Online Media Usage Behavior and Social Influence Factors Affecting Generation Zs' Self-Disclosure on Tiktok Application

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Abstract

The increase in social network usage around the world had affected the walk of life of people in the current situation. The objectives of this study were to 1) to study Generation Zs' self-disclosure on Tiktok application; 2) to study Generation Z's online behavior; and 3) to study the social influence on Generation Zs' self-disclosure on Tiktok application. A quantitative approach was conducted by using pen-and-pencil questionnaires distributed to 400 Generation Zs who had experienced using Tiktok application. Descriptive and regression methods were used to analyze the data. The results revealed that the level of self-disclosure was high, and social influence was medium. Gender, educational level, and career were not significant to self-disclosure at 0.05. However, the experience of using social media and Tiktok, the length of using Tiktok, time per hour, and problems and obstacles in using Tiktok were significant to self-disclosure. The regression analysis of social influence, which included persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience, affected the self-disclosure by \acute{Y} = 1.223 + .107 (Persuasion) + .148 (Conformity) + .210 (Compliance) + .151 (Obedient) and Z = .249 (Persuasion) + .281 (Conformity) + .346 (Compliance) + .253 (Obedient).

Keywords: Online Behavior/ Social Influence/ Self-discloser/ Generation Z/ Tiktok

Introduction

The Internet and modern communication have been becoming important to people's daily life by helping them access all kinds of life activities such as education, work, communication, entertainment, recreation, and the like. The internet refers to a large computer network that connects people around the world by relying on the telecommunication network as a link, so people can communicate with each other easily (Araphawate, Cheewasaton and Dejasawanong. 2013). Many users use social media in various ways in the age of social media and the rapid spread of information transmission, and some become "Net Idols," referring to a group of famous people measured by the number of followers, likes, viewers, or shares they receive on social media (Thanasirangkul. 2016). The use of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok application, has become a huge influence not only on teenagers but also on adults who have experienced using such applications. The developmental stage starts with the Gen Xs and Ys' parents, friends at school, and social media, which influenced the children to become familiar with social media. The wider online world could turn ordinary people into famous overnight, especially net idols who are mostly teenagers. Due to online communication behavior, there are both positive and negative effects of using social media, and they are easily convinced if teenagers do not have enough skills to cope with the impact properly. Children and young people may also be victims of inappropriate online social behavior, as well as being bullied, or they may bully others. The purpose of this research was to benefit parents, teachers, and individuals by studying the self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application, the online social behavior of Generation Zs on Tiktok application, and the social influence affecting the self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application in order to understand the online social media behavior of the upcoming generation in the Thai labor force and find an approach to handle such behavior effectively.

Research Objectives

- 1. To study Generation Zs' self-disclosure on Tiktok application.
- 2. To study Generation Z's online behavior.
- 3. To study the social influence on Generation Zs' self-disclosure on Tiktok application.

Literature Review

TikTok is a Chinese social networking service and original application. It is a video service available via iOS and Android. In China, it is called "Douyin." Launched in China in September 2016, TikTok has more than 100 million users around the world, with more than a billion videos viewed every day. TikTok was launched on the stock markets in September 2017. On January 23, 2018, TikTok became the #1 downloaded free app in Thailand and other countries, with approximately 80 million downloads in the US and 800 million downloads worldwide (https://www.tiktok.com/about?lang=en).

Online behavior and social influences have affected the behavior of people in each generation, especially Generation Zs, who will soon participate in the labor market and become the major labor force within 10 to 15 years from now on (Wuttaphan, 2018). The perception of this generation might be different from other generations because they are a product of Generation Y—the Generation of WHY. Moreover, social media, both online and onsite, also affects their minds, the way they think, and their expressions, which leads to their behavior and decision-making on what to do and not to do in life. Social influences consist of four dimensions: persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience. Self-disclosure of the individual to social media needs to be filtered among teenagers in an appropriate way. Many teenagers perceive that more self-disclosure to the public leads to a self-reputation that is recognized and being someone. It is consistent with the symptoms of "I want to be popular" in the online world, with the belief that when they become an internet celebrity, they will earn easy money from product advertisements, product or restaurant reviews, in both forms of money, privileges, and recognition without using much monetary investment to make a profit. However, the amount of money they earn depends on the number of people following, liking, and sharing their content, which leads to bargaining power. From the mentioned, it could be categorized into 2 factors, which play a vital role in teenagers' self-disclosure. There is online social behavior (a behavior from the inside) and social influence (an effect from the outside) affecting the self-disclosure of teenagers in many ways. First, self-disclosure means the self-identification process through which an individual presents certain

characteristics to society and to others (Goffman. 1956). People have the right to express themselves by choosing a "real self or hidden self" to present to the public, which hidden self might be a real self in some ways according to many factors such as personality, knowledge, experience, etc. Self-expression entails presenting oneself in order to gain likes in order to become famous; sexual attraction entails creating an image for sexual popularity by showing the body and the intention to imitate the idol in order to become famous; and sexual attraction entails creating an image for sexual popularity by showing the body and the intention to imitate the idol in order to become famous. Social influences are another dimension that affects the self-disclosure of individuals. Kim & Papacharissi (2003) conclude with 10 categorical items of online self-disclosure: name, gender, role-status, occupation, family information, self-ascribed identity, origin, religion, resident information, and physical description. In addition, Banczyk et al. (2008) reveal that self-disclosure involves disclosure of relationship status such as sexual orientation, hometown, body type, ethnicity, religion, smoking/drinking, children, education, occupation, income, schools, and companies (Krishnan and Atkin. 2014). Venkatesh et al. (2003) said that social influences mean the pattern of perception of action that individuals perceive in the world around them and impact their minds, feelings, emotions, and behavior as well as how they make decisions. Social influences consist of four dimensions: persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience (Friedkin and Johnsen. 1999; Thippawan Sutin. 2008). In addition, "online social behavior" means the actions and activities that individuals express to others via both physical and psychological covert or overt behavior. Online media behavior consists of experience, the purpose of using, the operation type, the period of using, using experience, and problems and barriers to use (Glodenson. 1984; Raweewan Kaewwit. 2007; Al-Qeisi and Hegazy. 2020).

Generation Z (born 1995–2010) was born into a world of rapidly evolving technology and the internet. Seemiller and Grace (2016) said that GenZs are loyal, compassionate, thoughtful, open-minded, high entrepreneurial skills, responsible, and determined. Furthermore, generation Zs could use the social network to communicate via texting, iMessage, and online face-to-face. Naphat Wuttaphan (2018) said that "GenZs are profound on social media usage to express what they

think, act, and did, for example, posting pictures, words, hash tags, videos, music, and clips on social media like Youtube, Snapchat, WhatApp, TicTok, WeChat, Instagram, and the like." Generation Z leans towards sharing stories using virtual pinboards (e.g., Pinterest) "According to Tulgan and RainmakerThinking (2013, cited in Wuttaphan, 2018), the major characteristics of generation Z are: (1) social media is their future, (2) engaging in intensive working relationships, (3) technical and critical skills must be trained, (4) having a global mindset and local reality, and (5) infinite diversity.

In the current situation, a majority of users are Generation Z and Gen Y (in this research, focus on Gen Z because they are younger and will soon become the labor force, which means HR needs to understand and take it into consideration). Besides, they reveal self-expression on Tiktok application in both positive and negative ways to get likes and followers via dancing, revealing identity, financial disclosure, creating a viral for more fame, premature pregnancy, showing adultery, showing precarious sexual behavior. Nowadays, these behaviors are often seen more and more and lead to risky and negative effects on the daily lives of teenagers and their families. Some actions appear on comments, criticism, and revenge through comments, using harsh words that affect their mental and emotional state and lead to an unconscious response, causing bullying behavior. Above-mentioned, the researcher is interested in studying the use of online social behavior, social influence, and self-disclosure of Tiktok application in Generation Z. The benefit of this study could be the guidelines for parents and teachers to understand online behavior and its effects in order to plan and implement future policies to handle these problems effectively.

Research Methods

This research on the self-disclosure and social influence affecting the identity of Generation Zs uses quantitative methods by surveying.

Sample and Population

The population used in the study was people aged between 8 and 20 years old (Generation Z) with experience using Tiktok application. The sample was calculated for an infinite population by using the Cochran (1953) formula with

a 0.05 significance level. 400 samples were conducted by convenience sample. The data were collected by questionnaires in Phitsanulok Province, Thailand.

Measurement

Online social behavior. Participants rated their online usage behavior according to 10 items adjusted by Wuthaphan and Suksomboonwonk (2019), Senkaew (2017), and Gleebyeesoon (2018). The reliability was 0.81. A sample statement is, "experience of using social media, TikTok application experience."

Social influences. Participants rated their social influence according to three factors of persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience in 12 items adjusted by Venkatesh *et al.* (2003) and Thippawan Sutin (2008). The reliability was 0.92. "The social media persuade me to posts and comments, and I obey the friend from social media even though I have met before," for example.

Self-disclosure Participants rated their self-disclosure of 16 items adjusted by Goffman (1956), Sprecher, Treger, and Wondra (2012). The reliability was 0.81. A sample question is "In a typical week, I post my opinion on my social media and I post my personal life on social media."

Data collection

The tools used to collect research data were close-ended questionnaires of rating scales and open-ended questionnaire questions. The questionnaire is divided into 4 parts as follows: In Part 1, the demographic characteristics consisted of gender, education level, and occupation. Part 2 of the online social behavior, which is an experience of using social media, Tiktok application experience, the purpose of using Tiktok application, type of use of Tiktok application, length of social media use per day, period of use per week, time of using Tiktok application per hour each day, time of use of social media hour per day, duration of accessing Tiktok application, and problems and obstacles in using Tiktok application in the checklist Part 3, the social influences, which are persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience, in 12 items with a 5 point Likert Scale. And part 4, the self-disclosure, consists of 16 items

of self-disclosure. The questionnaire was analyzed by 3 experts for construct validity using the Consistency Index (Item Objective Congruence: IOC) at 0.6 and distributed to a sample of 30 non-actual samples (try-out). Cronbach Alpha was equal to 0.87.

Data Analysis

The score was analyzed as follows: score of 1.00–1.80 means lowest, 1.81-2.60 means low, 2.61-3.40 means average, 3.41-4.20 means high, and 4.20–5.00 means highest (Srisaard, 2002). The questionnaires were returned 100%. The data was analyzed by descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, percentage, standard deviation) and inferential statistics by t-test, F-test, Anova, correlation, and multiple regression using the statistical software package.

Results

This research aimed to study the social influence affecting self-disclosure on Tiktok application of Generation Z as well as online social media behavior. The results have been divided as follows:

1. Demographic characteristics

The majority of the participants in this study were female: 201 (50.2 percent), 199 male (49.8 percent), 24 (6.1 percent) were in primary school, 151 were in junior high school (37.8 percent), 116 were in high school (29.0 percent), and 31 were Diploma students (7.8 percent). Bachelor's degree: 78 students (19.3 percent). The majority of them, 332 (83.1 percent), are students.

2. Online usage behavior of Tiktok application

A study found that most Generation Zs experienced using social media for more than 5 years (54.3%). 8 months (3%) of experience in using Tiktok application. The purpose of using Tiktok application is for entertainment (64.8%). Using it for entertainment, dancing, or singing is the most popular TikTok application (55.8%). Most of them use both social media and TikTok every day (75.8% and 49.5%, respectively). They spend more than 6 hours on social media (39%) and 1-3 hours on Tiktok each day (46%) in the middle of the night (48%). However, most of them

experienced facing problems and obstacles in using Tiktok application with negative comments (29.5%) as shown in Table 1.

 Table 1
 Summary of the results of online usage behavior on TikTok application

The behavior of using social media TikTok applications	Frequency (n = 400)	Percent
Experience of using social media		
- less than 1 year.	49	12.3
- 1-2 years.	48	12.0
- 3-4 years.	86	21.5
- More than 5 years.	217	54.3
TikTok application experience		
- 1-3 months.	99	24.8
- 4-5 months.	78	19.5
- 6-7 months.	67	16.8
	156	39.0
- More than 8 months. Purpose of use using Tiktok application		
	259	64.8
- For entertainment.	40	10.0
- View general news information.	79	19.8
- To relieve tension	22	5.5
- Want to post their clips to the public.		3.3
Type of use TikTok. Application		
- lip sync, funny.	81	20.3
- Entertainment / dance / singing.	223	55.8
- Show / Cooking.	27	6.8
- Personal blog / makeup / cast game	69	17.3
Length of social media using per day		
- Duration 1-2 days per week.	33	8.3
- Duration 3-4 days per week.	39	9.8
- Duration 5-6 days per week.	25	6.3
- Every day.	303	75.8

The behavior of using social media TikTok applications	Frequency (n = 400)	Percent
Period of using per week		
- Duration 1-2 days per week.	90	22.5
- Duration 3-4 days per week.	82	20.5
- Duration 5-6 days per week.	30	7.5
- Every day.	198	49.5
Social media usage time per day		
- less than 1 hour.	36	9.0
- 1-3 hours.	97	24.3
- 4-6 hours.	111	27.8
- more than 6 hours.	156	39.0
Time of TikTok applications per day		
- less than 1 hour	138	34.5
- 1-3 hours	184	46.0
- 4-6 hours	38	9.5
- more than 6 hours	40	10.0
Duration of accessing Tiktok application		
- Morning	31	7.8
- During the day	67	16.8
- Evening	110	27.5
- In the middle of the night	192	48.0
Problems and obstacles in using the TikTok app		
- Found negative comments	118	29.5
- To believe in false stories and false news	106	26.5
- Few followers	99	24.8
- The clips posted are not liked	77	19.3

3. Social influence and self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application

The results of social influence and self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application revealed that overall social influence is medium (Mean = 3.21, S.D. = 1.022), persuasion is high (Mean = 3.55, S.D. = 1.458), and conformity, compliance, and

obedience are medium (Mean = 3.21, 3.21, and 2.87, and 5.D. = 1.188, 1.027, and 1.045, respectively). However, self-disclosure is at a high level (Mean = 3.56, 5.D. = 0.928) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 The social influence and self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application

Factors	Mean	S.D	Meaning
- Persuasion	3.55	1.458	High
- Conformity	3.21	1.188	Medium
- Compliance	3.21	1.027	Medium
- Obedience	2.87	1.045	Medium
Total	3.21	1.022	Medium
- Self-disclosure	3.56	0.928	High

4. The demographic and self-disclosure tests

The demographics of gender, educational level, and career tests with self-disclosure have been revealed to be different in gender. There is no difference in self-disclosure of Generation Zs with a statistical significance level of 0.05. In addition, the differences in educational level and career also have no difference in the self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok applications, with a statistical significance level of 0.05 as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Summarizes The hypothesis, T-Test and F-Test of the variables

Demographic Factors	T/F test	Sig. (2-Tailed)
- Gender	0.45	0.31
- Educational level	2.88	0.21
- Career	0.77	0.58

5. The online usage behavior and self-disclosure of Generation Z on Tiktok

The study found that the difference in experience of using social media, TikTok application experience, length of social media use per day, time of using Tiktok application per hour, and problems and obstacles in using the Tiktok application led to a difference in self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok application with a statistical significance level of 0.05 as shown in Table 4.

 Table 4 The online usage behavior and self-disclosure of Generation Zs on Tiktok

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Experience of using	Between Groups	92.998	63	1.476	1.396	.034
social media	Within Groups	355.399	336	1.058		
	Total	448.398	399			
TikTok application	Between Groups	122.534	63	1.945	1.386	.037
experience	Within Groups	471.466	336	1.403		
	Total	594.000	399			
Purpose of using the	Between Groups	74.959	63	1.190	1.312	.069
Tik Tok application	Within Groups	304.801	336	.907		
	Total	379.760	399			
Type of use TikTok	Between Groups	69.596	63	1.105	1.251	.110
application	Within Groups	296.764	336	.883		
	Total	366.360	399			
Time of using Tiktok	Between Groups	34.144	23	1.485	1.855	.010
application per hour	Within Groups	300.856	376	.800		
	Total	335.000	399			
Period of using per	Between Groups	122.588	63	1.946	1.289	.083
week	Within Groups	507.172	336	1.509		
	Total	629.760	399			
Time of use of social	Between Groups	66.905	63	1.062	1.082	.325
media hour per day	Within Groups	329.673	336	.981		
	Total	396.578	399			
Length of social media	Between Groups	98.016	63	1.556	1.881	.000
using per day	Within Groups	277.974	336	.827		
	Total	375.990	399			
Duration of accessing	Between Groups	51.580	63	.819	.856	.771
Tiktok application	Within Groups	321.498	336	.957		
	Total	373.078	399			
Problems and	Between Groups	47.635	27	1.764	1.999	.003
obstacles in use Tiktok	Within Groups	328.355	372	.883		
application	Total	375.990	399			

6. The correlation and regression analysis

The correlation analysis of Generation Zs on the Tiktok application between self-disclosure, persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience revealed that the relationship of self-disclosure and compliance is at the highest (R = .790), self-disclosure and conformity (R = .758), and compliance and persuasion (R = .681) at the statistical significant level. 05, respectively, as shown in table 5.

Table 5 The correlation analysis

Factors	Self-	Persuasion	Conformity	Compliance	Obedience
	disclosure				
Self-disclosure	1.00	.623*	.758*	.790*	.657*
Persuasion	.623*	1	.470*	.467*	.318*
Conformity	.758*	.470*	1	.681*	.492*
Compliance	.790*	.467*	.681*	1	.540*
Obedience	.657*	.318*	.492*	.540*	1
Mean	3.56	3.55	3.21	3.21	2.87
S.D	0.928	1.458	1.188	1.027	1.045

^{*}P<.05

The regression analysis of Generation Zs on Tiktok application between self-disclosure, persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience. First, the researcher analyzed the factors of self-disclosure, persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience in order to establish the equation model as Table 6.

Table 6 Tolerance and VIF test

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Persuasion (x1)	.738	1.356
Conformity (X2)	.489	2.045
Compliance (X3)	.460	2.172
Obedience (X4)	.678	1.475

Table 6 shows that the tolerance is between .460 and .738 and the VIF is between 1.356 and 2.172, indicating that there is a relationship between independent variables, which leads to multicollinearity free and acceptable for regressions requiring tolerance greater than .10 and VIF less than 10 (Vanichbuncha. 2007: 84).

Table 7 Model summary of regression

Model	R	R	Adjusted R	Std. Error	Change Statistics			
		Square	Square	of the	F	df1	df2	Sig. F
				Estimate	Change			Change
1	.899 ^a	.808.	.806	.27459	416.383	4	395	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), OBED, PERSU, CONF, COMPL

Table 7 reveals that the independent variables have an influence of 80% and 20% of the others. Table 8 revealed that the independent variables could predict the self-disclosure with a statistical significance level of .05.

Table 8 The Anova testing

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	125.582	4	31.396	416.383	.000ª
	Residual	29.783	395	.075		
	Total	155.366	399			

a. Predictors: (Constant), OBED, PERSU, CONF, COMPL

Table 8 revealed the Anova testing by F-test is 416.383 with a significance at 0.00.

Table 9 The Coefficients

	Unstan	dardized	Standardized		
Model	Coeff	icients	Coefficients	t	sig
	b	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (constant)	1.223	.050		24.244	.000
PERSU (x ₁)	.107	.011	.249	9.726	.000
CONF (X ₂)	.148	.017	.281	8.924	.000
COMPL (x ₃)	.210	.020	.346	10.647	.000
OBED (x ₄)	.151	.016	.253	9.460	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Self-disclosure

b. Dependent Variable: Self-disclosure

From the data in table 9, we found that all variables are significant, which means that all variables could predict the self-disclosure of Generation Zs on the Tiktok application. However, variables of persuasion have regression = .107, which means if the Generation Zs are persuaded 1, the level of self-disclosure will increase. 107. Conformity = .148 means that if Generation Zs are conformed at 1, the level of self-disclosure will increase. 148. Compliance = .210 means that if Generation Zs are compiled at 1, the level of self-disclosure will increase. 210, and obedient = .151, which means that if Generation Zs are obeyed online, the level of self-disclosure will increase. 151. The regression model is as below:

$$\acute{Y} = 1.223 + .107(Persuasion) + .148(Conformity) + .210(Compliance) + .151(Obedient)$$
Or $\acute{Y} = 1.223 + .107(x_1) + .148(X_2) + .210(x_3) + .151(x_4)$
And $Z = .249(Persuasion) + .281(Conformity) + .346(Compliance) + .253(Obedient)$

Discussion

This research aimed to discover the online social behavior and the factors of social influence affecting the self-disclosure of Generation Zs on the Tiktok application. The result revealed that the online using behavior of Generation Zs has used the social media for more than 5 years and more than 8 months on the Tiktok application for entertainment by watching others every day for more than 6 hours a day during the evening through the night, and most of them are female. Poomjan, Hongliam, and Odompet (2015) supported that females use social media more than males, significantly, but this research found that there are no differences in gender when using online social behavior for self-disclosure. In terms of the level of self-closer of Generation Zs on Tiktok, the application is at a high level. Social influence is the medium of (conformity, compliance, and obedience) and a high level of persuasion. However, gender, educational level, and career have no effect on self-disclosure. Besides, more time spent on social media and the Tiktok application, length of use per day and hour have significant self-disclosure supported by Gleebyeesoon, which discovered the behavior of online media to access consumer aesthetic information correlates to aesthetic behavior, which means that the more time spent on social

media, people will be more persuaded. Poomjan, Hongliam and Odompet (2015) found that medical students use social media at a moderate level and their habits of using social media as a whole did not differ statistically significantly at the 0.05 level for study achievement. However, Kaewwit (2007) found the regression equation which predicted the frequency of using the internet per week was gender, education, experience, and purpose of internet usage (for communication and entertainment).

The research also found a strong relationship among persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience, which was supported by Guadagno and Cialdini (2009). Moreover, there is also a strong relationship to self-disclosure as well, because the more Generation Zs are persuaded by social media, the more they are compiled and obeyed to imitate that content, which leads to self-disclosure. Sarawanawong, Fyeted, and Chantrdee (2017) also found that attitude and opinion toward social media have a relationship to using online social media behavior at a.01 level. In addition, Garcia, Sousa-Filho, and Boaventura (2018) support that there is a relationship between social influence and financial performance. In addition, this research regression found that self-disclosure is affected by social influence (persuasion, conformity, compliance, and obedience), which is confirmed by Cheung, Lee, and Chan (2015) that social influence exhibits the strongest effect on self-disclosure in social networking and perceived benefits, but perceived privacy risk has no significant impact on self-disclosure. Moreover, the social learning theory states that people tend to imitate and learn from the group they are surrounded by, and they are influenced by the group of people that they often connect with and contact. It is important for parents and school teachers to observe their children and students both at home and school using social media in positive ways because they might be persuaded and convinced by unknown people online to do something harmful to others, which might include posting or commenting in negative ways, which might affect their life, for instance, mental and psychological health. Generation Zs grew up with technology, and at this age, they might not have much experience handling the real world of the internet, so parents should be more concerned about how to use social media in the appropriate way.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

In this research study, only generation Zs were studied in Phisanulok, Thailand. In order to confirm the result, further research should be conducted in other areas to compare the results in urban and rural areas or nationwide. Moreover, future research might focus on other social media platforms such as Facebook, IG, Weibo, Xaiolongshu, etc. in order to compare and contrast the level of self-disclosure of other generations. Furthermore, qualitative research should be conducted to avoid questionnaire bias (Posdakoff et al., 2003). Lastly, future research should extend to international levels by using culture as a factor that might affect the self-disclosure of teenagers in other countries.

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