

## The Use of Tiktok Among Millennials During General Election 15 (GE15) Campaign

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Received Date: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 Accepted Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023 Published Date: 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### Abstract

TikTok is a social media platform that offers content for a variety of interests, including education and entertainment. The user might decide to set a time limit for using the app in order to keep a connection to the outside world. Malaysian millennials frequently utilise social media for many purpose such as educational, social, financial and political purposes. If political parties would not embrace social media, which has become embedded in today's young generation, they would be left behind and unable to promote concepts, campaign materials, and manifestos. This study purposely conducted to identify the most frequent purpose of using TikTok among millennials, the most frequent political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15 and the significant relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15. This study applied quantitative online survey as method of data collection. The questionnaire for this study comprises of 13 items on the use of TikTok among millennials as their daily routines and specifically during GE15. According to the results, most of the millennials use TikTok because they can get a certain income, most of the millennials use TikTok to enhance their political knowledge in order to assist their voting decision during GE15 campaign and there is no significant difference in relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15.

**Keywords:** election, Malaysia, millennials, political parties, TikTok, voting behaviour

### 1.0 Introduction

The young empowerment campaign has been unveiled by social media company TikTok [1]. Among children and teenagers today, TikTok is one of the most widely used social networking networks. It's simple to understand why with its concise, interesting movies. However, there are dangers associated with utilising TikTok, just as with any social media platform [2]. Even though teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is difficult, TikTok has created a minefield for principals and instructors to navigate. The fact that young people watch everyone in the community's posts in addition to their friends' videos is one of the key worries. Any user can view this vast collection of uncensored movies, many of which are offensive and demeaning to women [3].

Young people escape to their beds and spend a lot of time following, liking, and commenting on posts on Tik Tok because the videos are never-ending and may keep them entertained for hours [6]. When homework and other academic obligations are not finished, this may lead to stress. Social media comments made about others and their potentially disastrous consequences. Many kids have gone through this or made an internet comment that they afterwards regretted [7].

User-generated content, which refers to a variety of media content types made by end users and made available for public consumption on social networking sites that are synonymous with the internet, is what makes social media so intriguing. As a result, when utilising social media, users not only consume online content but also create original content [8]. On July 16, 2019, Malaysian parliament adopted a legal change that will reduce the voting age from 21 to 18. The first group of 18-year-olds

who were granted voting rights under the new policy did so on March 12, 2022, in the Johor state election. The GE15 is expected to take place in the near future, according to most political commentators GE15. Younger cohorts in Malaysia, regardless of gender and ethnicity, are considered indifferent generations since they don't appear to be engaged in both traditional and alternative political movements. This is reinforced by the finding that educated young people vote substantially less frequently than older generations [9].

Political parties used social media as an alternate battleground during the run-up to the GE15, trying to secure the support of young people. Four million of the 21.1 million voters who were eligible to vote in the election were between the ages of 18 and 21 [10]. For making creating short and simple videos and live-streaming political debates and events, social media was a natural choice. They primarily obtained information from Facebook during GE14 [11]. TikTok has been the preferred media for the previous two to three years due to the current changes in the wind. In Malaysia, there are now 14.4 million active TikTok users after a two-year surge. 4.4 million people use Twitter, but Facebook still has 21 million members, making it the most popular platform. Campaigns and strategies for GE15, particularly those geared at youth, had been impacted by the move toward TikTok, according to reports, and this was part of a bigger shift in the pattern overall [12].

This study purposely conducted to identify the most frequent purpose of using TikTok among millennials, the most frequent political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15 and the significant relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 The usage of social media among millennials in Malaysia

The Millennial generation, which comprises today's young adults, is widely known for constantly using social media, calling them the "always on" generation [13]. This fact has effects on a variety of elements of their lives, including as their social interactions, how they consume news and entertainment, how they learn informally, how they participate in civic life, and even how they manage their career and financial goals [14].

Beyond just being a means of remaining in touch with friends and family, social media has taken on a significant role in many aspects of young people's life. This includes socialising, finding others who share interests, having fun, and learning about current events informally [15]. Teenagers' social and artistic lives include a significant amount of social media use. Social media is used by preteens and teenagers to have fun, form and maintain connections, share and discover hobbies, explore identities, and grow closer to family. Their in-person and offline interactions are expanded upon by it [16].

Millennials have the ability to share their writing, videos, and other works of content creation with one another through social media. This demonstrates how social media may both meet young people's requirements for developing relationships and give them a rare chance to actively participate in the media [17]. Millennials in Malaysia regularly use social media for leisure purposes, such as downloading music and video files and playing online games. They engage in these activities to pass the time and combat stress and loneliness [18].

### 2.2 The effects of TikTok towards millennials' daily routines

TikTok is a social networking site that caters to a wide range of interests, from entertainment to even education [19]. In order to maintain a connection to real world, the user may choose to set a time limit for using the app. People might consider TikTok to be an educational medium. People share knowledge on commonplace pursuits like cooking, creating art and music, and more. Many of the discoveries are novel and useful [20]. Another benefit of TikTok is that users of similar ages can offer advice. People of comparable ages have a tendency to understand one another better and can therefore offer

wise counsel that is accepted seriously. The final positive impact of TikTok is the spread of optimism. Many people on TikTok tend to encourage optimism and knowledge of important problems, such self-love [21].

The time-consuming nature of TikTok is one of its shortcomings. Users may lose track of reality for hours when reading through the "for you page". The propensity towards self-isolation is yet another effect of TikTok [22]. Social media is a more comfortable medium for communication than face-to-face interactions. TikTok also fosters a poisonous environment. Users are frequently terminated for bad behaviour rather than being told that it is incorrect [23].

Like any other social media platform, TikTok can be beneficial in moderation but can also be harmful if users abuse the programme [24]. A positive aspect of TikTok is that it allows people a forum to express themselves and that the younger generation in particular has been able to use it to campaign for significant problems [25].

### **2.3 The growth of social media usage during general election in Malaysia**

In this age of technological innovation, practically anyone may access the Internet thanks to smartphones and other digital gadgets. We move very quickly, and every piece of information we carry is processed very quickly as well. Particularly on social media platforms, where fake news or controversies involving pundits or powerful people can cause havoc and pique public interest. The 14th General Election (GE14) in Malaysia was held on May 9, 2018 [26]. Politicians are using social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok to streamline their messages for the roughly 6 million new voters in GE-15. Politicians may have been compelled to publish longer videos on more conventional media in the past. Short videos thus likely draw younger voters [27].

Particularly in terms of producing quick movies and live-streaming political debates and events, social media was the logical choice. The emergence of blogs under the fifth prime minister, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, was evidence of the utilisation of technology and the harnessing of digital advances. By the conclusion of Najib Razak's presidency, the 1MDB crisis, which was a major factor in Najib's collapse, had taken centre stage on Facebook and Twitter in the election narrative [28]. Political parties should be mindful of the drawbacks and shortcomings of social media use, despite all its advantages. Candidates for office who are engaged and well-liked on social media are more likely to win over voters, especially young people who will be voting for the first time in the GE-15 [29].

TikTok and WhatsApp are turning up to be the main battleground for politicians from all sides of the aisle to sway young voters ahead of election day on November 19. Politicians are utilising TikTok and WhatsApp to target the over 1.4 million 18 to 20-year-olds who will be voting for the first time, in addition to posting on Facebook, Twitter, and even blogs [30]. Political parties would be left behind and unable to promote ideas, campaign materials, and manifestos if they did not embrace social media, which has become ingrained in today's millennials [27].

Candidates who previously did not appear to be adept at using social media are suddenly starting to share videos of their work frequently on Facebook and TikTok as the election day of November 19 draws near [11]. While some leaders actively participate in online discussions and comments with their supporters and adversaries, others use music, videos, and hashtags to increase the visibility of their message among Malaysians [12].

### **2.4 Media Ecology Theory**

The study of media ecology examines how communication medium impact human perception, comprehension, emotion, and value, as well as how our interactions with media

help or hurt our chances of surviving. The term "ecology" refers to the study of environments, including their composition, structure, and effects on people [31].

In this study, the researcher keen to search how social media specifically TikTok contributes major impact towards the millennial's daily routines. In addition, this study also outlined the effects of TikTok usage towards voting behaviour among millennials during GE15. Basically, in this study, researcher highlighted how TikTok may affect the respondents' perception and insight. In fact, this study also highlighted how TikTok facilitates the decision-making process among millennials during GE15.

### 3.0 Methodology

This study applied quantitative online survey as method of data collection. Data was collected through the distribution of the questionnaire. Random sampling was used. Data collection used in this research is distribution of questionnaire using a Google Form link. A specially designed questionnaire was created to obtain significant data. The questionnaire for this study comprises of 13 items on the use of TikTok among millennials as their daily routines and specifically during GE15.

In the social sciences, quantitative approach dominates the research framework. It alludes to a collection of methods, approaches, and presumptions used to investigate numerical patterns in order to examine psychological, social, and economic phenomena. Numerous numerical data are gathered during quantitative research.

The target respondents used in this study are the millennials in Klang Valley. The Western demographic group known as millennials, often referred to as Generation Y or Gen Y, comes after Generation X and comes before Generation Z. The generation is often described as those born between 1981 and 1996, with the early 1980s serving as the starting birth year and the mid-1990s to early 2000s serving as the ending birth year. Hence, the range of age among respondents chose for this study is between 27 to 42 years old [39].

## 4.0 Results

### 4.1 Demographic profile: Gender

Table 1:

*Demographic profile: Gender*

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	39	39
Female	61	61

Based on Table 1, there are 39 (39%) male respondents. Meanwhile, there are 61 (61%) female respondents involved in this study.

### 4.2 Demographic profile: Age

Table 2:

*Demographic profile: Age*

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
27-34 years old	41	41
35-42 years old	59	59

Based on Table 2, there are 41 (41%) respondents from 27 to 34 years old range of age. Meanwhile, there are 59 (59%) respondents involved in this study are 35 to 42 years old.

### 4.3 Demographic profile: Education background

Table 3:

*Demographic profile: Education background*

<b>Education background</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Diploma	26	26
Degree	40	40
Master	23	23
PhD	11	11

According to Table 3, there are four education levels involved in this study. 26 (26%) of the respondents are Diploma holder, 40 (40%) of them are Degree holder and 23 (23%) of them are Master holder. Meanwhile, 11 (11%) of them are PhD holder.

### 4.4 Most frequent purpose of using TikTok among millennials

Table 4:

*Purpose of using TikTok*

<b>Purpose of using TikTok</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I use TikTok because I can get a certain income.	3.43	1.303
I use TikTok because I can make friends with similar interests.	3.11	1.293
I use TikTok because the video content is interesting.	1.80	.880
I use TikTok because the video content is informative.	1.80	.589

Based on Table 1, there are four items to measure the purpose of TikTok among millennials. The purpose of TikTok usage are measured with Likert scales 5 points; scale 1 (Strongly disagree) to scale 5 (Strongly agree). Higher scores indicate most preferred activities among respondents.

Higher mean values for most of the items imply that majority of the millennials use TikTok because they can get a certain income (M=3.43, SD=1.303). Followed by they use TikTok because they can make friends with similar interest (M=3.11, SD=1.293). Next, millennials use TikTok because the video content is interesting (M=1.80, SD=.880) and informative (M=1.80, SD=.589).

### 4.5 Most frequent political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15

Table 5:

*The political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15*

<b>The political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
I use TikTok to enhance my political knowledge in order to assist my voting decision during GE15 campaign.	3.72	1.029
I use TikTok to learn the history of political parties involved in GE15.	2.48	1.240
I use TikTok to have knowledge about the political parties' manifestos during GE15 campaign.	2.33	1.245

I use TikTok to understand the political parties' approaches during GE15 campaign.	2.33	.979
I use TikTok to earn knowledge about the political parties' practices involved in GE15.	1.98	1.020
I use TikTok to communicate well with the political leaders during GE15 campaign.	1.89	1.088

Based on Table 5, there are six items to measure the political related content to be searched on TikTok among millennials during GE15. political related content to be searched on TikTok are measured with Likert scales 5 points; scale 1 (Strongly disagree) to scale 5 (Strongly agree). Higher scores indicate most preferred activities among respondents.

Higher mean values for most of the items imply that majority of the millennials use TikTok to enhance their political knowledge in order to assist their voting decision during GE15 campaign (M=3.72, SD=1.029). Followed by they use TikTok to learn the history of political parties involved in GE15 (M=2.48, SD=1.240). Next, millennials use TikTok to have knowledge about the political parties' manifestos during GE15 campaign (M=2.33, SD=1.245) and TikTok to enhance my political knowledge in order to assist my voting decision during GE15 campaign (M=2.33, SD=.979)

#### 4.6 The significant relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15

Table 6:

*The relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15*

Gender	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P value
Male	13.4474	4.46426	1.950	97	0.054
Female	15.5410	5.59933			

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15 ( $t = 1.950, p > 0.05$ ). The mean value for both gender are (Male, M=13.4474, SD=4.46426 ; Female, M=15.5410, SD=5.59933).

Regardless of the gender among millennials, they have same preferences in terms of TikTok usage during GE15. This situation happens because TikTok is most used social media among millennials nowadays.

## 5.0 Conclusion and Discussion

According to the results, most of the millennials use TikTok because they can get a certain income. TikTok provides a range of ways to make money, including sponsored content and business promotion. A single post by a well-known TikTok creator can bring in anywhere from a few hundred dollars per month to hundreds of thousands of dollars [32]. Teenagers' ability to earn money on TikTok is based on their follower count as well as the number of likes, comments, and views they receive. The gift button that appears when watching a live video on TikTok is a function that is built-in to the app. This enables users to send presents to the TikTok users in the form of stickers and animations. In essence, the presents given can be turned into diamonds, which can be turned into money [33].

On the other side, this study highlighted that most of the millennials used TikTok because they wanted to enhance their political knowledge. This new knowledge may lead them to decide their voting decision. Hence, this valuable information shall be used by politicians who involved with GE-16 in future whereby they should use TikTok as their platform to reach their voters. Most of the politicians nowadays prefer to use new media approach compared to previous politicians where they use traditional

approach such as walkabout at their place, political speech and posters distribution. Social media widely used by those politicians who involved in general election today. However, different social media used will be reached different target audience [42]. The amount of political knowledge learned depends on how individuals consume news and information supplied by the media. It occurs by providing sufficient news on current events and politics, which encourages users to flag those that are political [34]. The source of political learning adopts social media features in the way news providers behave and assesses the widespread usage of social media among students as a significant informational source that will affect political learning [35]. The emergence of social media has brought about a rebirth in sociology addressing politics and the sociology of youths. The invention social media platforms have resulted in a revolutionary advancement in terms of people openly participating for political reasons [36]. Social media platforms also give users the freedom to contribute films, images, and status updates and interesting features that make it possible for them to engage in political discourse. Electronic media is enabling a generation by allowing them to learn about politics from political talk shows, much as social media is enabling the public to engage in politics [37]. With the new form of social media activities that expand and shape political behaviour among young, it is possible to analyse and understand youth political participation thoroughly and comprehensively [38].

Gender may have an impact on how people use social media to exchange information and make decisions. Through advertising and images showing women in a variety of jobs, from childcare to workplace responsibilities, which show women's reliance, the media actively promote gender roles and behavioural tendencies. In contrast, men are depicted as being more autonomous and less prone to show emotion [40]. Males use social media at a rate higher than that of females, while females use it more frequently to form new relationships, for academic purposes, and to follow agendas. This finding demonstrates that whereas women mostly use social networks to find their old friends and stay in contact with the ones they already have, men primarily use them to form new friendships and relationships. The likelihood that females try to conceal their identities and personal information to maintain their privacy in the online environment may help to explain the reasons behind this discovery. According to research, women tend to keep their identities a secret from individuals they don't really know because of societal pressure and the typical social roles that are assigned to them [41]. In this study, there is no significant difference in relationship between gender in terms of TikTok usage among millennials during GE15.

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