Understanding How Personal Activities Are Shared In Short-form Videos

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Sharing activities that people do in everyday life, such as physical activity, health management, or hobbies, help people receive benefits like social support and positive self-presentation. Short-form videos present new opportunities for activity-sharing, which has traditionally been studied in static contexts like text- and image-sharing. We therefore aim to understand what information people incorporate into short-form activity videos, and how. We qualitatively analyzed 420 short-form activity videos on TikTok across three domains: running, studying, and sketching. We found people often present information before, during, and after activities, developing strategies for qualitatively and quantitatively incorporating activity-relevant information in each. We also uncover practices for aligning the sharing of activity-relevant information with the nature of short-form videos, such as modifying broader-scale goals into video-scale goals. We further discuss design opportunities and challenges for designers to create tools that support the practice, such as closer integration with tracking tools and encouraging narrative structure.

CCS Concepts: • **Human-centered computing → Empirical studies in collaborative and social computing**.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Short-form Video, Activity-sharing, TikTok, Video Analysis, Personal Informatics

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1 Introduction

The prevalence and abundance of social media platforms enable people to easily share the activities that they do in their lives, including work related to their professions [13, 59, 60], taking care of their health and wellbeing [18, 51, 65, 67], studying [45], and completing hobbies such as thru-hiking [43], creating artwork [26], or listening to music [81]. In the past, this sharing has been largely examined in the context of sharing personal activity tracking data, namely the inclusion of data generated through dedicated tracking apps and devices or manual description of the activity. The inclusion of these activity-relevant data and information, such as steps people walk, calories burnt, or other types of personally-relevant details about the activity can help people achieve sharing goals such as receiving social support [22, 32, 37], being held accountable for goals they set [64],

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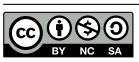

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informing others about their lives [19, 67, 85], motivating and getting motivated [26, 86], or helping individuals connect and find community of people who do similar things [36, 43].

To date, sharing of activity has been largely examined on platforms that emphasize static media. Over time, platforms that focus or emphasize sharing richer media content (e.g., beyond text and numbers) have also risen in popularity, such as platforms that center on sharing images (e.g., Instagram, Pinterest), recorded videos (e.g., YouTube), or ephemeral videos (e.g., Snapchat). The richer media often incorporates visual and audio content which allows the sharing to be more expressive and easier to disclose affect and emotion. Especially with videos, people have been able to communicate ideas or share lived experiences that are traditionally hard to communicate, such as aspects of their identities or interests [13, 21, 31, 76], life transitions [88], experiences managing health conditions [7, 32], and social activism [11]. The recent rise in short-form video sharing, both in dedicated platforms that skyrocketed in user base (e.g., TikTok [1]) and established platforms adopting similar sharing features (e.g., Instagram/Facebook, YouTube), further pushes the expressiveness of the format as it encourages creating content that is brief, engaging, and playful [21]. Short-form video platforms prioritize mobile device experiences, typically featuring vertical (rather than horizontal) display orientation that enables content creators and viewers to more conveniently produce and access videos through their mobile devices. Furthermore, the access to short-form videos is often mediated by platform algorithms that automate the selection of content relevant to a user's interests, based on engagement with prior videos (e.g., videos that the user likes and comments on, shares similar hashtags to videos that the user uploads). This leads users of the platforms to have highly personalized feeds based on their topical interests.

Despite past work understanding how this richer media can support conveying aspects of identity and interests, there is currently a gap in understanding how people leverage the capabilities of this media support people in conveying activities they do. In particular, past work also pointed out that activity-relevant information and data representations, either numerical or qualitative, are commonly presented when sharing activity [17, 23, 43, 45, 57, 87, 90]. But it remains unclear how people leverage the more expressive media format of video to integrate this content.

We therefore seek to understand how people share activities in short-form videos, as a widely-used form of richer social media. This knowledge aims to help us understand the effectiveness of this medium for supporting people's typical social goals for activity sharing, getting motivated, seeking and providing support and encouragement, and accountability. Further, it surfaces opportunities for improving the design of technology looking to support activity-sharing on these platforms, such as tools for activity data export and presentation as well as the short-form video platforms themselves.

We therefore ask the research question, **when people share activities in short-form videos, what information about the activities do people incorporate, and how?** To answer this question, we qualitatively analyzed public videos of activity sharing on TikTok. We collected and qualitatively coded 420 activity-sharing short-form videos that were incorporated with activity-relevant information in three distinct domains (running, sketching, and studying). Through our studies, we identified strategies that people used to incorporate these activity-relevant information, and the type of information that were incorporated through using these strategies. We find that people share before, during, and after their activity, incorporating a mix of qualitative and quantitative information in each phase. Video creators primarily using quantitative measures to set goals, demonstrate progress, and evaluate those goals (e.g., time studied, distance ran), and qualitatively describe how they feel about their progress and what concerns them about their goals. Overall, we find short-form videos to be a useful medium for sharing the affective qualities of activities, and that video creators tend to follow narrative arcs with their content that have the potential to effectively support common activity-sharing goals.

In this work, we make the following contributions that expand our understanding of how activities are shared in short-form videos:

(1) An understanding of the temporal nature of activity sharing in short-form video. People often share activities in multiple of three phases: preparation for the activity, during the activity, and reflection post-activity. Videos often use clips to incorporate multiple phases, such as introducing a goal before undertaking the activity or demonstrating progress and reflecting on it.
(2) Description of common strategies people use to incorporate information related to their activities short-form videos, such as *Progress Stamps* that help represent the passing of time and steps moving towards one's goal and *Conclusive Numerical Summary* which shows people demonstrating what they accomplished.
(3) Design opportunities for improving the experience of short-form video creation for activity-sharing to help people achieve their sharing goals. We suggest opportunities for short-form video platforms to have closer integration with activity tracking tools to reduce friction to integrating numeric information. We also suggest methods for systems to encourage activity sharing content to more closely follow narrative structures, like introducing a goal ahead of describing the activity.

2 Related Work

Our examination of activity sharing on short-form social media draws on past work in activity sharing on other forms of social media, as well as the kinds of content which prior studies have found people to frequently share in short-form videos.

2.1 Activity Sharing on Social Media

In this work, we broadly look at how people share activities from their lives on social media platforms. Past research have found that people often leverage social media platforms to share status updates from their lives [34], and often sharing across a great variety of activity types [78, 85]. Examples of activities span a wide range of things that people do, such as exercise [28, 47, 71, 84, 86], listening to music [81], creative work [20, 26, 37, 48, 53], learning and productivity [16, 77], managing of health and well-being [67], or hobbies that people have such as thru-hiking [43] or traveling [12]. Aligning with these works, we therefore define ***activities*** as events that people do in their everyday, typically offline, lives. While activity sharing covers a wide variety of kinds of content which people share on social media, it is distinct from other styles of content such as opinions on social issues [27], advice-giving or question-and-answer [58, 63], news headlines or other articles [52], or memes and other social trends [6, 50, 69].

While people use social platforms for many different communication purposes, such as connecting with others, seeking social information, or keeping in touch with distant friends or families [9, 34], there are many reasons why people specifically share activities with others. To motivate a framework for how people share personal informatics data, Epstein et al. reviewed prior literature to highlight five major sharing goals that people tend to seek out when sharing activity [23]. People share their activities to **request informational support**, such as advice, suggestions, or recommendation on things to try [20, 67, 73]. Others may share when they **desire emotional support** for overcoming challenges they face, such as around achieving health and wellbeing goals [18, 55, 89]. Activity sharing can also be helpful for **seeking motivation or being held accountable** towards activities people wish to accomplish, such as keeping up with exercise goals [64, 66]. This often is achieved through helping people find and connect with community who has similar interests or goals with them [36, 43] through activity sharing. People also share activities to **motivate or influence**

others to act similarly [5] or take on similar activities through performance (e.g., video gaming [83], creating artworks [26], or programming [13, 14]), or inform others of their current status [49, 78]. Sharing activity is often used for communicate an identity for **impression management** [13, 67, 81, 91]. Past work also pointed out that people may have multiple simultaneous goals when sharing on social platforms, and people need to carefully balance different, conflicting goals, such as performance in the moment and long-term self-image management [91]. In our study, we analyze how people's strategies around activity sharing in short-form video support and ignore these five sharing goals.

Past research, especially within the field of personal informatics, has considered how activities can be shared when they are recorded using tracking technology such as app or wearable devices. When shared, these activities are typically represented in quantified data presented as text or graphs. For instance, when physical activity like exercise is shared, it is often complemented with measures like the distance or steps walked, average heart rate, and other numerical metrics specific to the kind of activity (e.g., pace for running) [18, 64, 86]. Other activities such as creative or professional work are sometimes shared on social media with productivity measured in terms of activeness [59] or commitment level [60]. Other types of activity such as music listening [81], finances [10], or mental health management [70] are also frequently complemented with quantified information when sharing online, such as times a song has been played, money spent, or medication tapering dosage.

Across domains, how activities have been represented in posts to social media varies, often moving beyond quantified information depending on the capabilities of the platform or specific kind of activity being shared. For instance, many platforms support or emphasize a modality beyond text-based sharing, incorporating visuals. For example, images are often used for sharing what people eat [17], or where they travel [12]. Visualization and graphs has been used in sharing live biometrics for physical activities [19], the amount of donation received in crowdfunding campaign [40], or the amount of music people listen to and time spent on things ephemeral messages [87]. Videos are often used for sharing the process of activities, such as drawing and crafting [26] or programming [56]. Live streaming videos can present a window into activities being done remotely, such as for sharing intimate family times with distant family members [33].

2.2 Sharing in Short-form Videos

Video has been studied as a highly expressive format that enables people to share experiences in first person. For instance, sharing of video blogs (vlogs) allows people to document their personal experience and feelings about things that people are doing, which can help shift the focus videos from the technical or educational aspects of activities to personal experiences and struggles [13]. Therefore, video is often used by people to share unique or atypical experiences that they have, such as managing of chronic health conditions [51], everyday experience of people with disabilities [21, 68], or transitioning gender [75], and is useful for bridging people to providing and receiving social support [7, 32]. Simultaneously, videos are also largely used by people to share mundane everyday life experiences, such as spending time with family or friends [90] or simply chatting or showing objects, places [85], or events in real time [29].

The recent rise of short-form video on social media platforms highlight the conciseness in length as most videos are between 15 seconds to five minutes. Furthermore, most short-form video sharing platforms or platforms that incorporate features for sharing short-form videos optimize their experience for mobile devices, and subsequently curate their video presentation based on their users' social feeds through heavy algorithmic-mediation. For instance, TikTok provide the "For You" page for their users, which consists of a scrollable feeds of content that are highly-associative to their past engagement with content on the platform. The highly-personalized algorithm changed

Characteristic	Description
Condensed Duration	Video is widely studied as an expressive format [3, 4]. Short-form videos often constrain video length, which encourages expressivity and creativity [82]. Additionally, platforms often provide features that allows video sharers to creatively connect their videos with those of others (e.g., TikTok's Duet [69], Instagram's Remix).
Mobile-based Experience	Most short-form video platforms are mobile-based [4, 82], which lowers sharer effort as videos can be created and shared on the same device [74, 88].
Algorithmic Curation	Most short-form video platforms feature a hyper-personalized algorithmic feed that present content in similar topics (e.g., TikTok's "For You") [4, 35]. The algorithm's aggregative power also leads to people forming situated connection and communities (e.g., "serendipitous connection" [79] and "permeable communities" [62]) on the platforms.

Table 1. Short-form video is characterized by three distinct features: condensed duration content, mobile-optimized experience, and sophisticated algorithmic curation. These features all differentiate it from traditional mediums where activity-sharing typically occurs.

how people engage with consumption and creation of video [42] and presentation of self [44], and has been argued for supporting people's authentic presentation of themselves given the platform's norm shaped by its playful affordances [3]. Given these properties (Table 1), short-form videos were often highly condensed, expressive, and interest-centric, which generates both opportunities and challenges on how people create them, consume them, and interact with others on the platforms [39, 42, 44, 62, 69, 79, 82].

Recent research has emphasized how the affordances of short-form video platforms, particularly when mediated by an algorithmic feed, influence the type of content people share with one another [4]. For example, research has highlighted how the expressiveness of short-form videos enables exploration and construction of individuals' identity [44, 82]. Creating and sharing short-form videos also helps individuals connect and finding community around topics of interest [61, 74], challenging health conditions [62, 79] or identity [31, 82], facilitate creative collaboration [69], and collective action [30]. Activity sharing is distinct from these cases because the content being shared serves the dual purpose of supporting self-expression online, as well as some offline benefit associated with completing the activity. While people sharing activity on these platforms may have to contend with similar social values, like trying to authentically present themselves [3], activity sharers also have to consider how to use the platform to adequately present their experiences to achieve those social goals.

In this study, we aim to uncover how people leverage the capabilities of short-form video to share the activities they do in their lives. Specifically, we examine when and how people incorporate activity-relevant information into the videos they create, such as their goals, tracked data about the activity, and reflections on the activity.

3 Methods

In our study, we sought to understand how people represent activities in short-form video platforms. We now describe our process of understanding how three types of activities (running, sketching, and studying) are shared through collecting and analyzing 420 TikTok videos.

3.1 Data Collection

Prior to collecting data, we sought to identify a few domains which we thought could collectively be representative of how people approach activity sharing in short-form videos and had enough people sharing the activity to gain insight. We selected multiple domains to ensure that observations we made are not limited to a specific domain or a specific community (e.g., a specific hashtag, an activity-platform subculture).

We selected TikTok as our target platform for analyzing short-form video. TikTok had a large user base at the time of the study (1 billion active monthly users) [1], and made available their API access to research-focused initiatives which allowed large-scale data collection of video from the platform.

Building on our definition of activities as events that people do in their everyday and typically-offline lives, we centered our data collection on short-form videos which highlighted the demonstration or practice of these activities, such as video sharers recording themselves doing or preparing for the activities. To identify domains where people often share the **activities** they do in videos, we reviewed past video-sharing literature for activity domains which people often log for self-reflection and may share on platforms [4, 74, 90]. Past work surfaced that video-sharing social media are used to support different intentions (e.g., being humorous [79, 90], instructional [4, 72, 74]) or highlighting identity-based experiences [21, 31, 62, 82] that could be applied broadly to different activity domains. In our study, we aimed to ensure that the videos that we selected centered the activities themselves. Since people focus on documenting the activities within these videos, people naturally choose to include information or data about the activity. Therefore, we focus on these information being incorporated as an inseparable part of activity, and the focus of our research goal of studying activity-sharing in the context of short-form videos. Information included are both quantitative and qualitative. In activity-sharing, quantitative information (e.g., miles ran, time used) have often been studied in the context of personal informatics data [23, 59]. Conversely, qualitative information represents progress or experiences that are not typically susceptible to numerical representation (e.g., progress in crafting an artwork, body movement), and were incorporated in works on creative processes [20, 37].

Ultimately, we focused on three activity domains: Physical Activity, Creativity, and Productivity. Physical activity is often shared with quantified data to demonstrate performance [23], such as using pace or numbers of miles for running, which aligns with how people typically incorporate data when sharing tracked activities. Conversely, creative work often highlights the creative artifact itself as a measure of progress or effort [37], as people often show work-in-progress of their sketch or painting over time, therefore focusing less on numeric data. We were less sure how people would approach sharing studying, as prior work has largely examined productivity monitoring as a domain for self-reflection [41]. However, given the prominence of studying-related content on these platforms (e.g., #studywithme), we thought it was worth examining. We aimed to ensure that the activity domains we selected are representative of activity sharing as a whole. Therefore, we investigated communities on Instagram and TikTok to ensure that there was enough critical mass of shared activities within these domains. We also examined the videos to confirm frequent presence of information about the activity, which helped ensure that the videos centered around activity-sharing.

To identify specific activities to focus on within our domains, two of the authors used TikTok's search engine with relevant keywords. We sampled 10-20 activity videos for each domain and examined whether they fit our criteria for further investigation, such as bouldering and cycling for physical activity, digital music creation and crocheting for creativity, and programming and writing for productivity. We ended up not choosing these domains because the videos were often

tutorials rather than sharing the activities (Digital Music Creation) or only contained video clips showing other information (Bouldering). We also avoided selecting activities and hashtags where the activity only represented a small part of the video, like vlogs or #dayinthelife videos [57]. We eventually decided to focus on Running for Physical Activity, Sketching for Creativity, and Studying for Productivity. Our initial searches suggested that the videos on TikTok typically highlighted the activity prominently, while still including enough diversity in presentation to ensure that they were representative of activity sharing as a whole.

We used keywords and hashtags as search keys to collect videos through the TikTok Research API, ensuring that the keywords and hashtags were used prevalently and relevant to our research goal before settling on a hashtag for each domain for data collection. The chosen hashtags for data collecton are "#runtok," "#sketching," and "#studytok." For instance, we selected "#runtok" instead of "#run" for running because the latter included a great amount of videos that were shared for purposes beyond sharing the physical activity (e.g., people running away from things, dogs running around). We also avoided specific terms such as "#marathon" which might further narrow the type of activities being shared. Finally, to ensure that we were studying relatively common activity-sharing practices on the platform, so we opted for hashtags that regularly had new videos posted. For instance, each hashtag averaged nearly 200 videos each day (#runtok: 362, #sketching: 203.8, #studytok: 197.2).

After identifying domains and selecting hashtags, we used the TikTok API to collect videos in early 2023. We only collected videos from within the U.S. to focus on English-language videos and ensure that the U.S.-based researchers had enough cultural context to interpret the videos. We intentionally collected videos on five dates spread out over a 10-day time interval to try to mitigate the effect of micro-trends (e.g., a community's sketching challenge that happens once a week) and to collect activities that people might routinely complete over a week (e.g., running routinely on a Friday morning). Collecting all videos for these five days available from the API led to 3569 videos across the three activities (1750 running, 936 sketching, 883 studying).

3.2 Dataset Collected

Prior to analysis, we initially selected 300 videos in running, 250 videos in studying, and 250 videos in sketching domain to filtered the videos to those relevant to our research topic. The first and second authors manually filtered out videos that were not focused on activity sharing (e.g., discussions of running topics but not sharing a run) or were not in English. Based on these criteria, we removed 40 videos, resulting in 760 (273 running, 245 sketching, 242 studying). We then randomly sampled 140 videos for each activity domain, totalling a set of 420 videos for analysis across the three domains. We selected this number to be at the high end of prior qualitative analyses of TikTok video content; past studies in HCI and CSCW employing similar methods have typically analyzed between 100 and 300 videos [21, 79].

In our dataset, videos received an average of 252.57 likes (SD=1025.65), 6.95 comments (SD=36), 770.77 views (SD=5164.17), with 10.45 of hashtags used (SD=7.48). There were 386 accounts in total from our dataset (130 from Running, 130 from Studying, 126 from Sketching), with no more than 2 videos from any single account. We would categorize a small handful of videos as being from "influencer" type accounts (e.g., 3 running videos, 5 studying videos, and 4 sketching videos had over 5000 views). These videos appeared to be relatively typical of users in terms of content shared, visibility, and audience response. We also document the information from each activity domain that we analyzed in Table 2.

We refer to individual videos with a prefix indicating the domain, and then the video number in our overall dataset (e.g., $studying_{42}$, $running_{365}$).

	Likes		Comments		Views		Hashtags Used		Unique Accounts	Unique Videos
	AVG	SD	AVG	SD	AVG	SD	AVG	SD	-	-
Running	159.61	681.52	5.35	13.19	368.74	1148.61	7.39	4.99	130	140
Studying	439.73	1521.47	6.02	16.74	1309.79	8394.95	10.63	6.42	130	140
Sketching	158.37	582.04	9.47	58.67	633.79	2849.69	13.34	9.19	126	140
All Videos	252.57	1025.65	6.95	36	770.77	5164.17	10.45	7.48	386	420

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Video Collected in Each Activity Domain. Studying videos tended to have more engagement than the other domains, with relatively high variance among videos.

3.3 Analysis

We used a mix of inductive and deductive approach to thematic analysis [8]. We began by inductively examining the videos, open coding different dimensions around how videos represent activity-relevant information. We found that the timing of a video clip relative to the activity (e.g., before, during, after) had important influence on what content was shared, and began deductively looking at the videos through that lens. After multiple rounds of iteration, we developed a codebook with 17 codes centered around three dimensions of representation of data in video: the **Modality** of information included in the video (e.g., Video, Text, Audio, Image), the **Form Factor** of how the information was represented (e.g., voice narration, a video showing a tracking app), and the **Strategy** for sharing the data (e.g., presenting a goal before the activity, offering live commentary during the activity).

For our analysis, we ended up analyzed 140 short-form videos from the three activities, resulted in a total of 420 videos analyzed. Together, the first two authors analyzed a subset of 100 videos to filter out relevant videos, and a subset of 20 videos for coding features of personally-relevant information in the videos. Researchers had high initial agreement on most of the 17 codes (Cohen's κ 0.44-1, with 16/17 above 0.6 and 12/17 above 0.8), and further refined the code definitions for the codes which had lower agreement through discussion. The two researchers then split the remaining 400 videos.

Beyond coding, the research team checked in regularly to discuss the major themes surfaced around how people incorporate activity-related information into short-form videos. The two researchers who coded the videos felt as though they were approaching theoretical saturation after analyzing around 320 videos, and therefore opted to finish the remaining videos and not analyze additional videos.

3.4 Limitations

First, our analysis focused on U.S.-based accounts through filtering out the origin of videos using the API filter. Beyond supporting filtering to predominantly English-language videos for analysis, this allowed the U.S.-based research team to have sufficient cultural context to interpret the content. However, different countries or other cultures might have distinct practices surrounding video-sharing, such as different approaches to playful interaction [54]. Care should be taken when generalizing our findings to other cultures and regions, as activity sharing goals and strategies may differ.

Analyzing unique videos, rather than accounts who share activities in the domains we studied, enabled us to have greater breadth in the video sharing practices we observe and report on. However, the videos that we collected and analyzed could present just the phase of the activity process, and other stages may be in separate videos that we did not analyze. For example, a video creator may

have separate videos showing themselves in the process of sketching, and reflecting on the sketch. Deeper exploration is needed to understand how (or whether) people connect activities they do across videos, particularly when they set goals which are not achievable in the span of a single video.

We selected the platform (TikTok) and the three activity domains (running, studying, sketching) as a popular space for sharing short-form videos with some diversity in how activities might be presented. While we believe that much of our findings extend to other kinds of activity sharing and on other short-form video platforms, we expect some aspects of the platform and the activity may further influence the content produced. Similarly, TikTok's recent updates allow its users to upload videos in longer-length [2]. The platform's strategy may lead to its users adjusting strategies for sharing activity at scale. While our study advanced the understanding on how short-form videos support people in reaching their activity sharing goals, future studies could also investigate how people's strategies may change. For example, we may see less separation among narrative stages, with activities shared on TikTok following a more similar style to livestreams. The structure around how other platforms support sharing short-form video might influence the type of content people share. For example, because Instagram and Facebook emphasize followers alongside an algorithmic feed, short-form Reels on these platforms may not be structured to appeal to a curated audience rather than to grab the attention of a feed-watcher. Similarly, activity sharing in domains beyond what we studied may differ in important ways. For example, some domains may emphasize numeric metrics to greater or lesser degrees than the domains we studied. Domains like personal finance management (budgeting, spending tracking) or competitive activities like e-sports (player statistics) may include more numerics, as these are central to how people monitor these activities. Domains such as dancing, physical workouts, music instruments practice, or cooking, often underscore information of different modalities and qualities which are not well-represented through numerics, including visual (e.g., body movement), auditory (e.g., pitch accuracy and rhythmic precision), or gustatory (e.g., description of flavor). Future research that studies short-form video activity-sharing in domains that naturally contains these information may deepen our understanding of how the format helps or challenges people aiming to reach their desired benefits of sharing.

Finally, the nature of videos being filtered through an algorithmically generated feed results in video creators seeing, and being influenced by, the most popular and polished content. Past research highlighted how individuals' content creation on short-form video platforms may be influenced by factors related to popularity [3, 42]. The activity sharing videos which we analyzed, were similarly subjected to the influence of these popularity-relevant factors. We did not observe significant differences between how more- and less-popular videos approached the concept of activity sharing. Both included similar strategies for including information and similar narrative structure, and primarily differed in the level of polish which went into video production and the quality of the activity itself (e.g., the sketch quality, the prettiness of the landscape a person was running in). Nonetheless, we expect that video sharers developed their approach to sharing activity videos in response to what others found engaging on the platform.

4 Results

In this section, we describe the results from our video analysis showing the way individuals who share activities they do through short-form videos incorporate the activity-relevant information. From our analysis, we highlight three phases of activity sharing in short videos - preparing for an activity, during the process of the activity, and post-activity. Within each video sharers employ different strategies to integrate information related to the activities. The three phases align with the order of time of how the activity is done. To note, while it is common to see people showing different phases of their activity, we also observed that many videos included only some of the

activity phases, such as sharing reflections with or without showing the process of them doing the activity in the video.

4.1 Preparing for the Activity

At the beginning of activity videos, people often shared events or thoughts which preceded them conducting the activity, such as the goals that they planned to achieve or strategies that they planned to follow to achieve that goal. Videos often displayed goals before presenting the activity, and kept their goal persistently visible, both to introduce and describe their goals, as well as highlight more affective qualities about these goals such as apprehension or excitement. For example, $running_{61}$ shared their process preparing for and completing a 7 mile run that they have been pushing off. Their video described the goal through a persistent text annotation "*7 mile 'easy' long run / Spoiler alert. I died*"". As they introduced their goal at the beginning of the video, the affective qualities such as their voice and facial expressions signify their struggle and reluctance to running for: "*..we have to run 7 miles, and I put it off, it's now 03:17 pm and I don't want to do it...*"

4.1.1 Presentation of Goal. In our analysis, we found that the type of goals people integrate into videos could be separated by the scope of the goal. Videos often contained video-scale goals which could be completed the scale of a single session, which often leads to tasks and activities that they set out to do in a single video. Broader-scale goals required the video sharer's focus across many different sessions which could end up in multiple videos.

Video-scale goals are goals that are achievable within the scope of a video (e.g., running 5 miles in the morning, a single study session). For example, $sketching_{60}$ presents a sketching session with time lapse video, first flipping through a book containing 200 drawing prompts before settling on one "*prompt #2 / conch shell*" to achieve in that video. $studying_{95}$ similarly invited their audience to "*come complete half of my spring break work (homework) with me.*" The video sharer then holds up a small whiteboard that was written with their todo list that they plan to complete in the video.

Broader-scale goals, on the other hand, often introduce a major goal that the video sharer is working on, but will not complete in the video being shared and often requires multiple sessions to be accomplished (e.g., training for marathon, studying for a major exam, completing a large sketching project). These broader-scale goals could also be abstract in the description, without a clear "end" event (e.g., improve my math skills). For example, $running_{141}$ described having a broader-scale goal at the beginning of their video of "*running every day until my half marathon.*". $studying_{116}$ marked their broader-scale goal of taking the MCAT in the text description of the video "*40 days until MCAT. This is my way of holding myself accountable.*" and over-viewed what they studied in the session, including a mock test, notes, and slides.

We find that videos more often introduced video-scale goals than broader-scale goals. This trend existed across all three activity domains share video-scale goals within (81.18% of running, 94.12% of studying, and 70% of sketching) comparing to sharing broader-scale goals (63.77% of running, 23.53% of studying, and 30% of sketching). We also observed relatively high variance between domains in how frequently participants present goals at both scales (44.93% of running, 17.65% of studying, and 30% of sketching). When videos did include both goals, they frequently described their broader scale goals first, then introduced a video-scale goal. For instance, in $running_{47}$, the person first showed their broader scale goal ("*half marathon training*") through a text annotation over a video showcasing their running gear before going on a run. The runner then added another line of annotation to detail their training aims for the day "*day 55 / 3 miles (push pace) + cool down jog*" as they showed video clips of themselves running. We did observe cases, we videos only introduced a broader-scale goal, such as in $studying_2$, where the described "*study with me for my L&E exam"; L&E is a law licensing exam in the state of California*" without describing a specific goal

Fig. 1. **People often provide information about gear or equipment in lists to describe how they plan to achieve their activity goals.**

for the video.People largely introduced their goals in text, either as an annotation or in the video's text description (78.26% of running videos, 88.24% of studying videos, 90% of sketching videos).

When setting goals, people would try to provide additional information or supporting descriptions on how they plan to achieve these goals. The information would come in two formats - first being the list of gear or equipment people used to help them achieve the goal, which helped demonstrate how the video sharer intended to achieve their goal (Figure 1). For instance, $running_{98}$ showcased an individual preparing to run 16 miles. They first presented their goal, titled "*grwm [go run with me] to run 16 miles*", and then started to introduce the make-up and skin care products they put on prior to running, their hair preparation, the fanny pack they use, and the food (toast and banana) they ate, and concluded with some warm up exercises before showing themselves on the run. At the beginning of $studying_{122}$, the student shows their studying gear of a laptop, can of soda, headphone, sticky notes, and various types of pens, by throwing them onto their bed one by one. Similarly in sketching, many videos displayed their gear before they started sketching, such as $sketching_{319}$ (titled "*Broil Sketch*") showing the pens and eraser they were using, and $sketching_{152}$ (titled "*Finally continuing this work!*") demonstrating the various reference images they used for their character sketch.

Secondly, people would break down the goal into subgoals, which occurred for both video-scale and broader-scale goals. For example, in the running domain, people often shared the distance they intended to run, which was also the most commonly described video-scale goal (87.5% out of all videos with a video-scale goal) ($running_{94}$). For instance, $running_{29}$ documented a runner's daily half marathon training session (broader-scale goal), first describing in the video their video-scale goal ("*13 miles long run*"), then providing detailed plans around their pace before starting to run ("*we're gonna be 6 miles easy and 4 at 7:45, then do a 3 mile cool down, so I'll see you at the end*"). For studying, videos often shared the amount of time they planned to study, or the list of tasks to be studied (e.g., pages of a textbook to read or slides to look over) $studying_{95}$. In another case, $studying_{48}$ stated the day they were studying ("*Tuesday 3/14*"), and then showed a brief clip of their notebook with todo lists written down for the day. For sketching, people often presented the tasks that they set out to do (e.g., sketching, coloring). In addition to breaking down goals into achievable or more detailed plans, we also found people provided the reasons for their goals or other factors

which may influence what they are able to accomplish in the video. For example, the runner in $running_{94}$ explained why they settled on running 15 miles: "*I usually only get about 4 hours of sleep a night, and last night I actually get 9, so it's very, very rare for me. But I'm glad because that it happened at a perfect time - Today, we're gonna go for another long run.*" They then described their plan: "*I'm gonna shoot for 15 miles today.*"

4.2 During the Process of the Activity

When people leverage short-form videos to share the activity, they frequently share the actual process of doing the activity. These were typically clips of the activity edited together by the video sharer, or a sped-up timelapse of the whole recorded process. In this phase, people often describe their progress in video clips, and narrate over their activity with commentary.

4.2.1 Progress Stamps. Video sharers commonly used progress stamps to highlight the passing of time in their video, such as explicitly demonstrating progress or describing the different steps moving towards reaching video's goal. For example, in $sketching_{84}$, the video sharer shared a sequence of short clips of them working on "*drawing their spaceman*" as stated at the beginning of the video. In each clip, they worked on a different sketching task, such as line work on parts of the sketch, erasing redundant lines, switching and sharpening pens, and filling in different shades using pencils. In another case, $studying_{243}$ demonstrated their "*Sunday Study Session*" with a chronologically presented set of video clips. They overdubbed clips of themselves watching a lecture video, going through interactive learning material for the study subject, and ending by checking their to-do list and wrapping up their study session.

When using progress stamps, videos often, though not always, indicated progress relative to a video-scale goal. For videos that demonstrate progress towards a video-scale goal, videos typically highlight the progress made at the point of a particular clip (e.g., the number of miles that a runner has run so far). For instance, $running_{370}$ stated the mile goal at the beginning of the video (with text annotation saying "*Sunday 10 miles run in Central Park*"). They then started to run while holding the phone to record themselves running, demonstrating progress with both verbal description (e.g., "*mile 1 down, the park is so much crowded than it was / mile 2*") and text annotation (e.g., "*Mile 3 / Still in reservoir it was glowwwwing today*"). In another case, $sketching_{311}$ presented the goal of their sketching "*to finish their sketch*" at the beginning of the video, then went on to present the steps they took to finish it one at a time, showing the beginning lining work, further lining with different colors, coloring the character they were sketching, and finally with the font design that accompanying the sketch.

Within progress stamps, progress could be represented either in a numerical or qualitative fashion, as distinguished with the usage of a quantified metric to represent the progress of the activity.

Numerical representations. Many progress stamps were numerical in nature, aiming to quantify the amount of progress made such as distance ran or time spent studying. Within running, 22.86% of all videos leverage numerical representations for progress stamps, using metrics including Distance, Time spent running, Time running in a day, Power, Pace, Heart rate, and Calories burned. For instance, $running_{383}$ shared the number of miles they ran and their pace frequently through video clips, e.g., "2mi 7:38 pace 15:28". Comparingly, fewer (12.86%) studying videos leveraged numerical representations for progress stamps, with time spent studying being the most common numerical information that people incorporated. For example, $studying_{326}$ showed a timelapse video clip of themselves studying at their desk with a 30-minute countdown timer that stressed the amount of time they spent studying. We did not see prevalent usage of numerical information to represent progress in sketching videos (0.72%).

Fig. 2. **Towards demonstrating progress, runners make gestures with their fingers showing the number of miles they have run.**

We saw numerical information presented in a mix of modalities, including with video clips (86.27%), text annotations (82.35%), or audio voiceover (50.98%). We observed one strategy among people sharing running activity where the runner makes gestures with their fingers of the number of miles they have run (Figure 2). For instance, $running_{40}$ shows the video sharer running a 5-mile race, making gestures along with text annotating "Miles X" for each mile. $running_{21}$ similarly used hand gestures and text annotation to mark several of the milestones (only the first, fourth and finishing fifth mile), though not all.

People also demonstrate their progress by including video clips showing numerical information on trackers or smartwatches. In some cases, these were photos of the trackers or screenshot images of their tracking app, while others took video recordings of these devices. In $studying_{212}$, the video sharer incorporated a timer on an iPad in their timelapse video, set to 30-minute pomodoro studying sessions. $sketching_{108}$ worked on a character across multiple sessions, similarly showing clips displaying cumulative work time on their iPad every time they finished a session. Other times, tracking devices also summarized aspects of how the activity went. For example, the runner in $running_{338}$ demonstrated their running progress by showing their smartwatch screen with activity data (BPM, pace, time, distance) in video clips for every two miles they ran.

Qualitative representation. Qualitative representation of progress consists of displaying or describing how the person worked on a specific task or step that represents progress of that activity in the video. Similar to how people introduced the gear they planned to use in preparing for a video, people also highlighted the gear they wore across different parts of the activity, or food intake that they consumed during the activity process to demonstrate the passage of progress. Qualitative representations often used the modality of video and image, as the visual aspect of the activity could support demonstration of progress.

Videos would often highlight when they changed what gear they used to conduct the activity, in order to highlight the passage of time and making progress. For instance, running videos shared clips of consuming energy gels $running_{94}$ or a pack of candy $running_{111}$. $studying_{354}$ similarly showed a bowl of fruit next to their desk, and as they made progress they slowly consumed the fruit in their bowl. $running_{82}$ introduced the clothes they were wearing at the beginning of the video, and included a video clip of them taking off their hoodie after they ran for a while "*I started out with the hoodie and the hoodie definitely did not last long*". Similarly, in sketching, people might switch between gear to better align with different tasks. $sketching_{252}$ showed the individual sketching

switching between doing line work with a marker, coloring with different colors of highlighter, and back to more line work.

Videos additionally highlighted changes in how the activity is occurring, such as the passing of location and surroundings, or the events that happened during the activity. For example, video sharer $running_{45}$ showed their run by the sea, panning to show changes in the scenery in clips. Other runners similarly shared the surroundings that they ran past, such as $running_{115}$ showing a string of clips recording buildings, parks, riversides, and several clips of the street. A studying video ($studying_{305}$), listed out the things that they found impressive in their studying environment as they moved between locations, recording the different corners of the coffee shop. They also provided voice overdub to describe the surrounding: "*I decided to change my scenery this time at Starbucks, it was a 10 out of 10 but very noisy, make sure you got to change your scenery!*"

People also demonstrate progress qualitatively through defining and showing the noteworthy events that happened during the process. For instance, in $running_{40}$, the runner augmented numerical progress (signifying each mile they ran), with highlighting events that happened during the race. For example, at mile 4, they presented several photos of them high-fiving people and added: "*Mile 4: My friends came out to cheer on me and took these fabulous photos!*" Similarly, in $studying_{304}$, the individual presented selfie clips of working on a homework assignment, detailing each step and thoughts they had during the process. In between the time they focused on their study and work, they highlighted what they did during break time: "*Snack break! I was watching a shitty drama show!*"

We also saw people introduce progress through qualitatively displaying sub-activities that they planned to do, particularly in studying and sketching. For instance, in $studying_{14}$ and $studying_{17}$, the individuals show the materials (class notes, slides, assignments) that they used in their study session and the order of them working on each of them. $studying_{165}$ showed a "*morning study session*" the student did before class, gradually going through different materials in consecutive video clips such as a notebook, their lecture slides, finishing an assignment on their laptop, and reviewing the assignment questions while reading the textbook.

For sketching specifically, we observed a dominant amount of videos (93.57% among all sketching videos) incorporated with progress stamps, with the video sharer demonstrating steps that they took towards working on their sketch. For instance, $sketching_{267}$ demonstrated how they drew hair, going over each part of their portrait's face. They started with drawing the outer shape of the hair first (text annotated: "*Big shapes first*"), then used coal pens to draw the shades (text annotated: "*Shade dark areas first*"), then drew the detailed lines of hair (text annotated: "*Define chunks of hair*").

4.2.2 Live Commentary. Apart from describing the activity's progress, videos often included *Live Commentary*, where a video sharer provides details about the activity through a modality like text or audio in addition to video demonstrating they are undertaking the activity. Live Commentary allows the video sharer to include their feelings around how the activity is going and further describe their strategies for working on the activity. Video sharers often used their voice (41.91% out of all videos with live commentary) or text captions (61.03% out of all videos with live commentary) to describe the activity process. For instance, $running_{112}$ started by recording a large hill in front of them: "*what the heck did I get myself into, that's gonna be a beast. What goes up must come down, way better on the way down than on the way up. I don't know if I'll be doing this route for a while but it was a fun nice change.*" They then followed up with selfie videos of them running, describing their feelings about the weather and their condition during the run: "*this run has been a bag of emotions, it's been hard with the hill but also rewarding on the downhill. The scenery is amazing but on the negative, lots of vehicles. I've been hot, I've been cold, I've been everything and everything opposite, but more than*

anything I'm happy that I got this 6 miles in today, especially after yesterday's migraine…" Similarly, as $studying_{183}$ reported on their progress studying in the latter half of their video, the individual started to share the difficulty that they faced: "*Hey guys so I'm actually considering dropping out and… not studying ever again. I'm gonna work on my crochet instead because it brings me joy. That thing (pointing at their studying desk and assignment in progress), it was not f-cking joy.*"

Through live commentary, we saw people reflect on or describe their motivation and strategies while simultaneously presenting the activity. For instance, $running_{309}$ mentioned how running helped them break out of their mindset from being sick: "*I'm not one that does very good resting when sick. I get easily stir crazy. Going on a run and hoping to feel better. The run actually cleared my sinuses and my throat stopped hurting, let's hope it lasts!*". Similarly, $studying_{304}$'s video highlighted their strategy for working through their assignment: "*I started at 3 pm. The assignment was to rebrand a product and come up with a new marketing strategy. I chose [brand]'s [headphone model]. My approach was to market them as tools for neurodivergents who struggle with auditory sensory issues…*" $sketching_{327}$ described the process of practicing sketching an eye through a voice overdub: "*For this week I want to do a semi-abstract eye in hand drawing. All I'm doing to draw the hand is to break it down into shapes and have a reference.*"

Videos often used live commentary in conjunction with progress stamps, with live commentary supplementing demonstration of how an activity was progressing. For instance, $studying_{231}$ shows the sharer's day of studying (titled "*Study with me for my anatomy test tomorrow*"), as well as activities they did in between studying. As Progress Stamps, they showed clips of places where they studied ("*It's gorgeous outside so I'm studying outside today, I have one of the flamingo chairs, (...) it's 12pm right now and I have a mandatory class on zoom at one, so I will check back at 1 pm and let you know how many cards I've gotten done*") and numerically presenting the amount of cards they finished ("*so i did 675 cards in an hour of just anatomy*"). Using Live Commentary, they showed and described their study plan ("*I just did some review of the embryo stuff, and then went in these radiographs and I like highlighted where everything is.*"). In another case, we saw $running_{50}$ described their challenges and struggles as they demonstrated the number of miles they ran during their running training session (titled "*come on a 16 mile long run progression workout with me where I completely blow up at the end*"). They presented selfie recordings of them gesturing the miles they run and describing pace for each, and at mile 11, they started to describe the difficulty they faced: "*mile 11 - 7:53, dying. (...) mile 13 ended up in this parking lot with a cramp, I was dying 8:08, miles 14 and 15 were complete WOMP WOMP (showing the video sharer's slightly painful and twisted facial expression), 9:04 and 9:07 were the paces. I started walking at mile 16 but then I tried to finish strong with a positive attitude. 14:33 was that last mile. 16 miles struggle.*" Videos also used Live Commentaries along with qualitative representation in Progress Stamps to offer a tutorial or for educational purposes to potential audience members. For example, $sketching_{43}$ separated the video of their sketching activity into steps, demonstrating the progress that they made at each step and describing how to correctly shade with a pencil while they worked towards finishing the portrait.

4.3 Post-Activity

We saw that video sharers would often share reflections on the activity after it was complete, both summarizing what they accomplished and how they felt about their progress.

4.3.1 Conclusive Numerical Summarization. Conclusive Numerical Summarization consists of presenting a numerical summary of the activity that was shown in the video. It is typically used in videos which present video-scale goals, and often in videos which include numerical progress stamps (Figure 3). For instance, $running_{356}$, presented a marathon training run "*Half marathon training week 9 day 62*", and wrapped up the video with voice description plus an image of their

Fig. 3. **People presenting a numerical summary of their activity. People included supporting information, such as an image from their running tracking app (*running*$_{356}$), or text annotation summarizing what they did (*studying*$_{202}$).**

running tracking app. They summarized details from their smartwatch along with presenting a screenshot of their tracking app (Apple Fitness) detailing each mile split across their 14-mile run: "*14 miles done, total time two hours and twelve minutes, at a 9:27 per mile pace, slight change count on the fly. After the sixth mile what we did was two easy to kind of cool down, it felt good, it was super hot, about 80 degrees, but heart rate was relatively under control all the time, felt good.*" We also saw in some occasions people might present self-defined metrics that they used to keep track and represent the activity, to help demonstrate accomplishments in domains that are not heavily quantified. For instance, *studying*$_{202}$ presented a video of them "*studying for their MCAT exam almost every single day*". Through using Conclusive Numerical Summarization, they presented the "productivity level" that they used to evaluate how they thought the study session went at the end of the video "*Studied: 3hr 45min / Productivity level: pretty good*". We found that conclusive numerical summarizations were used more commonly in running than studying and sketching, with 89.95% (62 out of 69 videos, with 6 studying and 1 sketching video).

We saw people most often present these summaries through text or audio, either reading out the information (60.87%, 42 out of 69 videos) or adding a numerical annotation to the video (62.32%, 43 out of 69 videos). For instance, *studying*$_{304}$ presented a text caption on screen about the time they had studied at the end of their study session: "*I worked on this project for around 10 hours over the course of 3 days while procrastinating for an additional 7 hours. i definitely over thought it but I'm happy with the results*". We also observed that in 28.89% of summaries, people accompany their summaries with video recordings or photos or screenshots of apps or devices that they used for tracking their activity (Figure 4). For example, In *running*$_{402}$, the individual shared a record-breaking running session, which started with them describing their ambitious goal running 10 miles for the first time. At the end of the video, although they did not reach their goal, they presented that they still broke their record: "*8.5 miles! No it's not 10, but it is 8.5 miles*" alongside a video recording of their smartwatch face reading total distance run and calories burnt. *studying*$_{243}$ similarly concluded their studying session by going through and marking their hand-written todo list, describing what they completed over the session: "*I went through my checklist to kind of see what progress I was making*".

4.3.2 Post-activity Reflection. In addition to presenting numerical summaries that conclude the activities they shared, videos also tended to include reflections on how the activity went and any

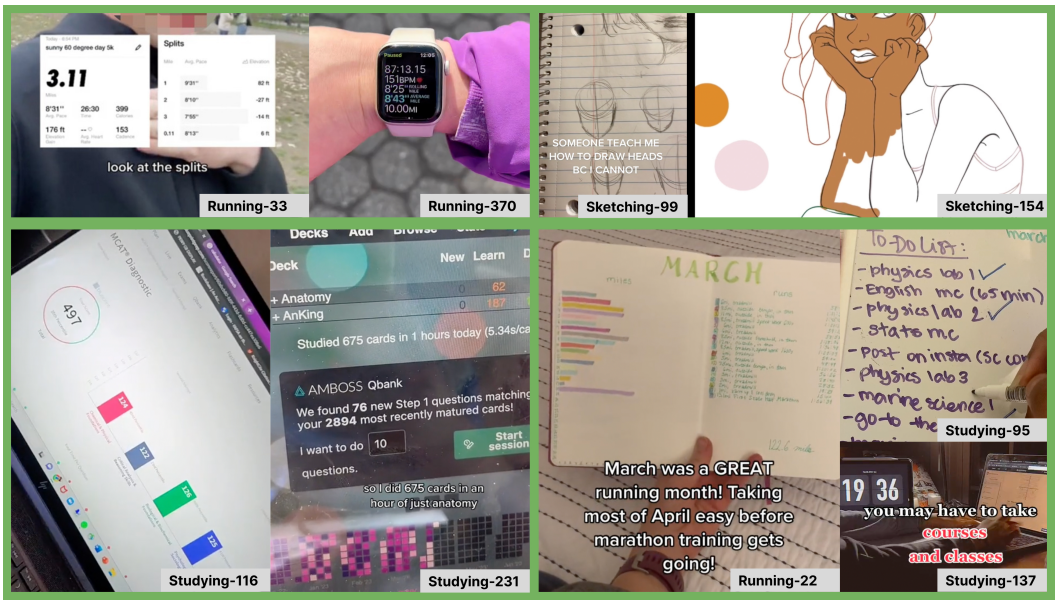

Fig. 4. **People often include numerical information tracked from other apps or devices in the content they share. Running videos included screenshots from tracking apps (*running* – 33) and devices (*running* – 370), and even handwritten journals (*running* – 22). Studying included scores from practice tests (*studying* – 116), time (*studying* – 137), todo lists (*studying* – 95), and flash card summaries (*studying* – 231). Sketches included the sketch itself (*sketching* – 99) or screenshots from an illustration app recording (*sketching* – 154).**

takeaways for future activities. For example, $studying_{202}$, after presenting a long study session, considered how they felt the studying went, assessed their productivity level, and shared plans to keep up with their goals in the future: "*so I just finished the night, it's 7:35pm. I just revised everything and wrote it out in a notebook, and I hope I'm smart, I really don't know. [...] I'm gonna go hang out with friends, eat dinner, and end my MCAT day 2 study.*" In most cases, people described how they did relative to their expectations, such as whether they felt the activity took more or less time or effort or whether they performed better or worse. In $sketching_{321}$, a video that presented progress via a timelapse in a digital sketching app, the video sharer reflected on their progress of growth in the text description: "*Digital pencil shading practice with help from @[redacted]. His Secrets of Shading course is friggin awesome. Still a lot to learn.*" $running_{84}$ presented a running session to retrieve their car after a late night of drinking, reflecting on the experience as "feeling defeated" because of it being more tiring than they had expected: ("*I've made it to my car… I'm not EVER doing that again. I learned my lesson. That was tough.… Learn for me, never, ever, drink and go running the next day.*")

While video sharers similarly reflect on strategies and plans for the activity during an activity session with Live Commentary, they use Post-activity reflections to present feelings or expectations towards how the activity went, such as if they feel positive or negative about the experience. For instance, $running_{18}$ highlighted that they tried to run up a steep hill in the first half of their video, and reflected on their experiences during the latter half: "*well here's my run, took me longer than I should have [...] I shouldn't have done the hill.*"

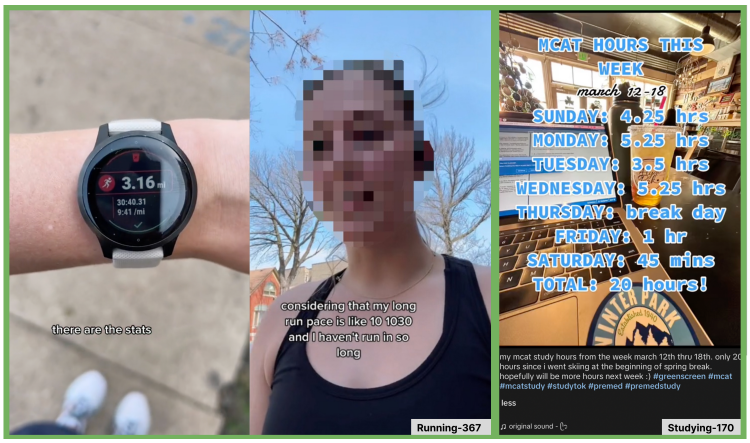

Fig. 5. **People often combined *Post-activity Reflection* with numerical summarization to share deeper reflection.** *running*$_{367}$ **used their watch to summarize statistics about their run, later reflecting on how the run went in a caption.** *studying*$_{170}$ **included reflection on the activity in their caption to accompany the numerical summary in text annotation.**

For people that used Conclusive Numerical Summarization, we saw that people often combined Post-activity Reflection to conclude their shared activity for deeper reflection, with 41.8% of videos which had numerical summarization also including some reflection 5. For instance, *running*$_{367}$ took a video of their watch screen summarizing their running stats, while talking about how the run went relative to their expectation: "*pretty proud of this considering that my long run pace is like 10:30 and I haven't run in so long [for] so many months, I do think it was the weather…*" In some cases, we also saw people include both conclusive numerical summarization and post-activity reflection in their text descriptions. *studying*$_{170}$ provided both numerical summaries and brief reflection in their video's text description: "*my MCAT study hours from the week march 12th thru 18th. only 20 hours since I went skiing at the beginning of spring break. hopefully will be more hours next week :)*".

We found runners often revisit goals they presented at the beginning of the video with Post-activity Reflection (47.86%, 24 out of 56 videos), especially when both videos presented both video- and broader-scale goals (48.39%, 15 out of 31 videos) compared with presenting only video-scale goals (36%, 9 out of 25 videos). Studying and sketching videos tended to revisit their goals less frequently (studying: 12.5%, 4 out of 32 videos, sketching: 7.14%, 1 out of 14 videos), primarily focusing on sharing the activity itself. To illustrate, *running*$_{33}$ presented their goals before they started their run through talking about it in front of the camera ("*...for today's run we have just a simple little baby 5k…*"), and then revisited the goal after they finished the run through narrating over a screenshot of their tracking app's numerical summary ("*..and we are done / what a fun little easy run / let's look at the time (presenting with the running summary) / look at the splits (presenting with summary of splits) / did pretty good I have to say*").

5 Discussion

Our analysis of activity-sharing TikTok videos surfaced that activity-sharing videos were often presented in three phases relative to the timing of the activity: preparation for undertaking the activity, during or in the process of the activity, and post-activity. Within each phases, we further uncover that videos incorporate information, often data, about the activity in different ways in each phase. Videos often emphasize *Presentation of Goal* in preparation, *Progress Stamps* and *Live*

Commentary during or in the process of an activity, and *Conclusive Numerical Summaries* and *Post-activity Reflection* post-activity. People often divide activity-relevant information into smaller chunks for incorporation to align with the condensed, highly expressive nature of short-form videos. For example, people often list summaries of their preparation steps to support *Presentation of goal*, highlight events or numerical progress in *Progress Stamps*. In addition, people often separate goals that were presented in the video into video-scale goals for to align the activity presentation with norms of short-form video, and occasionally describe their broader-scale goals to be achieved beyond the video.

In the following sections, we highlight the values and concerns that short-form videos may bring to sharing activity. We also discuss how these strategies in short-form video could support or limit people when they try to reach their sharing goals. Finally, we further present some recommendations for how apps and platforms could further support activity sharing via short-form video.

5.1 How Strategies Used in Narrative Structure Supports People's Sharing Goals

Table 3 describe how the strategies in narrative structures may impact people reaching each goal for activity sharing. Here, we further discuss how our newly-acquired understanding of these strategies for the narrative structure may impact people in reaching the major sharing goals. While many past work have discussed the goals one may have when sharing activities, especially within previous work on sharing self-tracking data, our discussion specifically follows the goals studied in Epstein et al. [23] which pointed out major social sharing goals for activity sharing in personal informatics.

5.1.1 Receive informational support. Through our analysis, we find that short-form video as an sharing modality has the potential to lead to greater opportunity for disclosing informational support needs. While past work on long-form videos has demonstrated that they can foster connectedness and intimacy [32], our work suggests that the frequency with which people share short-form video can further these benefits.

Previous research suggested that the clarity of request is crucial for the people to effectively receive informational support [37]. Although we did not observe many instances of direct requests for informational support in our dataset, we found that videos contained more details about their activities through step-by-step description, which improves the clarity of describing the activity they did. Therefore, when desiring informational support, the ability for video to clearly describe activity may improve their utility for informational support seeking compared to other approaches to activity sharing. We noticed that activity videos often included call-to-action messages to their audiences (e.g., "comment below to let me know what you think!"), aligning with communication norms around short-form video, which may lead to more opportunity for informational support.

Conversely, as short-form video encourages rich description of activities, it may lead to video sharers burying their informational support needs in favor of other forms of content. This practice can make it harder for audiences to assess what advice to give, as it may be less clear what advice people desire. This concern highlights the challenge that short-form video sharers face in create and editing videos. Specifically, video sharers may want to share activities frequently, or integrate media and information in other forms of sharing (e.g., on different platforms) [4, 39, 53]. Further support that helps synthesize and connect content across modalities within the video creation process may be useful. For instance, with a combination of speech-to-text tools and automatic import of tracked data from a personal tracking device, it could be easier for video sharers to incorporate and customize numerical information they narrate into visual expressive representations in the video.

5.1.2 Seek emotional support and manage impressions. We observed that the expressive nature of video provides activity sharers opportunity to readily disclose their feelings around their activities,

Sharing Goals	Pre-Activity	During Activity	Post-Activity
Receiving informational support	**Presentation of goal** encourages sharing activity goals, which improves clarity when seeking informational support.	**Progress stamps** and **Live commentary** encourage sharing more details about what was done, which enables more specific advice. Crucial points or questions may get buried within longer narratives.	**Conclusive numerical summarization** and **Post-activity reflection** encourage sharing more details about what sort of questions or advice would be helpful. Crucial points or questions may be buried within longer narratives.
Receiving emotional support and **Impression management**	**Presentation of goal** helps convey potential concerns about activities, which can result in emotional support.	**Progress stamps** and **Live commentary** support greater emotional expression of the challenges of undertaking activities, which can help convey support needs. People may be pressured (e.g., by social comparison) to put effort into polishing their visual impression, which may not have been as serious of a concern in other sharing mediums.	**Post-activity reflection** helps display emotional support needs for goal-commitment and opportunities for celebrating accomplishments.
Seeking motivation or accountability from audience	**Presentation of goal** helps with goal-commitment by presenting their goals before the activity begins.	**Progress stamps** demonstrate that people undertook the activity. **Progress stamps** and **Live commentary** encourage providing detailed explanations that help audiences interpret the effort required to do the activity.	**Conclusive numerical summarization** shows the outcome of goal-commitment, helping to hold accountability.
Motivating, informing, or influencing others	**Presentation of goal** helps describe steps or strategies used which their audiences could learn from.	**Progress stamps** describe how the activity is done, and positive feelings associated with doing the activity.	**Post-activity reflection** enable highlighting the positive feelings associated with completing the activities.

Table 3. How strategies people use across each activity phase may support or challenge people achieving their activity sharing goals. Green denotes potential benefits, while Red denotes potential concerns.

which may help people receive reciprocal effects of emotional support [89]. We frequently observed emotional expression during activities (*Live Commentary*) as well as after the activity concluded (*Post-activity Reflection*), and across all domains we examined.

Prior work examining forms of static social media has demonstrated that people are able to receive emotional support through posting retrospectively [22], which aligns with our observation that people use short-form video to share *Post-activity Reflections*. Nevertheless, our analysis highlights that short-form videos have the capacity to additionally support people in displaying emotional

support needs before and during activities. For instance, people convey potential concerns regarding the goals they set with *Presentation of Goal* and explicitly request emotional support from their audience. During the activity, with *Progress Stamps* and *Live Commentary*, runners were also able to move beyond sharing measures of their progress such as pace or miles, highlighting the challenges they faced during their run by recording painful or twisted facial expressions. A studier would similarly record clips midway through their sessions expressing how challenging they found the material or how hard it was to focus. Through representing progress qualitatively and more holistically, people were able to communicate their support needs when they are conducting the activity and demonstrate what is challenging about it in time. To add, greater expressivity poses both challenges and opportunities for impression management, which may impact outcome of support seeking. Past work pointed out that the expressivity of short-form video may lead to norms of self-presentation that benefits social support exchange, but could require additional effort in maintaining consistency in presentation [3]. Additionally, the curatorial power of the algorithm that determines the displayed content may impact whether the short-form videos reach their intended audiences [35]. This may even be more challenging for minority groups using the platform, given the algorithms creating exclusionary structures against them based on their identity performances [82]. Activity sharers who focus on presenting their activity and progress may have also less visibility on the platform compared to those who share similar themes, but with the motivation to monetize [20]. Strategies that people used for sharing across different activity phases may help counter these concerns, as they help people provide consistent presentation on goal-achievement, and achieve their goals in receiving support from sharing the activity. Nevertheless, it is crucial to also consider adjusting the algorithms within platforms to mitigate the impact of these challenges [35].

5.1.3 Seek motivation or accountability from audience. Previous research pointed out that people receive benefits related to motivation and accountability primarily through declaring goals before conducting the activity [66] or describing goal-commitment retrospectively [17, 23]. Through our findings, we observed that modality of short-form video provides opportunity for accountability and motivation throughout the whole activity process, especially during the activity. We saw videos demonstrate their goal commitment by presenting their goals upfront (Pre-activity: *Presentation of Goal*), similar to prior work. But short-form video further enabled sharers to demonstrate that they were accountable by showing that they undertook the activity (During: *Progress Stamps*), and eventually that they accomplished their goals (Post-activity: *Conclusive Numerical Summarization*). This way of presentation that is encouraged in short-form videos, which underscore sharing during the time the activity is conducted, is consequently beneficial in for accountability. For instance, runners demonstrated each mile they finish during their run by using text, hand gestures, or both, studiers showed timelapse videos along with a pomodoro timer during their study, and people who sketcheed demonstrate the cumulative time they worked on a sketch when they sketch. Videos explicitly celebrated their accomplishments after presenting the process of conducting the activity in the video (*Conclusive Numerical Summarization*), which previous literature highlighted as an effective means that contributes to sustaining ones motivation towards goal-setting endeavors [17, 86]. The more affective qualities of video further enabled people to share alternative achievements, even if they did not achieve the goal they set at the beginning of video, such as a record-breaking study session on running the longest distance ever even though they were not able to achieve their original goal. This is particularly noteworthy because when people are unsure whether they will be able to achieve a personal activity goal, they are also often less willing to share the activity with others [66]. Short-form video appears to help move activity sharing away from goal achievement and towards these more affective qualities.

Additionally, prior work has suggested that posting activity with goal-commitment is often considered to be serious and mundane, which can impact people's willingness to use social platforms for accountibility [65, 67]. The richer media of short-form videos may offer more opportunity for creativity and expressiveness, which may result in stronger opportunities for accountability. For instance, along with describing their progress of distance milestones, video sharers highlighted memorable events that happened during each milestones, such as showing the change of scenery, or interactions with friends.

5.1.4 Motivate, inform, or influence others. We observed that people frequently used short-form video to demonstrate how they undertook their activities in addition to share their accomplishments. Following from strategies typical in influencer culture [13, 54], we observed people creating videos which prominently highlighted the positive feelings associated with undertaking or completing activities, such as feeling good after a long run or feeling accomplished after a sketching session with *Post-Activity Reflections*. Videos would often expressly encourage others to try the activity for themselves. People often included specific steps or strategies that they undertook which their audiences could learn from, such as what materials or gear they used or what makes for a good study location, prior to or during the activity (with *Presentation of Goal* and *Progress Stamps*). Overall, these common sharing strategies were aided by the ability for people to expressively share their feelings and actions short-form video.

5.2 Design Recommendations

We suggest opportunities for tools designed for short-form video creation to further encourage aspects of narrative structure, as well for tracking tools to more directly support integration of tracked data into short-form video to support video sharers in creating short-form videos to reach their activity sharing goals.

5.2.1 Encouraging Videos to Follow a Narrative Structure. Although we found that short-form activity videos often followed aspects of a narrative structure, we see a few opportunities for designs to support video creators in more closely following a narrative to help them achieve their activity sharing goals. Given the richness of content being presented during the activity, structuring how people create and curate activity videos may help them achieve sharing goals which are typically achieved less frequently, such as informational support.

Prior social narrative systems around images and video have also proposed the idea of structuring how people create and curate video clips, such as suggesting taking clips which introduce the scene and recording video which reflects on what was done [15, 38]. Similar sort of structuring could be applied to short-form video, tailored specifically to how people tend to present activities. For instance, a tool could guide the sharer to frame points that are crucial to share, such as highlighting a specific challenge or question they encountered during the process, which could lead to more direct informational support. Similarly, a tool could suggest that a video creator outline a goal, whether broad-scale or video-scale, and describe what equipment they plan to use or other strategies they plan to follow to accomplish that goal, which could help the sharer motivate or influence others.

Conversely, tools could also support better creator-viewer interaction. As implied from past work [26], activity sharing in short-form video could benefit from tagging or marking the videos based on the video sharer's goal to make them searchable may benefit engagement with videos. For example, videos could be highlighted based on what phase of the activity process the video relates to, the goals that the video sharer set, and the questions they have. Alternatively, tagging or labeling based on the type of content shared, such as a skill that the sharer is working on or challenging emotions one is going through for the activity, could lower the barrier for potential support provider to access where support was requested or for audience intrigued by the activity

to search for a specific skill or phase to acquire knowledge or find motivation. Past work pointed to the value of disclosing challenging emotions during the activity to receive the desired support [47]. A design could similarly help in receiving such support by letting the sharer highlighting these moments when they share. Furthermore, a design could suggest annotating activity sharing videos using TikTok's existing "call-to-action" features. For example, the "button" stickers for click-to-respond or polls could be incorporated into conclusive numerical summaries as a mechanism for requesting additional informational support. To explicitly indicate focus for the audience, a "visual summary" sticker could be used to pinpoint highlights and points where support is request. In addition, platform-wide design changes may help people connect with others on the platform sharing similar activities, such as features for annotating the goal achievement process through a hashtag-like system or marking the activity phase. For instance, people may use a hashtag sticker in their video to annotate different phase (#Prepare, #In-Progress, #Post-activity) and their intention (#celebrate-achievement, #feedback-required, #cheermeup!) to both highlight and draw connection across videos.

System could also potentially foster community support through surfacing activity sharing videos from different community members undertaking activities in similar phases or facing similar challenges. Past work also suggested supporting interaction between the audience and activity sharers through multi-modal messages incorporating activity-relevant content, such as encouraging creative live stream audience to create their own variation of sketch [53], or supporting non-verbal interaction during live stream group fitness classes [28]. A tool could similarly support activity sharers using short-form videos to encourage audiences share their goals or activity-relevant information, which may provide opportunity for support exchange.

It is also shown that videos which had a clearer narrative tended to incorporate multiple modalities of content, adding voice or text narration explaining goals or summarizing progress to video clips which showed the person actually undertaking the activity. Past work has suggested reflective prompts for writing descriptions to activities shared through images [22, 80], such as highlighting the importance of an activity. Designs could similarly suggest leveraging audio narration or text description to describe how a person feels about an activity, aligning with how people traditionally use this content in short-form videos.

There is some tension between encouraging short-form activity video sharers to follow a narrative structure and being too prescriptive in that structure. People regularly express concern that the activities they share will be too similar to the activities of others, which would diminish how interested their audience is in them [26, 44]. While some amount of narrative structure is useful for helping people create short-form videos which help them achieve their activity-sharing goals, encouraging videos which become formulaic can then undermine these goals. Care therefore needs to be taken to balance encouraging following a narrative structure while also allowing people to share their activity videos, their way.

5.2.2 Supporting Closer Integration of Video Editing with Activity Tracking Tools. In some of the domains we examined, particularly running, we saw frequent use of numerical measures of progress in stamps and conclusive summaries. To measure the numeric progress, video creators often used other tools, primarily digital tools like running trackers and timers but also analog journals. These practices aligned with typical use of personal informatics tools for self-monitoring [25, 46], and we expect served self-reflection goals as well as collecting the data to be shared. Video creators had diverse strategies for incorporating data from these tools into their videos including taking screenshots from apps, recording video of the device screens, and summarizing key numbers in text annotations.

We expect video's current approaches to data incorporation introduce a fair amount of friction, both for the video creator and the audience. If video creators want to incorporate data, they are presented with the task of formatting it to be interpretable to their sharing audience. Some videos manually extracted metrics out of tracking tools, like summarizing study time in a caption, which we found to be the most interpretable when analyzing the videos toward our research goals. But we found that more often, video creators would go the easier route of taking screenshots or video clips of tracking apps or devices. Screens of tracking apps often incorporate diverse and rich data (e.g., multiple metrics, comparison to previous days) to support self-reflection goals. This rich data might be overwhelming to audience members, particularly in the context of a short interaction with a video [72], which would similarly reduce the effectiveness when people presenting the information for informational support seeking purposes. Beyond feeling overwhelming, we often found complex screenshots and videos of tracking devices illegible (e.g., small relative to a video), and would often have to rewatch the video multiple times in order to make sense of the data.

We recognize that as researchers closely analyzing these videos, our experiences may not fully reflect the practices of the audiences of activity sharing, and further work is needed to demonstrate that audiences similarly perceive these concerns. Accounting for the nature of different activity domains, the type of information being presented in the videos may also varies. Further research that expands on sharing in more activity domains is required to understand how a design that help them incorporate activity-relevant information would benefit specific domain. However, we still envision that closer integration could better serve a video sharer in creating videos that help them reach their sharing goals. Video editing tools could provide features that directly select, customize, and embed tracked data or measures collected in the video, and that tracking tools could support data export in ways which enable better integration into short-form videos. Particularly since collected video clips are timestamped, there is opportunity for systems to automatically align tracked data with video clips prior to sharing, such as identify how much time was left on a studying timer at the time a video clip was recorded. Systems for supporting data integration into short-form video could also help people curate and filter among parameters that tracking apps collect to what they want to highlight for their sharing audience. For example, as most running videos emphasized a single metric like distance ran, a tracking app could filter to to that metric and align it with a video clip (e.g., how long a person had ran at the time a clip was recorded). Closer connection between videos and tracking tools could also enable more complex ways of integrating data into short-form videos, like indicating progress toward a goal between successive clips [24] or incorporating other passively-tracked data like where a person ran on a map. There is also an opportunity to leverage the existing norm of using video templates or filters on short-form video platforms. A video editing tool could provide templates to visually connect clips for consistent presentation of goal-achievement, such as featuring similar visual effects that automatically incorporate tracked data for demonstration, while being accompanied by a relevant soundtrack or other visual effects. Moreover, we see opportunities for tools to extract highlights in tracking data which align with parts of a narrative structure to create videos based on the sharer's goal. For example, a tool could support detecting and extracting highlights from the tracking data, such as parts where a runner reached peak speed, or a studier finish a long pomodoro session, that helps condensing long sessions activity tracking into content more suitable for short-form videos.

6 Conclusion

Our findings highlight that activities are shared through short-form videos in three phases related to the timing of the activity: preparing to undertake the activity, during the process of the activity, and post-activity. We further surface how video sharers incorporate activity-relevant information in each phase, including presenting their goal when in the preparation phase, demonstrating making

progress and commenting on them during the process, and providing numerical summaries and reflections post-activity. Furthermore, activity goals are often separated into video-scale goals that suits the presentation in a single video to align with the condensed, expressive nature of short-form video. Our findings suggest that short-form video has the potential to help people achieve typical activity-sharing goals beyond what static content can enable. Further, we envision that designers could provide tools that better support alignment of activity-sharing with the practices of short-form video sharing, such as integration with self-tracking tools and greater support for narrative storytelling.

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