



The Influence of TikTok on Thai Gen Zs for Selecting Alternative Accommodation in Thailand

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Abstract

TikTok is an app that distributes short, entertaining videos to users. The platform is particularly popular with Generation Z, who comprise most of its user base. TikTok is popular because its content is short-form videos (Yudhistira & Muflichah, 2022). This paper examines how TikTok influences Thai Gen Z when selecting alternative accommodations in Thailand. This study used a quantitative research design in collecting data from 348 participants to explore the key factors that influence TikTok's role in selecting alternative accommodation. The data gathered was analyzed using the following statistical tools: frequency count and percentage distribution, and Chi-Square Tests. The results revealed that TikTok's usefulness, ease of use, and engaging content were significant factors that drove Gen Z to use the platform when choosing accommodations. Other factors, such as having good internet access and the enjoyment of using TikTok, further increased the platform's appeal. Habit was also an important factor, with many respondents regularly using TikTok for travel planning, making it a routine part of their decision-making process. Moreover, the trust that Gen Z placed in TikTok and their intention to use it frequently for gathering travel-related information strengthened its position as a valuable resource for selecting accommodations. Overall, this study highlights TikTok's growing popularity and effectiveness in assisting Gen Z travelers with their trip planning. It provides useful insights into the factors that make TikTok a preferred tool for finding accommodations and destinations. These findings emphasize the platform's role in shaping how young travelers make decisions about where to stay while traveling in Thailand.

Keywords: *TikTok, Alternative Accommodation, Gen Z*

1. Introduction

In recent years, TikTok has become one of the most popular apps among Thai Gen Z. TikTok, a short-video sharing platform launched in 2016, allows users to create and share 15-60 second videos, often accompanied by music, filters, and other effects (Zhao et al., 2020). The app's engaging and dynamic nature has made it not only a source of entertainment but also a powerful tool for influencing decisions, including where young people choose to stay when traveling. Thailand, known for its affordable travel and rich culture, offers many unique accommodation options such as treehouses, float houses, hostels, homestays, lodges, and river camps. These types of accommodations, commonly referred to as alternative accommodations, differ from traditional hotels by offering more unique, personalized, and often locally immersive experiences (Xie et al., 2022). The popularity of these alternative accommodations has grown, in part, due to the influence of TikTok.

TikTok displays short video clips of alternative accommodations, allowing Gen Z to visually explore the rooms, amenities, and surroundings in a fun and attractive way. This type of content greatly influences the decisions of young travelers (Park & Chen, 2021). For example, a video showing a beautifully designed treehouse with modern décor and a cozy vibe can motivate Gen Z to choose it over other places, even if they haven't been there before.

Many alternative accommodations in Thailand have adapted to the TikTok trend by creating experiences that match Gen Z's values and interests. When young travelers see these places on TikTok, they may feel that staying there will make their trip more special and different from staying in a regular hotel. The visual appeal



of TikTok is particularly strong in Thailand, where many alternative accommodations highlight local culture, nature, and lifestyle, making them unique and exciting choices for young travelers (Johnson, 2020).

Influencers, especially travel bloggers, often share their travel experiences on TikTok, showcasing the alternative accommodations they've stayed in. These influencers can encourage young travelers to book the same places, particularly when they highlight the affordability, style, and location of the accommodations (Akin & Sener, 2023). Additionally, influencers help Gen Z visualize what to expect by sharing their real experiences, which builds trust in the content. TikTok's short videos highlight the atmosphere, services, and unique features of each place, making it easier for Thai Gen Z to choose where to stay. Rather than reading long reviews or using traditional travel websites, young travelers prefer the quick and engaging information TikTok offers. The app also customizes video suggestions based on users' interests, helping them find accommodations that match their preferences. As a result, many young travelers now rely on TikTok as a main tool for discovering the best places to stay.

Studies show that TikTok is now the top source of travel ideas for Thai Gen Zs, with 20% of young travelers using the app for recommendations. This is higher than traditional word-of-mouth advice, which only 17% rely on (HTrends, 2025). This shift shows that Thai Gen Zs prefer digital content, like TikTok videos, rather than asking friends and family when planning their trips. Furthermore, approximately 80% of Thai Gen Z travelers believe their booking experience and stay would be better if accommodations used more technology (The Nation, 2023). This shows how important TikTok is in attracting young travelers. The app suggests videos based on users' interests, helping Thai Gen Z find accommodations that match their needs.

TikTok's ability to share real experiences through short and engaging videos will make the trip planning process easier and faster for young travelers. Without a doubt, TikTok has a strong influence on how Thai Gen Zs choose alternative accommodations. Its focus on real-life experiences and personalized recommendations gives young travelers exactly what they want—authenticity and convenience in trip planning.

Hence, the objective of this study is to explore the influence of TikTok on Thai Gen Z's decision-making process when selecting alternative accommodations, specifically focusing on how the platform's visual and engaging content shapes their preferences and booking choices.

2. Objectives

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3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Materials

TikTok is an app that shares short and entertaining videos, and it is especially popular among Generation Z, who make up most of its users. One main reason for TikTok's success is its focus on short videos, which keep users interested and engaged (Yudhistira & Muflichah, 2022). This paper used the UTAUT2 model to understand the factors that influence tourists to use TikTok when choosing alternative accommodations. The UTAUT model, explained by Ali et al. (2024), helps understand how people use information and communication technology (ICT) by combining insights from eight existing models. It includes key factors such as performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), and facilitating conditions (FC). Later, the UTAUT2 model expanded on this by adding hedonic motivation (HM) and habit (HBT) to better explain technology adoption, including how TikTok influences travel decisions. Performance expectancy (PE) refers to how useful Thai Gen Z travelers find TikTok in making better travel decisions (Venkatesh et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2023), while effort expectancy (EE) relates to how easy it is to use TikTok for trip planning (Ali et al., 2022; Venkatesh et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2023). Curtis et al. (2010, as cited in Ali et al., 2022) described EE as how simple a platform is to use, including ease of use, complexity, and understanding of the technology. Zhou et al. (2023) emphasized that EE influences how much effort tourists believe is needed to use TikTok for travel planning, and together with PE, it shapes how travelers



perceive TikTok as a tool for selecting destinations and accommodations. Social influence (SI) describes how opinions from family, friends, and celebrities impact users' decisions to use TikTok for travel planning (Venkatesh et al., 2012; Zhou et al., 2023). Facilitating conditions (FC) refer to the support and resources available to help travelers use technology for making travel decisions (Venkatesh et al., 2012). According to Venkatesh et al. (2003, cited in Zhou et al., 2022), FC includes the resources users believe they have to help them navigate platforms like TikTok. The UTAUT2 model suggests that when travelers feel well-supported, they are more likely to use TikTok for trip planning. Hedonic motivation (HM) refers to the fun and enjoyment people get from using technology, such as TikTok, to make decisions. Venkatesh et al. (2012, cited in Milon et al., 2021) described HM as the satisfaction people feel when using technology, while Ali et al. (2022) defined it as the pleasure users experience. Research by Amaro et al. (2016, cited in Zhou et al., 2023) found that for digital platforms like social media, enjoyment has a greater impact than ease of use or usefulness, meaning that for young users, TikTok's entertainment value is just as important as its practical benefits when choosing accommodations. Lastly, habit (HBT) refers to automatic behaviors people develop over time, such as repeatedly using a platform for decision-making. Venkatesh et al. (2012, cited in Milon et al., 2021) explained that habit is a learned behavior that leads people to regularly use technology, while Limayem et al. (2007, cited in Ali et al., 2022) described it as the tendency to repeat actions based on past experiences. This means that if young travelers frequently use TikTok for trip planning, they are likely to continue relying on it in the future. The more they use TikTok, the stronger their habit becomes, making it their preferred platform for travel planning.

Thus, we can say that these factors are interconnected. If travelers perceive TikTok as useful (PE) and easy to use (EE), they are more likely to adopt it for trip planning. Additionally, social influences (SI) can encourage them to try or continue using TikTok, while strong facilitating conditions (FC) ensure they have the necessary support to use the platform effectively. Together, these elements explain why TikTok is a popular tool for travel decision-making, particularly among young users. Furthermore, hedonic motivation, price-value, and habit factors work together to influence tourists' decisions to use TikTok for travel planning. The platform attracts users with engaging and entertaining content, making the experience enjoyable. At the same time, it provides valuable travel information, helping users make informed decisions about accommodations and destinations. When users find TikTok both fun and useful, they perceive it as a valuable tool that enhances their travel planning without additional costs. Over time, as travelers repeatedly turn to TikTok for recommendations and inspiration, using the platform becomes a habit. This combination of enjoyment, perceived value, and habitual use makes TikTok a preferred choice among young travelers when selecting accommodations.

3.2 Methods

This paper uses a quantitative method and collects data through a questionnaire. The questionnaire has two parts: demographic questions and questions that measure eight factors—performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, perceived trust, and intention to use—using a Likert scale (Dremicanin et al., 2023).

Research Hypothesis and Model

Primary Hypothesis:

H0: TikTok influences Gen Z in Thailand when selecting alternative accommodations.

Supporting Hypothesis:

H1: The expected performance of TikTok influences Gen Z's choice of alternative accommodations in Thailand.

H2: The ease of using TikTok influences Gen Z's decision to choose alternative accommodations in Thailand.

H3: Social influence influences how Gen Z in Thailand uses TikTok to select alternative accommodations.

H4: The availability of support and resources on TikTok influences Gen Z's accommodation choices in Thailand.



H5: The fun and enjoyment (hedonic motivation) provided by TikTok influences Gen Z's selection of alternative accommodations in Thailand.

H6: Habitual use of TikTok influences how Gen Z in Thailand chooses alternative accommodations.

H7: Trust in TikTok influences Gen Z's decision to select alternative accommodations in Thailand.

H8: The intention to use TikTok influences Gen Z's choice of alternative accommodations in Thailand.

Figure 1 showed that the hypotheses above were based on the author's previous study on how TikTok influenced the choice of alternative accommodations. The study included independent variables from Dremicanin et al. (2023), such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, hedonic motivation, habit, perceived trust, and intention to use. These variables help explore TikTok's impact on travel decisions. This research aims to test the hypotheses to see if the independent variables are connected to the dependent variable.

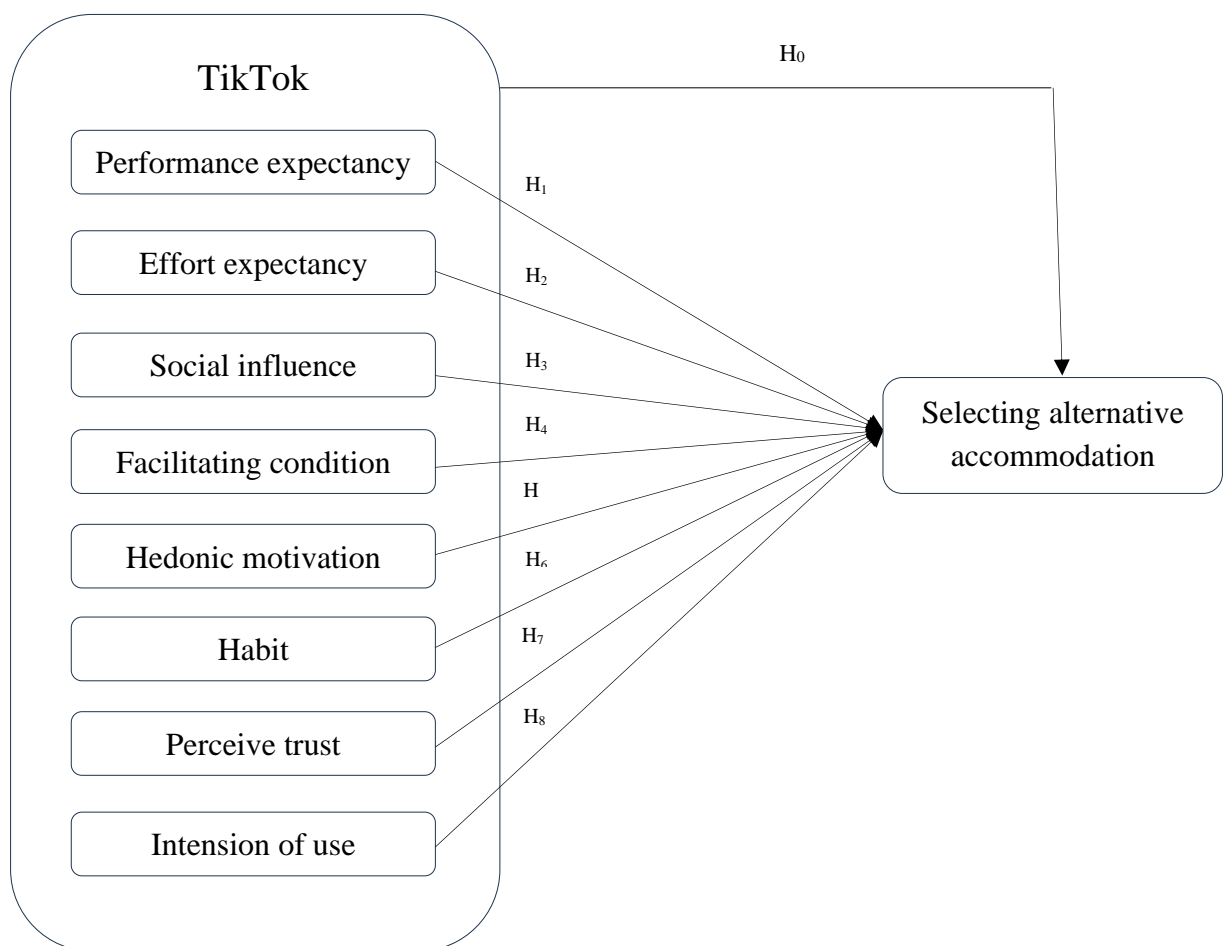


Figure 1 Research Model



4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive analysis

The study surveyed 348 respondents using online sampling to explore how TikTok influences Gen Z's decisions when choosing alternative accommodations in Thailand. Table 1 presented the demographic details of the respondents.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics

Characteristics	N	%
Gender		
- Male	117	33.6
- Female	231	66.4
Education		
- High school	7	2.0
- College	225	73.3
- Bachelor Degree	86	24.7
How long have you known about TikTok?		
- Less than 3 months	14	4.0
- 3 - 6 months	0	0.0
- 6 -12 months	6	1.7
- More than 1 year	328	94.3
How much time do you spend on TikTok each session?		
- Less than 30 minutes	136	39.1
- 30-60 minutes	131	37.6
- More than 1 hour	81	23.3
Do you use TikTok to find alternative accommodation?		
- Yes	237	68.1
- No	111	31.9
Do you like short presentation video?		
- Absolutely not	41	11.8
- No	11	3.2
- May be	138	39.7
- Yes	145	41.7
- Absolutely yes	13	3.7
Have you ever chosen an alternative accommodation after seeing it on TikTok?		
- Yes	198	56.9
- No	139	43.1

Table 1 showed that most respondents are female (66.4%) and were currently studying in college (73.3%). The majority have been using TikTok for more than a year (94.3%), with each session typically lasting less than 30 minutes (39.1%). When selecting alternative accommodations, many used TikTok as a decision-making tool (68.1%). However, most preferred watching video presentations about accommodations (41.7%), while 56.9% chose accommodations through TikTok.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

Table 2 Chi-Square Tests

		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2 sided)
Performance expectancy	Pearson Chi-Square	30.108 ^a	4	.000**
Effort expectancy	Pearson Chi-Square	30.256 ^a	4	.000**
Social influence	Pearson Chi-Square	9.015 ^a	4	.061
Facilitating conditions	Pearson Chi-Square	9.764 ^a	4	.045*
Hedonic motivation	Pearson Chi-Square	29.782 ^a	4	.000**
Habit	Pearson Chi-Square	34.635 ^a	4	.000**
Perceive trust	Pearson Chi-Square	17.427 ^a	4	.002**

[57]



Intension of use	Pearson Chi-Square	30.889 ^a	4	.000**
Number of Valid Cases	384			

Table 2 showed that the ease of using TikTok also impacted their decision. Because TikTok offers short, clear, and engaging content, respondents often use it to search for alternative accommodations. The expected performance of TikTok influences Gen Z in Thailand when choosing alternative accommodations. Respondents believed they could effectively use TikTok to find useful information for their accommodation selection. The ease of using TikTok also plays a role in their decision-making. Since TikTok's content is short, clear, and engaging compared to other platforms, respondents frequently use it to search for alternative accommodations. Social influence, however, did not significantly impact Gen Z's accommodation choices. Since selecting accommodations is a personal preference, the influence of others is less important compared to purchasing other products or services. Facilitating conditions, such as internet access and Wi-Fi speed, affected TikTok's role in accommodation selection. The platform's convenience makes it easier for users to find relevant information. Hedonic motivation also played a part, as Gen Z enjoys using TikTok. They were accustomed to using various platforms to gather information, making TikTok a preferred tool for selecting accommodations. Habit influenced their choices as well. Since many respondents already use TikTok for shopping and finding services, they are more likely to rely on it for booking accommodations. Perceived trust in TikTok impacted accommodation selection. As the platform became more popular, users felt more confident in relying on it for travel-related decisions. Lastly, the intention to use TikTok affected accommodation selection. Gen Z actively integrated TikTok into their daily routines to find information on news, products, and services, making it a key resource for travel planning.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Theoretical implications

The UTAUT and UTAUT2 models offer valuable insights into the factors influencing Gen Z's use of TikTok for travel decisions. Key factors such as the usefulness and ease of use of TikTok, social influence, and facilitating conditions all contribute to its role in trip planning. Although social influence has some effect, personal preferences are more important when choosing accommodations. Additionally, the enjoyment of using TikTok and its value for money further enhances its appeal. Habit plays a significant role, as frequent use of TikTok makes it a regular part of the travel planning process. Overall, these factors highlight why TikTok is a popular and effective platform for young travelers to find accommodations and destinations.

5.2 Practical implications

The study reveals that TikTok significantly influences Gen Z's decision-making when choosing alternative accommodations in Thailand. The ease of use, engaging content, and convenience of TikTok make it a popular platform for finding accommodation information. Most respondents feel they can effectively use TikTok for this purpose, and a majority use it as a decision-making tool. Social influence has little impact, as accommodation choices are more influenced by personal preferences. Factors such as good internet access, hedonic motivation, habit, and trust in the platform further enhance TikTok's role in travel planning. Lastly, Gen Z's intention to use TikTok regularly for gathering information reinforces its importance as a key resource for selecting accommodations.

5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has a few limitations to consider. First, it focused only on Thai Gen Z users, so the results may not apply to other age groups or countries. Second, the data was collected through online surveys, which may limit the variety of responses because it only includes people with internet access. Additionally, the study mainly looked at how TikTok influences accommodation choices, but other platforms and factors could also play a role in decision-making.



For future research, it would be useful to include a wider range of participants, such as users from different age groups or countries. Researchers could also compare TikTok with other social media platforms, like Instagram or YouTube, to see how they influence travel decisions. Finally, exploring how personal preferences like budget or location interact with the factors in this study could provide more insights into the decision-making process.

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