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From viral to verified: A systematic review exploring the role of Dermatology on TikTok

Abstract:

The overwhelming use of dermatology education on TikTok by both medical and non-medical content creators has led to a growing concern about misinformation, with the implications of this still uncertain.

This systematic review assessed the content of dermatology education on TikTok and the potential risks associated with their widespread influence. A search of PubMed, Cochrane Library and SCOPUS identified 63 articles meeting inclusion criteria that highlighted common themes regarding the qualifications of dermatology TikTok providers and their audience engagement. Non-medical influencers often disseminate advice on skincare, treatments, and dermatological conditions, reaching millions of viewers. Concerns have been raised about the accuracy and safety of shared information, as viewers may follow unverified recommendations without consulting professional guidance.

Certain TikTok features, such as the Duet function, was noted, highlighting its potential value for dermatologists on social media. It allows them to directly pair their insights with existing videos, either to complement or challenge what's being shared. DISCERN, a tool to assess the quality of consumer health information, revealed higher scores for content created by medical professionals although the majority of dermatology education TikTok videos were from non-medical creators. Ethical considerations are also highlighted surrounding the promotional content of TikTok videos and the creators who profit from their platforms. Ultimately, the review underscores the critical need for awareness regarding the qualifications of online health influencers and the potential consequences of relying on their advice for dermatological concerns.

Biography

Neenu Sebastian graduated from The University of Nottingham, United Kingdom in 2019 with a Medicine and Surgery BMBS. Dr Azmeralda Abraheem graduated from The University of Liverpool, United Kingdom in 2020 with a Medicine and Surgery MBchB. Having completed Internal Medicine Training, they are currently Research Fellows with interests in Dermatology and digital health.