerging themes were identified from top 30 videos with #MentalHealth, serving as the inductive codebook
- This codebook helped establish existing themes and should be applicable to the majority of tiktoks under #MentalHealth
- The codebook was then used to categorize another 100 videos with #MentalHealth
- # of views was collected for ANOVA and regression analyses that reveal the popularity/viewership of certain themes on tiktok
- Note: This study did not hunt out any specific themes; the purpose was to be unbiased going into the study and objectively investigate whatever themes may appear

RESULTS

Finding 1: Themes

Five different themes were observed from our inductive codebook. The graph below charts their frequency out of our subject 100 tiktoks. Note: A tiktok can fall under more than one theme, meaning there are overlaps



Viewership: Posts with Inspirational and Awareness themes had higher views on average; posts with Educational themes had lower views

Effects of Themes on Views:

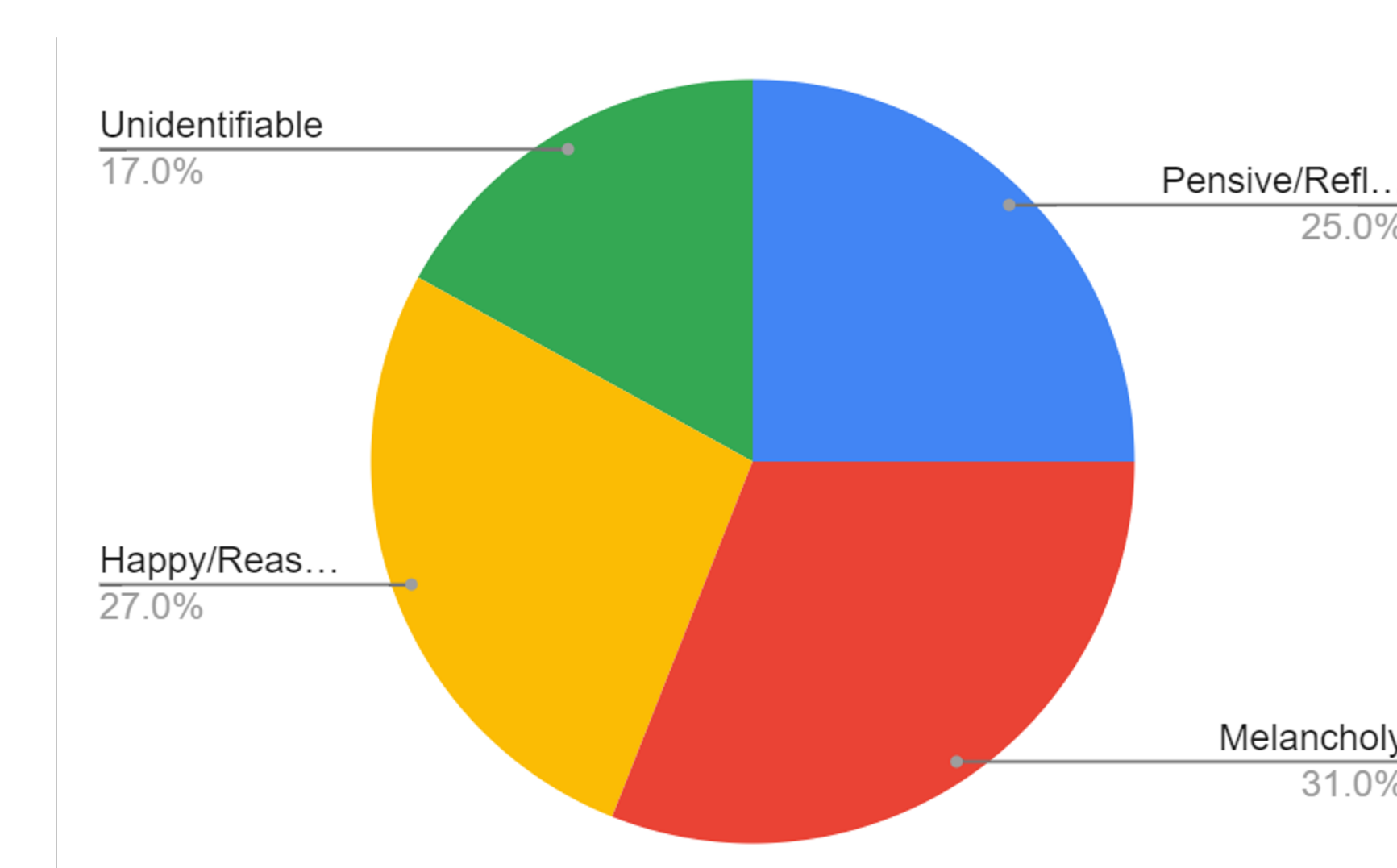
Themes	B	SE	t	p
Inspirational**	4.6477	1.4988	3.101	0.0026
Educational*	-4.4095	1.9813	-2.2255	0.0285
Awareness*	3.0553	1.2208	2.5027	0.0141
Humorous	0.9814	1.7312	0.5669	0.5722
Despairing	-0.6901	1.7312	-0.3986	0.6911

** = p-value < 0.01

* = p-value < 0.05

Finding 2: Moods

3 distinct "moods" in tiktoks under #mentalhealth were observed



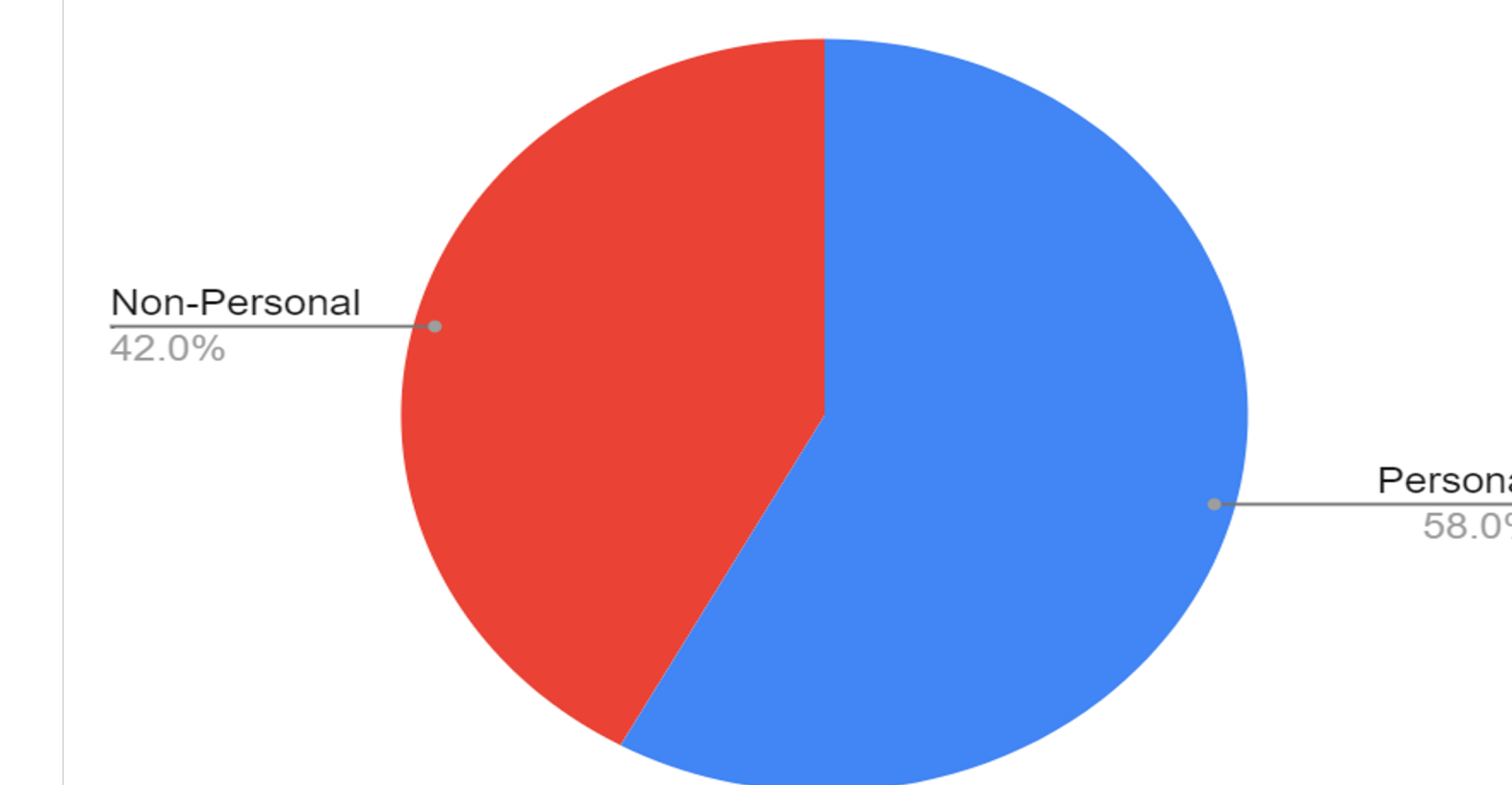
Viewership: Views did not significantly differ

Effects of Themes on Views:

Moods	B	SE	t	p
Pensive	-0.3169	1.7321	-0.183	0.8552
Melancholy	-3.2813	1.705	-1.9245	0.0573
Happy	-1.057	1.7476	-0.6048	0.5468

Finding 3, Personal v.s. Non-Personal:

"Personal" and "non-personal" tiktoks relating to mental health were observed



Viewership: Views did not differ. This was tested with a Welch's t-test and results showed the average views of personal videos (2.8M) was not significantly different from the average views of non-personal videos (2.7M), t(88.71) = 0.072, p = 0.942.

CONCLUSIONS

Key Findings:

- Tiktoks under #mentalhealth generally fall under 5 categories - Inspirational, Educational, Awareness/Relatable, Humorous, and Despairing
 - "Inspirational" and "Awareness/relatable" = higher viewership;
 - "Educational" = lower viewership
- Tiktoks under #mentalhealth generally fall under three moods - pensive/sentimental, melancholy, and happy/reassuring
 - No significant difference in viewership
- Tiktoks relating to personal experience under #mentalhealth were incredibly common
 - No significant difference in viewership

Limitations

- Many tiktoks don't definitively fall under one category and subjectivity is a factor when I am the only person categorizing the tiktoks
- A larger sample size would be helpful for determining relationships between demographics and variables. Ex: Views regarding moods were deemed insignificant

Implications

- There is a broad variety of mental health content on tiktok.
 - Primarily inspirational or awareness/relatable videos
- Our study suggests that Tiktok is a safe sharing space for mental health topics as there were many counts of tiktokers sharing personal experiences relating to mental health.
- Our study suggests that there's a supportive culture surrounding mental health on Tiktok

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