TikTok and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS): A Cross-Sectional Study of Social Media Content Quality

Faraz Jafri, BS; Niru Ancha, BS; Ananya Roy, BSA, BA; Sami Ahmad; Hamna Riaz; Charles Hyman, MD; Deepak Agrawal, MD;
Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas

The University of Texas at Austin
Dell Medical School

OBJECTIVE

Investigate the **quality of Tiktok content** to characterize the **educational content, understandability, actionability,** and **accuracy** of information **related to IBS** being distributed by different user groups.

METHODS

100 videos under **#IBS** meeting inclusion criteria analyzed

Categorized by **user group** and further stratified into **content categories**

PEMAT-A/V was used to assess the **understandability**, and **actionability** of the videos

Videos Excluded (n=242): videos with no audio or text, non-English videos, videos unrelated to IBS, or duplicate videos.

UNDERSTANDABILITY
TOPIC: CONTENT
1. The material makes its purpose completely evident.
TOPIC: WORD CHOICE & STYLE
3. The material uses common, everyday language.
4. Medical terms are used only to familiarize audience with the terms. When used, medical terms are defined.
5. The material uses the active voice.
TOPIC: ORGANIZATION
6. The material breaks or “chunks” information into short sections.
7. The material’s sections have informative headers.
8. The material presents information in a logical sequence.
9. The material provides a summary.
TOPIC: LAYOUT & DESIGN
10. The material uses visual cues (e.g., arrows, boxes, bullets, bold, larger font, highlighting) to draw attention to key points.
11. Text on the screen is easy to read.
12. The material allows the user to hear the words clearly (e.g., not too fast, not garbled).
TOPIC: USE OF VISUAL AIDS
13. The material uses illustrations and photographs that are clear and uncluttered.
14. The material uses simple tables with short and clear row and column headings.
ACTIONABILITY
15. The material clearly identifies at least one action the user can take.
16. The material addresses the user directly when describing actions.
17. The material breaks down any action into manageable, explicit steps.
18. The material explains how to use the charts, graphs, tables or diagrams to take actions.

Figure 3: PEMAT Criteria for Understandability and Actionability of A/V Content

RESULTS

A **minority** of analyzed Tiktok videos about IBS **were educational** with **more than half of educational videos** containing **non-factual health information.**

Influencers posted half of all analyzed videos, of which 21% were non-factual.

User Group	Number of Posts	% Non-factual
Influencer	42	21.4%
Organization	6	33.3%
Medical Professional	10	12.5%
Individual	42	40.0%

Figure 1: User Demographic Information

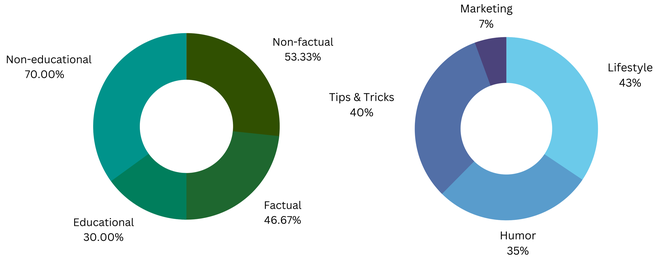

Figure 2: Content Analysis Breakdown. (a) Validity and Educational Content (b) Content Categories

Average Actionability: 27.56% ± 0.42
Average Understandability: 65.91% ± 0.16

DISCUSSION

Physicians should be aware of **possible misinformation** and preempt any concerns with **proper patient education.**

Healthcare **organizations** can **partner with influencers** to provide **verified health information** on IBS that can be disseminated to the target audience.

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