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# The Content Production Logic and Algorithm Game of Bloggers' Digital Performance on Short-Video Platforms from the Perspective of Feminism

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the interaction between content production and algorithmic governance on short-video platforms, focusing on how platform algorithms, cultural norms, and user expectations shape creators' digital performances. The study also investigates the strategies employed by content creators to adapt to and navigate algorithmic systems. Using a critical theoretical framework, the research analyzes the structural mechanisms embedded in recommendation algorithms and their implications for user behavior, labor practices, and creative expression. Findings indicate that algorithms actively influence content visibility, productivity, and user engagement, while simultaneously providing opportunities for creators to experiment and innovate within platform constraints. By exploring these dynamics, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of digital labor, platform governance, and the complex interactions between algorithms and content creation in contemporary media environments. The paper highlights considerations for platform design and policy to support effective and sustainable content creation practices.

**Keywords:** feminism; discipline; algorithmic governance; digital performance; short-video platforms

## 1. Introduction

The rapid growth of short-video platforms has significantly reshaped digital cultural production, introducing new forms of content creation, audience interaction, and algorithmically mediated visibility. In this dynamic environment, content creators and influencers play a central role, continuously adapting their creative practices in response to platform algorithms, audience engagement patterns, and system-level rules. While existing research has examined technological affordances, monetization strategies, and audience behavior, less attention has been given to the mechanisms through which algorithms influence creator decision-making, content performance, and platform-mediated labor.

This study investigates the relationship between content production and algorithmic governance on short-video platforms, focusing on how recommendation algorithms and platform metrics shape creative outputs and operational strategies. Drawing on theoretical perspectives from digital media studies, the paper analyzes the structural and procedural mechanisms embedded in algorithmic systems, including content ranking, visibility metrics, and platform regulations. The research further explores how creators strategically respond to algorithmic signals to optimize visibility, engagement, and productivity, highlighting the adaptive and negotiated nature of digital content creation.

By examining these dynamics, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between algorithms and content production, offering insights into the operational logic of short-video platforms and the strategies employed by creators to navigate complex algorithmic environments. The findings contribute to ongoing discussions on digital labor, platform governance, and the design of more transparent and efficient content ecosystems.

## **2. Feminist Theory and the Digital Discipline of Platforms**

### *2.1. Patriarchal Structures in Digital Cultural Production*

Digital media platforms increasingly mediate cultural production through algorithmic systems, which influence the visibility, engagement, and reach of content. These algorithms, while often presented as neutral and data-driven, embed structural preferences that shape which content is prioritized, recommended, or amplified. As a result, the circulation of content on short-video platforms is not entirely random but reflects underlying operational logics, including engagement metrics, ranking mechanisms, and recommendation protocols [1].

Content visibility thus becomes a function of algorithmic filtering, where certain aesthetic styles, formats, and presentation strategies are more likely to gain traction. Creators adapt to these structural conditions by optimizing their output for discoverability, audience engagement, and performance metrics. This negotiation between algorithmic design and creator strategies transforms digital content production into a complex, adaptive process, in which operational rules and creative practices continuously interact.

By analyzing these dynamics, researchers can better understand how algorithmic governance shapes participation, content distribution, and creative decision-making in digital media environments. This perspective highlights the need for transparent design, fair ranking practices, and adaptive strategies that support both platform efficiency and content diversity.

### *2.2. Discipline and Algorithmic Governance*

Foucault's theory of discipline provides a useful framework for understanding how control can be exercised through subtle, pervasive mechanisms rather than overt enforcement. Discipline operates through monitoring, normalization, and the internalization of rules, influencing behavior while maintaining the appearance of autonomy. On short-video platforms, algorithmic governance demonstrates a similar form of digital discipline: creators' activities are continuously tracked through engagement metrics, behavioral data, and predictive analytics, which collectively guide content production toward platform-defined standards of visibility and performance.

Metrics such as likes, shares, comments, and watch time act as signals of which content formats and strategies are favored, shaping creators' production practices. In response, content producers adapt their outputs to align with these performance signals, optimizing engagement and reach. This interaction illustrates how algorithmic systems structure behavior, incentivize certain practices, and indirectly standardize digital production, transforming content creation into a dynamic process shaped by both system rules and creator strategies.

By examining these mechanisms, researchers can gain insight into how algorithmic governance shapes participation, influences creative decisions, and maintains operational consistency on digital platforms. This approach highlights the importance of transparent metrics and adaptive strategies that support both efficient platform operation and diverse content production.

### 2.3. Productive Tensions and Spaces of Resistance

While algorithmic governance imposes structured constraints, it also produces productive outcomes by shaping behavior, creative practices, and engagement patterns. Continuous content production, feedback mechanisms, and performance evaluation encourage creators to internalize platform norms, fostering self-regulation and strategic planning. Importantly, this process is not entirely deterministic; it provides creators with insights into the system's operational logic, enabling them to identify opportunities for optimization, innovation, and alternative expression. Under these structured conditions, content producers often develop adaptive strategies that balance compliance with experimentation, enhancing both visibility and audience engagement.

This study highlights the dual nature of algorithmic systems: they guide and standardize content production while simultaneously creating openings for innovation and creative problem-solving. By examining how creators respond to algorithmic constraints, researchers can gain a nuanced understanding of the interaction between platform rules, user strategies, and emergent digital practices. Such an analysis emphasizes the importance of adaptive strategies, feedback awareness, and informed decision-making in navigating the complexities of contemporary content ecosystems [2].

## 3. Algorithmic Governance and the Regulation of Visibility

### 3.1. Algorithmic Selection and Digital Hierarchies

Algorithmic governance plays a central role in shaping visibility and reach on short-video platforms, determining which content is amplified and which receives limited exposure. Designed to maximize user engagement and platform performance, recommendation algorithms continuously process large datasets to prioritize content most likely to attract attention and sustain interaction. This process creates a hierarchical valuation of digital content, where certain formats, styles, and presentation strategies that align with algorithmically favored patterns are more likely to achieve prominence.

These mechanisms reflect a form of structural influence: creators adapt their content production, posting frequency, and engagement strategies in response to performance metrics such as likes, shares, and watch time. Consequently, visibility is not a neutral indicator of quality or creativity but rather the outcome of algorithmic prioritization, which encourages predictability and alignment with platform-defined norms.

By examining these dynamics, researchers can better understand how algorithmic systems influence creative decision-making, audience reach, and content distribution in digital media. This perspective emphasizes the interplay between platform governance, content strategy, and emergent patterns of cultural production, highlighting both the regulatory and adaptive dimensions of contemporary digital ecosystems [3].

### 3.2. Opacity, Self-Surveillance, and Behavioral Standardization

The logic of algorithmic governance is characterized by complexity and asymmetries of information. Content creators typically do not have direct access to the precise parameters of recommendation systems and must infer operational rules through observation, experimentation, and iterative adaptation. This uncertainty encourages continuous self-monitoring, prompting creators to track engagement metrics, adjust posting schedules, and refine content presentation to optimize visibility and audience interaction. In this process, creators internalize the implicit norms embedded in algorithmic operations, reflecting the Foucauldian concept of self-discipline enacted through mediated observation.

Algorithmic systems effectively act as selective filters, prioritizing content that aligns with platform-defined engagement patterns. This filtering shapes creative strategies, incentivizes particular production styles, and standardizes behaviors to enhance reach and impact. As a result, visibility on digital platforms emerges as both a measure of engagement potential and a mechanism of structural guidance, influencing how creators plan, produce, and evaluate their content. By examining these dynamics, researchers can better

understand the interplay between algorithmic design, user behavior, and content distribution in contemporary digital media ecosystems.

### *3.3. Neoliberal Ideology and the Commodification of Visibility*

Algorithmic governance intersects with contemporary discourses of individual entrepreneurship, encouraging content creators to view themselves as self-managed entities responsible for optimizing visibility, branding, and audience engagement. The emphasis on personal optimization transforms creative work into a process of strategic self-presentation, where digital success depends on effectively aligning content and persona with algorithmic selection criteria. This approach shifts the focus from structural platform dynamics to the actions and decisions of individual creators, framing performance outcomes as the result of strategic management.

In this context, algorithms operate as both technical and behavioral frameworks, shaping not only which content is prioritized but also guiding creators toward platform-favored production styles and engagement strategies. Visibility functions as both a reward for alignment with these standards and a mechanism for structuring creative practices. By analyzing these dynamics, researchers can better understand how algorithmic governance influences content production, user strategies, and the distribution of attention, highlighting the interplay between system design, creator behavior, and emergent patterns of digital media engagement.

## **4. Content Production Logic and Gendered Performativity**

### *4.1. Algorithmic Imperatives and Production Rationalities*

The production of content on short-video platforms is fundamentally influenced by the interplay of algorithmic design, audience engagement patterns, and commercial objectives. Creators are required to continuously generate content that captures user attention, aligns with algorithmic prioritization, and supports the platform's operational goals. This triadic demand fosters a production logic that emphasizes immediacy, repetition, and high visibility, favoring content that is quickly consumable and broadly shareable over more contemplative or complex narratives. Metrics such as likes, shares, watch time, and engagement rates become central indicators of success, turning content creation into a data-informed practice and visibility into a form of structured performance evaluation.

As a result, the digital media ecosystem incentivizes standardization and predictability, encouraging creators to tailor content to algorithmically and commercially mediated expectations. Strategies such as repetition and formulaic formats enhance audience retention, while more experimental content may face reduced exposure. This operational logic underscores the close interconnection between platform incentives and algorithmic governance, illustrating how short-video environments foster highly productive yet systematically guided forms of creative labor.

### *4.2. Gendered Performativity and Algorithmic Discipline*

Theories of performativity provide a useful framework for understanding how digital creators construct and maintain their online identities within algorithmically mediated environments. On short-video platforms, identity is actively performed rather than passively represented, shaped through recurring gestures, stylistic choices, vocal expression, and narrative patterns. Algorithmic systems reinforce certain behavioral and aesthetic norms by rewarding content that aligns with platform-preferred patterns of engagement and visibility, thereby shaping creative practices and guiding the strategies of content production.

This dynamic illustrates how algorithmic visibility functions as a form of governance: creators are incentivized to adopt recognized and platform-favored content strategies in order to maintain relevance, audience attention, and overall engagement. By analyzing these mechanisms, it becomes clear that algorithmic systems not only prioritize certain

types of content but also influence the processes through which creators develop, present, and refine their work, effectively embedding platform-defined norms into everyday digital production practices [4].

#### *4.3. Subversion, Resistance, and Re-signification*

Despite the constraints imposed by algorithmic and commercial imperatives, content production on short-video platforms retains inherent potential for creative experimentation and innovation. Creators can strategically adapt platform norms, employing techniques such as exaggeration, parody, irony, or stylistic amplification to explore alternative forms of expression and challenge standardized content expectations. These adaptive strategies reveal the constructed and flexible nature of platform-mediated performance, offering opportunities for creators to assert agency and navigate system-driven pressures.

Such practices highlight the ambivalent logic of short-video production: while algorithmic and market incentives encourage conformity, they simultaneously provide resources and feedback mechanisms that enable experimentation, negotiation, and creative differentiation. Platforms thus function as dynamic spaces where control and creativity coexist—creators are guided by systemic structures, yet they can also leverage these structures to innovate, test boundaries, and redefine the norms of digital content production. This duality emphasizes the complex interplay of constraint and opportunity that characterizes contemporary algorithmically mediated media environments.

### **5. The Algorithm Game and Negotiated Agency**

#### *5.1. Strategic Engagement with Algorithmic Governance*

The concept of the algorithm game captures bloggers' deliberate and strategic engagement with the governance mechanisms embedded in short-video platforms. Creators continuously experiment with tactics designed to increase visibility: optimizing posting times to align with algorithmic cycles, leveraging trending hashtags, adopting viral formats, and extending reach through cross-platform promotion. Such strategic maneuvers reflect a sophisticated understanding of the opaque computational rules that structure content recommendation, transforming uncertainty into a calculated form of adaptation. However, these tactics rarely ensure consistent success, as algorithms are dynamic and continuously updated, rewarding conformity while penalizing deviation.

This ongoing experimentation exemplifies the dialectic between discipline and agency, illustrating how digital actors are simultaneously constrained by algorithmic structures and enabled to navigate within them. By interpreting metrics as signals for performance optimization, creators engage in a constant process of observation, learning, and recalibration. The algorithm game, therefore, is not a straightforward contest but a complex negotiation that requires balancing platform demands, audience expectations, and individual creative expression.

#### *5.2. Agency within Disciplinary Structures*

From a Foucauldian perspective, agency is not solely defined in opposition to structural constraints but emerges within and through them. Content creators operate under algorithmic frameworks—such as engagement metrics, retention rates, and recommendation logics—yet they exercise agency by navigating, adapting, or creatively leveraging these parameters. Strategic choices in content design, timing, and presentation enable creators to optimize visibility and engagement while exploring alternative forms of expression.

These adaptive practices demonstrate the tension between being shaped by algorithmic systems and actively shaping one's own digital performance. Such strategies constitute constrained yet meaningful forms of agency, illustrating how systemic pressures and

creative decision-making coexist. They highlight the interdependence of control and innovation in digital media, showing how creators can transform algorithmic structures into opportunities for experimentation, self-expression, and strategic positioning.

### *5.3. Hybrid Practices and Feminist Possibilities*

The algorithmic environment illustrates that digital content production is a dynamic and iterative process involving experimentation, adaptation, and strategic navigation. Content creators do not passively follow algorithmic rules; instead, they observe system behaviors, test boundaries, and, in some cases, leverage insights to optimize visibility or explore alternative forms of expression. This demonstrates that agency in digital labor is neither complete autonomy nor total compliance, but a continuous negotiation within structured constraints.

These practices highlight the dual character of algorithmically governed platforms. On one hand, algorithmic systems establish patterns of visibility, engagement, and reward that guide content creation. On the other hand, these same structures provide opportunities for creators to innovate, experiment with content strategies, and exercise adaptive agency. Understanding these dynamics is essential for analyzing how digital infrastructures shape creative behavior, mediate audience interaction, and enable strategic interventions that extend beyond straightforward adherence to platform norms.

## **6. Feminist Implications for Platform Governance**

### *6.1. Algorithms as Cultural and Gendered Infrastructures*

Integrating critical perspectives into the study of short-video platforms underscores the need to reconsider platform governance from both conceptual and practical angles. Algorithms are not purely technical or neutral systems; they operate as complex infrastructures that shape content visibility, engagement patterns, and resource allocation. Every stage of algorithmic design—from data collection and model training to recommendation and moderation—reflects the design assumptions, priorities, and operational goals of platform developers. These mechanisms influence which content is amplified, how audiences interact with it, and which contributions are rewarded or marginalized.

Recognizing algorithms as both technical and cultural systems implies that effective governance must go beyond optimization of performance metrics. Platforms function as structured environments where design decisions directly affect visibility, attention distribution, and engagement outcomes. By critically evaluating the assumptions and value frameworks embedded within algorithms, governance strategies can be developed to ensure more transparent, consistent, and balanced treatment of content, mitigating unintended biases and promoting equitable visibility across diverse types of contributions [5].

### *6.2. Transparency, Accountability, and Recognition of Digital Labor*

Critical perspectives on platform governance emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability in algorithmic design and implementation. Platforms should clarify the operational principles of recommendation systems, including content ranking, visibility allocation, monetization mechanisms, and moderation rules. Lack of transparency can hinder creators' understanding of how algorithms function, limiting their ability to optimize, adapt, or provide feedback on content performance. Mechanisms that allow creator participation in policy evaluation and platform design are essential for refining governance and ensuring that system rules are clear, consistent, and interpretable.

Furthermore, digital content production constitutes a significant form of labor that contributes to the online economy, encompassing activities such as audience engagement management, content curation, and community interaction. Effective governance frameworks should recognize and support this labor through fair compensation, acknowledgment, and institutionalized resources, ensuring that creators' contributions are valued and sustainable within the platform ecosystem. By integrating these principles, platforms can

promote accountability, equitable treatment of creators, and a healthier digital content environment.

### 6.3. Intersectionality and Ethical Governance

Algorithmic governance in digital platforms is influenced by multiple dimensions of creator experience, including geographic location, linguistic background, socioeconomic status, and cultural context. Creators from underrepresented regions, with limited resources, or using less common languages may face systemic barriers that reduce visibility, engagement, and monetization opportunities. Similarly, content from non-mainstream cultural contexts may be misclassified, suppressed, or flagged disproportionately due to algorithmic design and automated moderation. Effective platform governance requires a holistic approach that accounts for these intersecting factors to ensure equitable treatment and access for all creators.

Beyond technical adjustments, equitable platform management involves embedding inclusive principles into decision-making processes, independent oversight, and content policies. Governance should prioritize representation, sustainability, and user well-being over purely profit-driven metrics. By fostering transparency, participatory engagement, and fair recognition of diverse contributions, platforms can support creators as active participants in digital cultural production, encourage innovation, and maintain a resilient and inclusive ecosystem. Such approaches provide a pathway for building ethical, accountable, and sustainable digital platforms that balance efficiency, fairness, and diversity.

## 7. Conclusion

This study examined the dynamics of content production and algorithmic regulation on short-video platforms, focusing on how digital performance is shaped by system-driven metrics and platform governance mechanisms. The analysis revealed that algorithms function as regulatory tools, subtly influencing creators' visibility, engagement, and content strategies through monitoring, feedback, and normalization. Within this framework, creators learn to interpret algorithmic cues, adapt their production approaches, and experiment with alternative strategies, demonstrating that structured digital environments simultaneously constrain and guide creative behavior.

The findings highlight the dual role of short-video platforms: they serve as both operational infrastructures that enforce algorithmic priorities and as spaces where creators can innovate, optimize, and strategically navigate system constraints. By situating content production within a theoretical framework of algorithmic governance, this study provides insights into the mechanisms through which platform design shapes creative labor, engagement patterns, and decision-making processes.

Future research could explore additional contextual factors, including geographic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, to assess how different creators experience and respond to algorithmic regulation. Longitudinal and comparative studies may further illuminate adaptive strategies and evolving practices across diverse platform ecosystems. From a practical perspective, the study underscores the importance of transparent algorithmic mechanisms, inclusive governance policies, and the recognition of digital content creation as legitimate cultural and economic work. Such considerations contribute to designing more equitable, efficient, and sustainable platform environments that support both operational goals and creative potential.

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