





Booktokers: Generating and sharing book content on TikTok

Booktokers: Generar y compartir contenidos sobre libros a través de TikTok

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ABSTRACT

Reading is essential for learning in education. However, the digital revolution has transformed the ways to encourage reading and learning about books. People who generate and share content about books on social networks are the so-called booktokers, influencers on TikTok who have become an emerging phenomenon in this connected society. However, there is scarce research that studies them in depth. Therefore, it is crucial to explore booktokers to understand them better and to assess why they accept and use technologies to generate and share content about books on TikTok. This paper intends to explore the acceptance and use of TikTok to generate and share content about books on this social network as a booktoker. For this, a qualitative methodology of semi-structured interviews with thirteen Latin American booktokers was used. The analysis was developed through a thematic analysis based on the UTAUT2 theory to explain the findings. The results indicated the categories: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, price value, and a new identified category related to the generation of community and networks. This study constitutes one of the pioneering works in the exploration of the booktoker phenomenon.

RESUMEN

La lectura es fundamental para el aprendizaje en la educación. Si bien, la revolución digital ha transformado la manera de incentivar la lectura y conocer sobre libros. Las personas que generan y comparten contenidos sobre libros en las redes sociales son los denominados booktokers, influencers de la red social TikTok, quienes se han convertido en un fenómeno emergente en esta sociedad conectada, pero aún con poca investigación que los estudie en profundidad. Por lo tanto, es crucial explorar para una mayor comprensión a los booktokers y conocer por qué aceptan y usan tecnologías para generar y compartir contenidos sobre libros en la red social TikTok. Se pretende explorar la aceptación y uso de TikTok para generar y compartir contenido sobre libros en esta red social siendo un booktoker. Se utiliza una metodología cualitativa de entrevistas semiestructuradas a trece booktokers latinoamericanos. El análisis se desarrolló por medio de un análisis temático basándonos en la teoría UTAUT2 para explicar los hallazgos. Los resultados indicaron las categorías: la expectativa de desempeño, la expectativa de esfuerzo, la influencia social, las condiciones facilitadoras, la motivación hedónica, el hábito, el precio y una nueva categoría identificada que es generar comunidad y redes. La contribución de este estudio es ser uno de los pioneros en la exploración del fenómeno de los booktokers.

KEYWORDS | PALABRAS CLAVE

Virtual communities, education, influencer, reading, books, social media.
Comunidades virtuales, educación, influencer, lectura, libros, redes sociales.



1. Introduction

Reading enables learning and communication; it helps us understand and learn about the world. In this sense, recreational reading of books is consistently associated with literacy benefits (Jerrim & Moss, 2019), reading comprehension (Torppa et al., 2020), spelling (Mol & Bus, 2011), and other areas such as mathematics (Sullivan & Brown, 2013). However, statistics indicate that reading motivation among adolescents is declining (Darmawan, 2020). According to UNESCO (2017), there is a learning crisis among children and adolescents in terms of minimum reading literacy, compromising Sustainable Development Goal number 4 (SDG 4), which seeks to achieve quality education. While the statistics are troubling, social media use among teenagers is on the rise. This poses a great opportunity to encourage reading through social media platforms among teenagers. Currently, TikTok is one of young people's favorite social networks, exceeding 1 billion monthly active users in the world (La Tercera, 2021); and by the year 2025, an estimated 1,327 million users (Fernández, 2021). This platform enables users to easily create, edit and share short videos (Hudders et al., 2021), akin to what occurs among Spanish and British teenage tiktokers (Suárez-Álvarez & García-Jiménez, 2021).

In social networks we find the social media influencer (SMI), who is: "First and foremost a content generator: someone who has a status of expertise in a specific area, who has cultivated a considerable number of captive followers, who has marketing value for brands by regularly producing valuable content delivered through social networks" (Lou & Yuan, 2019: 59). A specific type of SMI is one that generates and shares content about books on social media. While there are similar phenomena such as booktubers who share content about books on YouTube (Albrecht, 2017; Tomasena, 2019; Vizcaíno-Verdú et al., 2019), we did not find a specific definition of SMIs who share content about books in literature, therefore, in this article a definition is proposed: "A book SMI is one who has a status and expertise in books, with a considerable number of followers on social media platforms, and who has a marketing value for publishers and other related brands, regularly producing and sharing valuable content about books on social networking sites".

On the other hand, books and reading can be promoted on TikTok (Merga, 2021), here we find a type of book SMI, which is the booktoker. Booktokers generate and share content about books on TikTok. They create a community of readers where recommendations and discussions of books, writings, characters, and fictional places are allowed, known as booktok. This community can stimulate adolescents' interest in books and participation in reading (Merga, 2021).

There are studies focusing on the ways in which TikTok encourages learning (e.g., Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021; Literat, 2021). However, the importance of booktokers has received limited academic attention. According to our literature review (conducted as of December 13, 2021) there are only a few scientific publications, including Merga (2021), Jerasa and Boffone (2021) obtained from the Web of Science and the conference proceedings by Dezuanni (2021) who explore the booktok community phenomenon. Merga (2021) explores the presence of hashtags, authors, books, and book topics promoted in 116 TikTok videos analyzed. Meanwhile, Jerasa and Boffone (2021) refer to booktok as a useful literacy practice in English Language Arts classrooms among youth.

Furthermore, Dezuanni (2021) analyzes young Australians, indicating that adolescents can purposefully learn about books from microcelebrities on digital platforms. Given the above, more research is needed on SMI in other areas of study, such as books, which is an area that has not been explored in depth (Yé et al., 2021). In addition, studies are needed in emerging regions such as Latin America, as the study of SMI is mainly concentrated in developed countries (Vrontis et al., 2021). Therefore, the current literature review shows that previous SMI research has not yet incorporated TikTok, and it is important to explore it in detail (Hudders et al., 2021; Vrontis et al., 2021).

While further exploration of this phenomenon is needed to gain a deeper understanding of booktokers, it is necessary to understand their motivators on TikTok for educational and learning purposes. For this reason, we posed the following research question: why do booktokers accept and use TikTok to generate and share book content? To answer this exploratory question, a qualitative method was implemented with semi-structured interviews with 13 booktokers in Latin America.

1.1. Theoretical framework

There are several models that focus on studying technology acceptance and use. One of the most recognized is Venkatesh et al.'s (2012) Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2), an extension of Venkatesh et al.'s (2003) UTAUT. UTAUT is a theory that combines several models and includes four different central determinants that influence the behavior of technology acceptance and use. These are: performance expectancy, which in this study refers to booktokers' beliefs about the benefit of TikTok for sharing content about books; effort expectancy, understood as the degree of ease associated with the booktoker's perceived use; social influence, which refers to the booktoker's perception of how significant others (family, friends, followers, etc.) think he or she should use TikTok to share content about books; and facilitating conditions, such as the booktoker's perception of the resources and support available for using TikTok to share content about books (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

In contrast, the UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012) incorporates three new determinants: hedonic motivation or enjoyment, understood as the booktoker's perception of pleasure or enjoyment derived from using TikTok to share content about books; price value, which refers to the booktokers' cognitive trade-off between the perceived benefits and cost of using TikTok to share content about books; and habit, which refers to the extent to which the booktoker tends to perform repeated behaviors on TikTok to share content about books.

In the context of educommunication, as a theoretical lens for UTAUT, it is perceived as a suitable framework to study the predisposition to use technology for learning. Awotunde et al. (2019) analyze university students' acceptance and willingness to use social networking sites for learning purposes, finding a direct influence of the model variables on learning. Furthermore, Lawson-Body et al. (2018) evidence that the acceptance and use of e-book technologies among students improve their learning. Thus, in this study, UTAUT2 is adapted to a social media context where SMIs share content about books.

2. Methodology

The acceptance and use of TikTok has not been explored for booktokers. This study adopted a qualitative approach to understand this new phenomenon (Miles et al., 2019). Therefore, to answer the research question, we considered data obtained through semi-structured interviews from the perspective of the booktokers themselves. The interviews were conducted with 13 booktokers in Latin America who use TikTok to generate and share content about books with their followers. The interview design was structured in three sections with standardized open-ended questions (personal background, general questions about book content generation, and specific questions about TikTok acceptance and use). This allowed the researchers to set guidelines for the data collection stage (Miles et al., 2019).

The researchers conducted two pilot interviews to verify that the participants understood the questions posed. The data collection instrument was then refined and applied to the Latin American booktokers in the sample. The procedure to contact the study participants involved identifying and creating a database of booktokers in Latin America. The creation of this database was carried out using the hashtags #booktok and #booktoker on TikTok, which yielded a total of 67 booktokers. Subsequently, we contacted each booktoker via instant messaging on the platform. The message indicated the objective of the research and requested collaboration and participation in the study. The booktokers who agreed to participate in the study were sent an informed consent indicating identity protection and authorization for the audio recording of the interview. The interview was conducted by telephone, which has been established as a sound data collection method (Cohen et al., 2017; Gaitán & Piñuel, 1998).

The interviews were conducted between the months of July and August 2021, the average duration was approximately 24 minutes; they were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, the latter being a crucial step for data analysis (Cohen et al., 2017). New booktoker participants were incorporated until there was sufficient information for the study; the data saturation point was reached with participant number 13, as no additional data were obtained (Cohen et al., 2017; Miles et al., 2019). Table 1 presents the participant data. To analyze the data, the six stages of thematic analysis (TA) proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) were carried out to identify, interpret and define categories (themes). TA is a flexible method that provides detailed descriptions of phenomena in education (Xu & Zammit, 2020).

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Country	July – August 2021		First TikTok
				Followers	Following	
E1	Female	25	Chile	1,800	71	06-jun-21
E2	Female	22	Chile	5,129	239	30-nov-20
E3	Female	18	Argentina	187.9 K	754	05-may-20
E4	Female	18	Ecuador	18.3 K	1,070	20-dec-19
E5	Male	18	Uruguay	4,407	151	18-jan-21
E6	Female	22	Peru	58.2 K	281	13-apr-20
E7	Female	25	Chile	13.4 K	58	03-jul-21
E8	Female	19	Argentina	112.9 K	126	10-nov-20
E9	Female	21	Mexico	3,695	176	8-dec-2018
E10	Female	23	Mexico	8,833	135	31-jan-21
E11	Male	23	Chile	17.4 K	38	02-jan-21
E12	Female	31	Chile	1,750	300	10-jul-20
E13	Male	24	Chile	44.7 K	121	21-jan-21

3. Results

Results are presented interpreting the determinants of UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012), from the booktokers' point of view. The findings showed eight categories that influenced the acceptance and use of TikTok to generate and share content about books. The categories include performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, and price value. These are related to the UTAUT2 theory. Additionally, there is the category related to the generation of community and networks, which is new and original to the UTAUT2 theoretical framework in the context of booktokers and TikTok. The eight categories and subcategories are described below using the booktoker responses.

3.1. Performance expectancy

The participants perceived TikTok as a useful social networking site, which allowed them to generate and share content about books. As subcategories, they indicate that the most highlighted aspect of the platform mentioned by the interviewees is the algorithm. They also indicate that content generation is dynamic and fast. In addition, they highlight the achievement of attracting sponsors; and finally, they consider that their relationship with followers and the feedback they receive is rewarding.

3.1.1. The TikTok algorithm

The participants perceived the TikTok algorithm as very useful for generating and sharing content about books. E3: "The truth is that TikTok has a good thing, you can become a hit, a video can go viral and that video can give you 100-200 followers, I was lucky enough that one of my videos reached a million views and I got about 3,000 followers and it was like wow, that's what TikTok has, people interact and that interaction has a result, so it is impressive how the TikTok algorithm works in that regard".

3.1.2. Content creation

The generation of content on TikTok is highly valued by booktokers. E9: "I like it because it delimits the time you have, you have to make quick, digestible content, because you have a limited amount of time, so you have to make dynamic content, now that they have increased it to three minutes you can still make a video, you have more time to talk about a specific book".

3.1.3. Sponsors

Booktokers indicated that it is positive to have sponsors and that the resources they receive enrich their videos and their TikTok profiles. E13: "Almost everyone comments positively, I had never been involved in social networks and everyone is surprised that I can do this kind of thing and that I can achieve so much, that publishers contact you, send you books, that they want to participate in activities with you".

3.1.4. Relationship with followers

The interviewees indicated that the relationship with the followers is rewarding. E8: "Another positive thing is that every time someone writes to me, they tell me that they bought a book because I recommended it and they end up loving it and it becomes that person's favorite book, that also fulfills me a lot".

3.2. Effort expectancy

Most of the interviewees indicated that TikTok was easy to use to generate and share content about books. They emphasized that at the beginning it is hard to understand the application because of its wide variety of tools, but that habit of use makes it easier. In other words, the practice and collaboration that exists on this platform affects the acceptance and use of TikTok to generate and share content about books.

3.2.1. Application's ease of use

Booktokers indicated that using TikTok is easy for generating and sharing content about books. E5: "I think it is a very complete application, it allows you to do everything there, that is, you can edit the videos there, it is quite easy I think, it was hard for me to understand some things, but because it has many features, it has many tools, but I find that it is quite interactive [...] And as I said, you can edit everything there, so it is quite easy".

3.2.2. The practice

The booktokers related effort to practice. E7: "But it took me about one or two months to learn how to use the application well, because it is a new application, where I didn't understand why, if I liked a video, then another one would appear, etcetera; but yes, at the beginning it was complicated, but then you get into the rhythm, but of course, with some practice, because practice is what makes you good at something".

3.2.3. Collaboration

Booktokers related the level of effort needed to use TikTok to collaboration. E12: "It was actually super easy, it is not very difficult to understand the platform, but also, within the platform itself, there are people who show you the tricks behind it, how to record certain types of videos, how to use certain transitions, so you can get ideas from there".

3.3. Social influence

Participants indicated that social influence is key to understanding the acceptance and use of TikTok to generate and share content about books. Given this, they identified that support from others such as family, followers, and friends is relevant. Likewise, influence from others and the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3.1. Support from others

Booktokers indicated that for them the influence of others, such as family, followers and friends is relevant to both initiating and continuing to share book content on TikTok. E1: "I have a younger sister who is 17 and she told me to download TikTok, I watched several videos on YouTube, such as some showing how to edit a video in TikTok, because I didn't know how to add the lyrics, how to forward it, I had no idea, it took me about two or three months to learn how to use the app to upload videos".

3.3.2. Influence from others

Booktokers indicated that seeing other people talking about books prompted them to share knowledge about books on TikTok as well. E4: "I remember I saw a girl talking about books, and I was like, I still want to talk about books, I want to talk about that passion, without feeling like 'oh no, they want to listen to me!'".

3.3.3. The pandemic

Participants indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic influenced their use of TikTok to generate and share content about books. E6: "It was 2020, we were in pandemic, but it was almost the end of the year and during that whole year I had read a lot, and I just went to follow books and that kind of stuff on TikTok, there I saw what other girls who shared and listened to audios where I also came up with ideas and so I started creating videos, some of which had quite a few likes".

3.4. Facilitating conditions

Booktokers indicated that technological and literary resources (books) were relevant to generate and share content about books on TikTok with their followers. E2: «The truth is that I think you can make content with a phone, internet, a phone or a camera, I often share content when I don't even have the physical book, for example, I have the possibility of having a Kindle, but before, when I didn't have it I used the phone or printed the cover of the book and put it on another one and it was the book I had read, the thing was to show it more than having the book itself, and yes I think you don't need so much, to make content. Before I didn't have a ring of light, nor a tripod and, for example, I had those selfie tips and I tied them with shoelaces to a table leg so I could have a tripod and take pictures or record whatever, so I think that of course, over time I have been able to upgrade the devices I have, but with a cell phone, you can do many things, I think that a ring of light, having the book or having many books is not necessary to create content [...] with just a little you can do a lot".

3.5. Hedonic motivation

Booktokers indicated that for them, their acceptance and use of TikTok is related to enjoying what they do by sharing content about books. Specifically, they stated that they enjoy and like sharing their passion for books on TikTok.

3.5.1. Enjoyment

Booktokers indicated that they enjoy making and sharing videos on TikTok. E10: "I have a lot of fun, in a way that you can't imagine, I stand in front of my window and start performing a trend, because I have a lot of fun performing trends, it also forces me to think creatively and that is very much appreciated, because I enjoy it a lot, if I didn't like it I would have quit a long time ago, but the truth is that it is very entertaining".

3.5.2. Sharing a passion for books

Interviewees indicated that sharing their passion for reading with others motivates them to use and embrace TikTok. E4: "I think it's important that, if you are afraid to start a channel, that is, create booktok, create booktagram, leave that fear behind and start because it's a super nice adventure to talk about books, to share that passion, to meet new people makes you really happy".

3.6. Habit

Participants indicated that the routine of recording videos about books and feeling addicted to TikTok has an influence on their use and acceptance.

3.6.1. Recording routine

Booktokers associated their video recording routine on TikTok with continued use of the platform, which would drive the use and acceptance of TikTok. E8: "Maybe I'm used to it, I don't know how to explain it, it's like when you get up in the morning and have breakfast, you don't think about it, you just do it because you're hungry, this is something similar, something happens to you and you record, in other words, it's sort of automatic".

3.6.2. Sense of addiction

Respondents indicated that they experience a feeling of addiction when using TikTok to share content about books. E3: "I can't live without TikTok [...], in fact, there was a time when TikTok went down

and the follower count showed 000, I almost died, seriously, and then I realized that it was happening to everyone else”.

3.7. Price value

Participants did not comment on the fact that TikTok is free to use; rather, they refer to the time investment they make to prepare their content on books. E11: “I record when I feel like it, but I organize myself with the timing, because the videos I make generally recommend a book and I have to prepare a small script, and that takes some time, and recording involves several takes to get it right, so I give myself at least the day before I upload the video to prepare it”.

3.8. Generate community and networks

Finally, booktokers indicated that the community arises from common tastes, bonding, networking opportunities and the ability to influence others’ reading. This fosters the use and acceptance of TikTok to share content about books.

3.8.1. Common tastes

Booktokers considered reading as a means of relating to others. E2: “It was just the fact that I liked to read, while I had a friend who also read, we didn’t read the same things, so I felt like, who can I discuss this with? I need someone to talk to, someone to tell how I’m feeling about the book, these are my favorite books, and things like that, I was already following other accounts, I was consuming a lot of BookTok”.

3.8.2. Bonding

Participants indicated that generating and sharing content about books on TikTok has allowed them to form friendships. E4: “I think what I liked the most was meeting people from several Latin American countries, at the American and Canadian level, because we got to share that notion of books and I never thought in my life that I would have a friend who lives in Mexico, a friend who lives in Argentina, a friend who lives in Chile, so the notion of sharing it with someone and knowing that you are not the only one who has that passion for books was very nice”.

3.8.3. Opportunities through the network

Booktokers identified that networking allows them to leverage their work. E7: “Two very beautiful things happened to me if I look at them from the booktoker side, one is that, through TikTok, people knew that I wrote a book because I was telling them about it [...] A girl met me and she introduced me to her publisher, that was like a very good thing: to find the publisher who trusted me to publish my book, so for me that was very important. And the second part is that I was invited to a school talk to share my experience writing a book, uploading it to the Wattpad platform and talking about that, I think that’s what I liked the most about the booktok on TikTok. But that is what being a booktoker is all about: being able to achieve your dreams when you persist, that was what I liked the most, being able to talk about my book, to talk to younger generations and get my book published”.

3.8.4. Influencing others

The interviewees indicated that in their community they can influence others through the book-related content they generate. E13: “There was a lady who sent me a message saying that her 12-year-old daughter had started reading books that I like, books that I had recommended through my social networks, thanks to my videos and that she was very happy, because they had tried to instill reading in her and had not succeeded and somehow social networks convinced her, that day was the girl’s birthday and she told me if I could send a greeting to the girl, I really liked that, I like the closeness with people and having an impact on the girl’s life, hopefully it will be positive”.

4. Discussion

The performance expectancy category is identified by booktokers, who value TikTok, for the multiple benefits it gives them in generating and sharing book-related content. This is consistent with studies

conducted in a learning context by Mensah and Onyancha (2021) and Williams et al. (2021) who find a significant influence of performance expectancy on the acceptance of social networks for academic libraries. Likewise, Gunasinghe et al. (2019) found that performance expectancy among academics is considered relevant in predicting technology acceptance. Within this category one of the benefits is the TikTok algorithm, which booktokers indicated helps them grow by having more followers and interaction. Likewise, Su et al. (2020) in their study of TikTok stated that the algorithm promotes viral content.

On the other hand, booktokers also valued content generation because of the multiple tools that this platform provides in its role of generating attractive content, as indicated by Vizcaíno-Verdú and Tirocchi (2021). Another important output is the satisfaction generated among followers so that they buy books that a booktoker suggested. This is also evident in the case of booktubers (SMI of books on Youtube) (Albrecht, 2017). Another benefit of social networks are the profits generated. In the case of booktubers they engage in commercial collaborations with brands (with advertising contracts), with publishers, at book fairs or with self-published writers, which are similar for booktokers, these collaborations may or may not be monetary, such as invitations to events, premieres, meetings with writers, or free book shipments in exchange for reviews (Tomasena, 2019). This study also indicates that, in exchange for these collaborations, booktubers publicly thank publishers on their social media profiles (e.g., Instagram, Twitter and Facebook). Also, they indicate that they broadcast unboxing videos and hold contests that involve book raffles among their followers (Tomasena, 2019). This can also be evidenced on TikTok, according to the participants' responses. In the effort expectancy category, similar to Mensah and Onyancha (2021), Williams et al. (2021) found that this determinant influences the intention to use social networks in academic libraries; similarly, Gunasinghe et al. (2019) in an academic context. This is verified in the findings provided by the booktokers in this study, where they value the ease with which TikTok can generate and enable them to share content about books, indicating that it is even easier than other social networks. This is evidenced in the study by Su et al. (2020), where they indicate that TikTok fulfills a content-generating function thanks to numerous easy-to-use templates and unique visual effects.

Within the social influence category, aspects such as support and influence from others and the COVID-19 pandemic emerge as subcategories that explain this determinant. This is similar to the study by Williams et al. (2021) who analyzed the perceived acceptance of social networking sites for academic libraries in students, finding that social media acceptance is positively affected by social influence. From the field of educommunication, the results are in line with Awotunde et al. (2019) who point out that peer social influence among students is relevant in the acceptance of social networking sites for learning purposes. In relation to the facilitating conditions category, booktokers indicated that technological and literary resources are necessary to generate and share content about books on TikTok. Other studies such as Mensah and Onyancha (2021) in Ghana indicate that facilitating conditions have a significant influence on the intention and subsequent use of social networking sites in academic libraries; and Gunasinghe et al. (2019) found that facilitating conditions are important in predicting technology acceptance in a study conducted with academics for online educational purposes.

In the hedonic motivation category, Gunasinghe et al. (2019) found that this domain is important in predicting technology acceptance in an online academic context. This is also validated in the present study by booktokers who indicate that enjoyment and sharing a passion for books are subcategories that explain the motivation to use and accept TikTok. This supports findings by Iodice and Papapicco (2021) which suggest that people who use TikTok use it to satisfy their need for fun and creativity. In addition, Omar and Dequan (2020) indicated that TikTok users participate to relax and for entertainment. Likewise, athletes who generate videos on TikTok are characterized as funny and entertaining (Su et al., 2020).

The habit category in booktokers relates to having a recording routine and feelings of addiction to TikTok. This is similar to the study by Gunasinghe et al. (2019) who found that habitus is important in predicting technology use and acceptance in an online academic context. Tomasena (2019) indicated in his study that booktubers constantly review their page to evaluate their performance in order to adapt their content to their followers' reactions. The price value category among booktokers does not relate to the price of the digital platform, because it is free, as indicated by Zhang (2021) where TikTok users can log in for free, review and make videos, trim songs, use filters and virtual props, and use special effects on

their TikTok content. So, although booktokers do not comment on the free use of this social network, they refer to the time investment to create content about books. Thus, the time and effort ratio reflect the cost they perceive on TikTok. This is in line with what is stated in UTAUT2 (Venkatesh et al., 2012), where value is defined as the trade-off between perceived value, time, and effort invested.

Finally, there is the new category related to community and network building which contributes to the UTAUT2 model, which explains common tastes, the creation of ties, the opportunities that arise in the network and the ability to influence others. These results support Parratt-Fernández et al. (2021) who indicated that booktubers started talking about books because they did not find people or spaces to discuss and give their opinion to others with the same literary interests, where the motivation is initiated to share readings and meet people with the same interests. Likewise, Sorensen and Mara (2014) confirm that booktubers are part of a networked knowledge community. Tomasena (2019) indicates that booktubers work to improve their editing and filming to build a community, interacting with their followers. Also, other social networks, such as Instagram, help produce reader interactions that build communities (Thomas, 2021). This is also the case with TikTok (Merga, 2021). Moreover, TikTok has not only become an entertainment community, but also an online education platform (Zhang, 2021), which can be seen in the present study where booktokers promote and encourage their followers to read.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights a new phenomenon on social media. Specifically, a new type of SMI that generates and shares book-related content on TikTok known as a booktoker, who attracts followers interested in reading and influences their motivation to read. Since this study is exploratory and done from the booktoker's perspective, the use of the UTAUT2 enables an expanded understanding of the acceptance and use of TikTok to generate and share content about books on this platform. Findings indicate that the determinants that explain the acceptance and use of TikTok by booktokers are performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, price value and a new category identified for this phenomenon which relates to community and network building. Therefore, this study contributes theoretically to SMI literature, understanding the acceptance and use of this platform by book-related content creators on TikTok known as booktokers. To our knowledge, there is limited research focused on book-related SMIs on TikTok, which opens the door for further research on this phenomenon that contributes to promoting reading among adolescents. Also, it contributes by studying a geographical area such as Latin America, which has limited research on SMIs (e.g., Gonzalez-Carrion & Aguaded, 2019; Guíñez-Cabrera et al., 2020; Lisdero & Duperré, 2021). This study also contributes to the area of education and SMIs (e.g., Izquierdo-Iranzo & Gallardo-Echenique, 2020; Marcelo & Marcelo, 2021). The practical implications are twofold. Firstly, this study is important for education, as a deeper understanding of this new booktoker phenomenon can encourage educators, administrators of educational institutions, and decision-makers in government institutions to work together with booktokers to promote and encourage reading habits among adolescents. This would make it possible to strengthen SDG 4 in order to achieve quality education. Secondly, the implications of this research concern publishers and marketing specialists by recognizing booktokers as allies to promote book marketing.

Finally, this study has limitations and opportunities for future research. First, the study sample focused only on Latin American booktokers, using non-probability sampling. Therefore, the results of this research may lack generalizability, which should be considered when interpreting the results. It is encouraged to replicate this study in other contexts and to conduct research using a quantitative methodology in a more representative sample, to achieve greater validation and generalization of the findings. Second, this study was limited to the exploration of other factors that could be influential, such as the specific characteristics of each booktoker. Therefore, future researchers could consider these factors to achieve a more complete understanding of the analyzed phenomenon. Third, this study is limited to TikTok. It invites further exploration and research on other social networks that provide opportunities to generate and share content about books that encourage reading. Finally, this study highlights opportunities for additional research that analyzes this phenomenon from the perspective of followers, such as considering their reading habits and interest in reading.

Authors' Contribution

Idea, N.K., K.M.; Literature review (state of the art), N.K., K.M.; Metodology, N.K., K.M.; Data analysis N.K., K.M.; Results, N.K., K.M.; Discussion and conclusions, N.K., K.M.; Writing (original draft), N.K., K.M.; Final revisions, N.K., K.M.; Project design and funding agency, N.K., K.M.

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