

Factors Influencing the Re-Usage Intentions of TikTok amongst Generation Z Users

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Keywords

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Abstract

The evolution of technology and communication has led to the rise in the usage of mobile devices, which provide individuals with access to the internet and various social networking applications. Originating from China in 2016, the TikTok application allows for the creation and sharing of short videos that attract viewers through various filters and background music. The exponential growth and popularity of the application amongst young adults, warrants continued research from various viewpoints to contribute to a deeper understanding of the re-usage of the application. The study examined the relationship between five (5) independent variables and re-usage intentions as the dependent variable, through the mediating role of satisfaction. Quantitative data were collected from 341 students, which was thereafter analysed using SPSS27, with structural equation modelling (SEM) being used to test the stated hypotheses. The results obtained supported eight out of the eleven hypothesis statements. In addition, there was evidence to suggest that satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, social interaction and re-usage intentions. This study contributes to the existing literature on digital and social media marketing and can benefit both social media application developers and marketing practitioners.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The advancement of technology has enabled the worldwide adoption of technologically driven social media applications such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. TikTok, originally created as a lip-synching and comedy application in China, (Wuttaphan, 2022) has performed tremendously well since its launch in September 2016 (Montag *et al.*, 2021). Although the application's market acceptance has been controversial, with it being banned in several countries including Bangladesh and India, TikTok has been able to garner support from over 800 million users worldwide by November 2020 (Montag *et al.*, 2021). The application is accessible on both Android and Apple devices and enables the user to create short 60 second videos which can be shared with other users, downloaded for non-commercial purposes, commented upon, and even 'liked' (Dilon, 2020; Montag *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the application has extended into other niches, which include food, business, fashion, pets, health, and short films (Sharabati *et al.*, 2022) and the addition of features such as filters, quick cuts and stickers thus partially justifying its success (Dilon, 2020).

The TikTok features and characteristics have enabled the application to successfully appeal to younger consumers (Montag *et al.*, 2021) belonging to the Generation Z cohort who were born during an era of rapid technological evolution (Wuttaphan, 2022). Generation Z (individuals born after 1995) account for approximately 32% of the global population (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021) and can be described as digital natives who are highly connected to the world around them and are fast and decisive decision makers (Cilliers, 2017). Their unhesitating decision-making is linked to their desire for instant results and has driven the use of artificial intelligence and complex algorithms by social networking sites in order to provide personalised content to users (Djafarova and Bowes, 2021; Montag *et al.*, 2021). This results in users having an immersive and entertaining experience and has acted as a catalyst for the exponential growth of TikTok, motivating researchers to understand the provocations behind the application's use (Montag *et al.*, 2021; Sharabati *et al.*, 2022).

TikTok remains the most popular application with 3 billion downloads recorded in 2021 (Liang and Yoon, 2022), which indicates the significance of this application and hence the continued research interest by scholars from various disciplines. Research on the adoption and usage of TikTok has investigated its acceptance among different groups of users (Deng *et al.*, 2022), factors affecting its usage (Al-Khasawneh *et al.*, 2022; Sharabati *et al.*, 2022) and the time of day when the application is frequented (Scherr and Wang, 2021). Additionally, the majority of the reviewed TikTok adoption studies have drawn inspiration solely from the Uses and Gratification Theory

(Omar and Dequan, 2020; Shao and Lee, 2020; Sharabati *et al.*, 2022).

Although the past literature sheds light on consumers' use of the application, its relevance and applicability to social media use (Adebiyi and Olayiwola, 2019), its main limitation lies with the choice of breadth over depth and thus making it general in application (Montag *et al.*, 2021). This study deviates from previous literature by viewing TikTok as a new technology and adopts an investigation from the lenses of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM2), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), and the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). The study also responds to calls from other scholars (Dilon, 2020) to further research on popular social media applications (i.e. TikTok) and introduce satisfaction as a variable of interest in TikTok investigations (Abbasi *et al.*, 2023).

1.2. Problem Statement

The rate and volume in which the TikTok application has been downloaded since its inception has attracted the attention of scholars in various academic fields (Al-Khasawneh *et al.*, 2022; Scherr and Wang, 2021). With TikTok having the ability to engage with users better than previous social media applications, marketers believe that its potential should be further explored. Alongside, reach and engagement, TikTok offers small and medium sized businesses support in designing creative marketing communications (Al-Khasawneh *et al.*, 2022). However, apart from these noticeable advantages, more information is required to holistically explain the success of this relatively new social media platform and why users are inclined to spend an immense amount of time on it, with further intentions to become regular users of the application (Scherr and Wang, 2021). Prior desktop inquiry has led the researchers to believe that there is insufficient knowledge regarding how and why young people are continuously drawn to the platform over time. The factors that contribute to this re-usage of the platform over time are still under explored in a South African context and are therefore worth investigating. Additionally, this study deviates from previous TikTok adoption studies by incorporating TAM2, UTAUT and the UGT, which will add a significant theoretical contribution.

1.3. Research objectives

The main objective of the study is to investigate the factors influencing satisfaction and successive re-usage intentions of TikTok amongst Generation Z users. Additionally, the study seeks to test the mediating role of satisfaction between the various independent variables and re-usage intentions. Furthermore, from a theoretical perspective, the study aims to review literature from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM2) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of technology (UTAUT) and the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT).

The forthcoming sections of this paper provide a discussion on the literature surrounding the topic. Thereafter, the conceptual model is depicted to provide a graphical illustration of how the

hypotheses were formulated. The researchers also emphasise the methodology that has been used and provide a detailed report of the data acquired. Finally, the paper culminates with discussions on the contributions, limitations and areas for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptualisations

This section addresses the operational definitions of the main concepts that are used in this study. TikTok refers to a video-sharing social media platform with multiple capabilities (Abbasi *et al.*, 2023), which enables the recording and uploading of 15-60 second long videos developed from a variety of content to an online community (Omar and Dequan, 2020). The authors have adopted Ladkoom and Thanasopon's (2020) definition of re-usage intentions, which describes it as the consumers decision to continue using the product or service they have used before. Generation Z refers to the primary users of the TikTok service who were born between 1995 and 2010 (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). Lastly, the view by Ladkoom and Thanasopon (2020) is adopted that satisfaction is a feeling that occurs when a customer's service experience meets or exceeds their expectations.

2.2 The history of TikTok

TikTok is a multichannel social networking application, which was first launched in China in 2016. Formally known as musically, the application, which was originally a lip-synching and comedy application (Wuttaphan, 2022), has evolved to allow users to make their own music videos through improvisation, music and various visual effects (Liang and Yoon, 2022). The following year, Beijing Byte Dance Technology acquired musically and renamed it TikTok. Within a brief period, TikTok became the most successful social media application globally with growing popularity among young adults aged below 35 years (Montag *et al.*, 2021).

2.3 Generation Z and TikTok

Generation Z users have been identified as the highest users of the TikTok application (Genoveva, 2022) because of the application's features (Mediyan and Purwanegara, 2022). Due to the use of artificial intelligence and complex algorithms which facilitate an addictive behaviour, the application has been able to provide users with access to endless amounts of highly personalised content (Montag *et al.*, 2021) and the opportunity to connect and identify with users that share common interests (Dilon, 2020). Being born in the time of the Internet and social media, Generation Z users are technologically savvy and deemed to be the generation of the true digital natives (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). Although social media has no physical interaction, it has become an easier way to develop one's identity. It is evident that Generation Z are more likely to favour social networking applications as a main source of self-expression, communication, connection and human interaction. Subsequently, these features have resulted in the increased usage of TikTok and other social media applications by Generation Z (Prakash,

Yadav and Rai, 2017).

2.4 TikTok Re-usage intentions

Literature on satisfaction studies indicates that when consumers are satisfied with the products and services chosen, this increases their likelihood to continue using them in future (Ma *et al.*, 2019). For instance, when investigating consumers' re-usage intentions for online payment services in Thailand, it was found that satisfaction determined consumers future re-usage intentions for the service (Ladkoom and Thanasopon, 2020). Similarly, Bao and Zhu (2022) conducted a study on consumers' usage of food delivery applications and found that customers who were satisfied with the application tend to exhibit re-usage intentions in future. Notably, Sharabati *et al.'s* (2022) Jordan-based investigation of factors that influence continued use of TikTok identified that the factors of self-expression, informativeness, a sense of belonging and trendiness significantly and positively influence TikTok users' satisfaction. Moreover, respondents' satisfaction with TikTok usage was found to have a significant and positive effect on the consumers' intentions to continue using the application. However, such investigations that specifically address TikTok re-usage intentions have been scarce, especially in an emerging economy like South Africa.

2.5 Grounding Theories

Many theories have been used in the past to explain various consumer behavioral situations with regards to adoption of technology-based products and services. The current study views the usage of TikTok as an adoption of technology and draws inspiration from the commonly used theories in technology adoption studies such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM2), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of technology (UTAUT) and the Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). These theories highlight the influential factors that facilitate a positive predisposition to satisfaction, which in turn influences the users' re-usage intentions. The study differs from previous studies by incorporating these models, which have the potential to provide richer insights into research. All these models have been considered useful in understanding consumer behaviour within a technology mediated environment.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative research design, which incorporated a deductive and positivist approach to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Data were collected through the administration of an online survey consisting of close-ended questions from students between the ages of 18 and 26 at a research-intensive university in Gauteng. By employing a non-probability convenience sampling method, the researchers were able to obtain a sample of 341 students. The use of university students is not unique to a study of this nature and was deemed appropriate as past research has found the youth to be the heaviest users of the application (Yang and Zilberg, 2020) and this is more so because the demographic falls within

the age group of interest (Francis and Hoefel, 2018).

The data collection instrument consisted of 10 sections, which were used to measure the objectives as set out in the study. A qualifying question was included at the beginning of the questionnaire to determine the suitability of the respondents. Thereafter, Section A included questions relating to the respondent's demographic information. Section B comprised of 3 questions which aimed to determine the respondent's level of familiarity and usage of the TikTok application. Section C to H included questions which sought to measure the effect of the chosen factors (independent variables) on adoption the TikTok application. Section I assessed the respondent's satisfaction, and finally Section J measured the respondent's intentions to reuse the application. The variables used were measured by adapting existing scales. The following section encompasses a discussion on the development of the various hypotheses' statements.

3.1 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

Perceived Ease of Use and Consumer Satisfaction

Davis's (1989) definition of perceived ease of use, that refers to the extent to which an individual believes that the use of a given system is effortless, was adopted. Gefen and Straub (2000) suggest that perceived ease of use exerts an indirect effect on IT adoption through perceived usefulness. This is derived from the fact that perceived ease of use deals with ease of use and ease of learning, thus dealing with the intrinsic aspect of IT usage such as the interface. Gefen and Straub (2000) draw a difference between perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, stating that the extrinsic aspect of IT usage is often the cause for technology adoption and should therefore directly affect IT adoption. Users of technology are more likely to adopt the technology when it is easy to use (Arahita and Hatammimi, 2015). Therefore, the likelihood of perceived ease of use having a positive impact on consumers in the context of TikTok can be established. The present study proposes that:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between perceived ease of use and consumer satisfaction.

Perceived Usefulness and Satisfaction

Previous literature suggests that a social media platform that contains a high perception of usefulness leads users to believe that usefulness and performance share a positive relationship (Arahita and Hatammimi, 2015). A study conducted by Ma *et al.* (2019) investigating TikTok users' loyalty, found that perceived usefulness of the service led to users satisfaction and subsequently their loyalty in continuing to use the application. Additionally, Lanlan *et al.* (2019) also confirmed that perceived usefulness positively influenced the users' intentions of social media internet usage, as users that possessed a higher perceived usefulness also possessed a higher level of consumption with respect to that specific technology. Thus, it is anticipated that:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between perceived usefulness and consumer satisfaction.

Self-Expression and Satisfaction

Self-expression is a representation of an individual's characteristics and young adults use social media platforms such as TikTok to express who they are as individuals (Orehek and Human, 2017). Through self-expression on TikTok, users are enabled to present themselves to the world and connect with other individuals that share common interests. Self-expression on TikTok allows young adults to develop who they are as people and helps with identity formation and in some cases aids in combating insecurities (Montag *et al.*, 2021). Results from Omar and Dequan's (2020) study suggest that self-expression features of TikTok usage allows users to enhance their skills and grow their skill set which enables them to gain recognition in the hopes of becoming famous hence leading to satisfaction. In the same vein, Sharabati *et al.*'s (2022) investigation of TikTok satisfaction found that self-expression had a positive and significant influence on consumers' satisfaction with the usage of the application. Therefore, it is anticipated that:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between self-expression and consumer satisfaction.

Information Sharing and Consumer Satisfaction

Information sharing refers to the way to facilitate communication as well as providing information to share with others. Previous literature such as Smock *et al.* (2011) has touched on the use of features such as statuses in the context of Facebook, addressing how the information sharing aspect of the social network satisfies users and pulls them towards the social networking site, thus being a predictor of technology usage. With TikTok being largely based on status like short videos, this supports the fact that information sharing in the context of our study, is likely to be positively related to consumer satisfaction. The present study therefore proposes the following hypothesis:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between information sharing and consumer satisfaction.

Social Interaction and Satisfaction

Previous literature indicates that social networking platforms are formed based on instant social exchanges between users and these harbor different kinds of connections between individuals such as relationships, friendships, business deals and job opportunities (Felmlee, 2007). There is disagreement among previous studies on the relationship between social interaction and satisfaction. Sharabati *et al.* (2022) found that sociability does not have any impact on satisfaction for individuals using TikTok, whereas Arahita and Hatammimi's (2015) study on consumers re-usage intentions for mobile banking technology found that social interaction positively influenced consumers intentions to re-use the service due to their satisfaction with using the service the first time. Despite the contradictory findings, conclusions are drawn from the view that users are able to fulfil their social needs through social interactions that are encouraged by TikTok in the forms of personal messaging, liking, commenting and sharing content (Omar and Dequan, 2020).

Hence, it is anticipated that:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between social interaction and consumer satisfaction.

Consumer satisfaction and Re-usage intentions

Previous studies (Bao and Zhu, 2022; Ladkoom and Thanasopon, 2020) indicate that when consumers are satisfied with the products and services chosen, they tend to be more inclined to exhibit positive reusage intentions. In their study, Ho *et al.* (2017) observed that determinants of consumer satisfaction such as performance expectancy positively affected the re-usage intentions of virtual communities (VC) supporting cosmetic products. Additionally, the study also revealed that effort expectancy was not a main consideration as respondents in the study all had experience with VC and how it operates. In the context of Tik-Tok, Ho *et al.* (2017) strengthens the theory. Performance efficiency is continuously shown to have a significant impact on consumer satisfaction, ultimately resulting in re-usage intentions. This intention to use TikTok repeatedly may be driven by high perceived usefulness, which on its own is a predictor of consumer satisfaction. Thus, it is anticipated that:

H₆: There is a positive relationship between consumer satisfaction and re-usage intentions.

The mediating role of consumer satisfaction

The conceptual model developed in this study investigates the mediating effect of consumer satisfaction, in the relationships between the various antecedents of consumer satisfaction (perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, self-expression, information sharing, and social interaction) and re-usage intentions. Several previous studies in the marketing, branding and technology adoption have examined consumer satisfaction as a mediating variable (Abd Ghani *et al.*, 2017; Chen *et al.*, 2022; Dewi and Giantari, 2022; Yasir *et al.*, 2021). Given the positive effect that consumer satisfaction has on behaviour and loyalty (Iqbal *et al.*, 2018), the following hypotheses were proposed:

H_{7a}: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use and re-usage intentions.

H_{7b}: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived usefulness and re-usage intentions.

H_{7c}: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between information sharing and re-usage intentions.

H_{7d}: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between self-expression and re-usage intentions.

H_{7e}: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between social interaction and re-usage intentions.

Hypothesised Model

Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesised model for the study, which depicts the hypothesised relationships between determinant factors of technology acceptance and satisfaction and between satisfaction and reusage intentions.

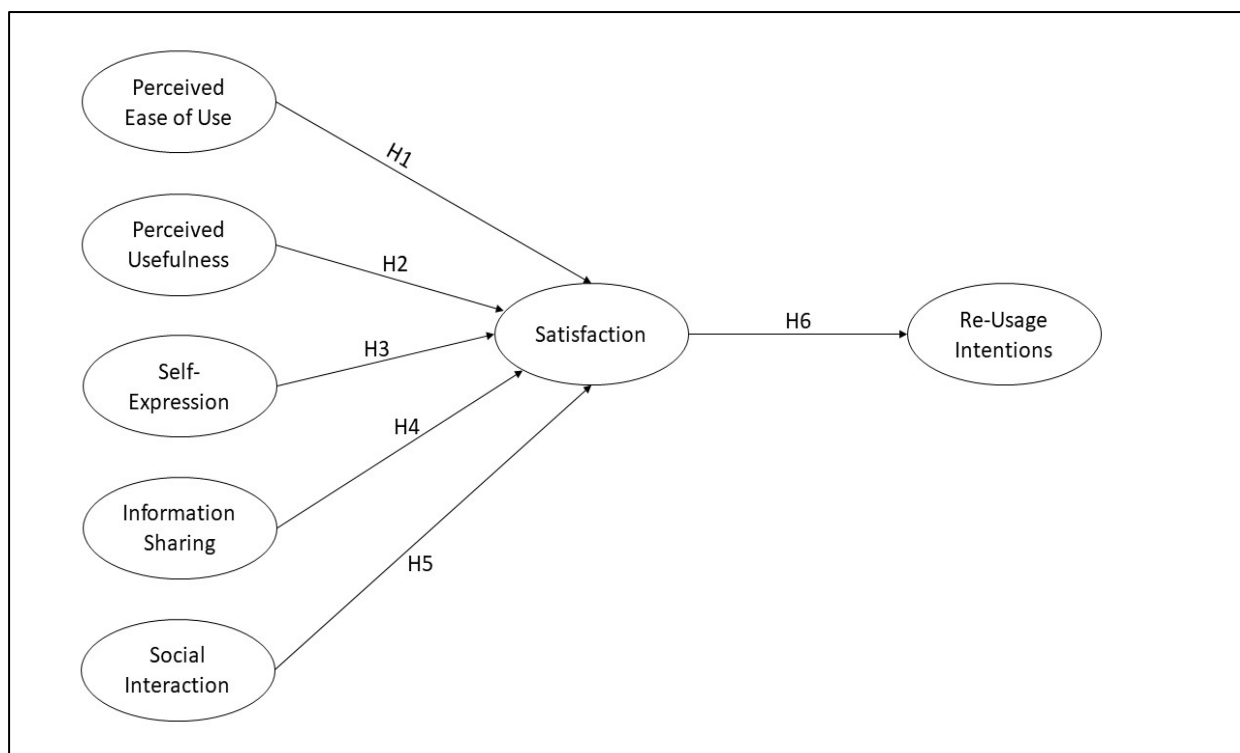


Figure 1: Research Hypothesised Model

Source: Authors' own work (2023)

3.2 Ethics

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand's, School of Business Science's ethics committee. The committee deemed the study to be of low risk and subsequently granted an ethical clearance indicating the protocol number of CBUSE1846.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The demographic profile of respondents, variable statistics of constructs, and measurement instruments will be discussed and analysed in this section. The demographic profile of the 341 respondents was observed and describes the gender, age, ethnicity, year of study, when they created their TikTok account and the average amount of time spent on the app for each respondent. The descriptive statistics results are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 illustrates that 74.2% of the respondents were female while 23.8% were male and a collective 2.1% either identify as gender neutral or preferred not to specify their gender. The majority of respondents fell in the 18-20 years old age category at 55.1% of the respondents, this was followed by 29.3% of the respondents fell in the 21-23 years old age category with the remaining respondents falling in either the 24-26 years old age category or prefer not to say. Most the respondents are of African ethnicity (53.7%), followed by Caucasian (21.4%), Indian (18.2%), and other (5.3%). In total, 1.5% of the respondents preferred not to state their ethnic

origin.

Most respondents in this study are Humanities students (29.6%). This is followed by Commerce, Law and Management students (23.5%), Health Sciences students (20.5%), Science students (17.9%), Engineering and the built environment students (7.3%) and the remaining 1.2% of students preferred not to provide their faculty. First year undergraduate students made up 33.7% of respondents, with 22.9% being registered 2nd year undergraduate students, 15.2% were 3rd year undergraduate students, the collective of Honours students and 4th year undergraduate students accounted for 17.9% and the remaining 5% were PhD candidates or preferring not to disclose their year of study.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

| Demographic variables | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------|------------|
| What is your gender? | Male | 81 | 23,8% |
| | Female | 253 | 74,2% |
| | Gender neutral | 4 | 1,2% |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 | 0,9% |
| What is your age category? | 18-20 years old | 188 | 55,1% |
| | 21-23 years old | 100 | 29,3% |
| | 24-26 years old | 39 | 11,4% |
| | Prefer not to say | 14 | 4,1% |
| What is your ethnicity? | African | 183 | 53,7% |
| | Caucasian | 73 | 21,4% |
| | Indian | 62 | 18,2% |
| | Other | 18 | 5,3% |
| | Prefer not to say | 5 | 1,5% |
| Which faculty do you belong to? | Commerce, Law and Engineering and the BUILT environment | 80 | 23,5% |
| | Health Sciences | 25 | 7,3% |
| | Humanities | 70 | 20,5% |
| | Science | 101 | 29,6% |
| | Prefer not to say | 61 | 17,9% |
| | Prefer not to say | 4 | 1,2% |
| What is your year of study? | 1st year undergraduate student | 115 | 33,7% |
| | 2nd year undergraduate student | 78 | 22,9% |
| | 3rd year undergraduate student | 52 | 15,2% |
| | 4th year undergraduate student | 27 | 7,9% |
| What is your year of study? | Honours student | 34 | 10,0% |
| | Masters student | 18 | 5,3% |
| | PhD student | 6 | 1,8% |
| | Prefer not to say | 11 | 3,2% |
| | Less than 1 year ago | 140 | 41,1% |
| | More than 1 year but less than 2 years ago | | |
| | More than 2 years but less than 3 years ago | | |
| | More than 3 years but less than 4 years ago | | |
| | More than 4 years ago | 3 | 0,9% |
| | Prefer not to say | 14 | 4,1% |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------|----|-------|
| On average, approximately how many minutes per day do you spend on TikTok? | Less than 10 minutes | 52 | 15,2% |
| | 10-30 minutes | 57 | 16,7% |
| | 31-60 minutes | 89 | 26,1% |
| | 61-90 minutes | 56 | 16,4% |
| | More than 90 minutes | 84 | 24,6% |
| | Prefer not to say | 3 | 0,9% |

The majority of the respondents created their TikTok account less than 2 years ago at the time of the study with 77.2%. This was followed by 15.8% of the respondents creating their TikTok more than 2 years ago but less than 3 years ago. The remaining 7.1% of respondents either created their TikTok account more than 3 years ago or preferred not to specify.

On average most of the respondents spent 31-60 minutes on TikTok per day (26.1%). This was followed closely by 24.6% of respondents who spent more than 90 minutes on TikTok per day. This was followed by 16.7% of respondents who spend 10-30 minutes of TikTok, 16.4% who spent 61-90 minutes on TikTok, 15.2% who spent less than 10 minutes on TikTok per day and 0.9% of respondents who preferred not to say how much time they spend on TikTok per day.

This section illustrates the reliability and validity analyses of the seven constructs in this study.

4.2 Factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were performed to confirm the proposed measurement model structure of factors, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Information Sharing, Self-Expression, Social Interaction, Satisfaction, and Re-Usage Intentions. The result of the overall measurement model is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Model fit summary for full Measurement Model

| Factor | Parameters | CMIN/df | SRMR | CFI | RMSEA |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---------|--------|------|-------|
| Measurement model | All significant ($p < 0.01$) | 2.02 | 0.0551 | 0.94 | 0.055 |

According to Hair Jr *et al.* (2014), the following guidelines indicate appropriate model fit for CFA analyses, a CMIN/df ratio less than 5, a CFI value greater than 0.92, a SRMR value of 0.08 or less, and a RMSEA value of 0.07 or less. A combination of three model fit indices reflecting values within these guidelines is deemed sufficient to indicate appropriate model fit. Reviewing the model fit indices, the full measurement model indicates a good model fit. In addition to an appropriate model fit, significant parameters are necessary to indicate construct validity. All factors included within the measurement model demonstrate construct validity. In addition to construct validity, convergent and discriminant validity of the scales is required.

In order to assess convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) values were analysed (Larwin and Harvey, 2012; Steinkühler, 2010). The AVE is defined as the total value of variance in the observed variables that are represented by the latent construct (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017). An

AVE value of 0.4 can be accepted provided the CR is higher than 0.6 (all CR values in this study are greater than 0.7) (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Lam, 2012). The lowest value in this study is for the Perceived Usefulness construct, which equates to 0.469, and the highest value is for the Satisfaction construct which is equal to 0.741. This range of values is deemed acceptable.

Discriminant validity is a type of construct validity that evaluates the extent to which a measure does not correlate with other constructs, which it is supposed to be distinct from (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017). To assess discriminant validity, the positive square root of AVE is compared to the inter-construct correlations and should be greater than the highest correlation with any of the other constructs. As seen in Table 3, discriminant validity is established for all constructs.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity: Inter-Construct Correlation vs Square root AVE

| Correlations | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | SQR T (AVE) | Perceived Ease of Use | Perceived Usefulness | Self-Expression | Information Sharing | Social Interaction | Satisfaction | Re- Usage Intentions |
| Perceived Ease of Use | 0.729 | 1 | ,369** | ,280** | ,209** | ,288** | ,461** | ,416** |
| Perceived Usefulness | 0.685 | | 1 | ,432** | ,412** | ,450** | ,618** | ,547** |
| Self- Expression | 0.805 | | | 1 | ,676** | ,536** | ,486** | ,510** |
| Information Sharing | 0.833 | | | | 1 | ,422** | ,385** | ,405** |
| Social Interaction | 0.815 | | | | | 1 | ,478** | ,439** |
| Satisfaction | 0.861 | | | | | | 1 | ,727** |
| Re-Usage Intentions | 0.814 | | | | | | | 1 |

A variety of methods are used to calculate internal reliability, but Cronbach’s alpha is most frequently used amongst business researchers (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). An acceptable Cronbach’s alpha value should be equal to or exceed 0.7 (Bonett and Wright, 2015). A Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.6 is permissible, but questionable. Any value below 0.5 is not acceptable and is therefore unreliable (Trizano-Hermosilla and Alvarado, 2016). Table 4 indicates that all Cronbach alpha values are greater than 0.7, confirming internal consistency or reliability. An additional method used to determine internal reliability is composite reliability (CR). CR is defined as the total amount of true score variation in relation to the total score variance (Malhotra *et al.*, 2017). As can be seen in Table 4, all values are in excess of the recommended cut-off of 0.7, indicating that the scales are reliable.

4.3 Hypothesis testing through SEM

Mediation effects are studied to assess the processes that trigger the relationship between the dependent and independent constructs (MacKinnon *et al.*, 2000; Pallant, 2020). In order to

demonstrate mediation, four separate models are required. For a mediation model, it is required to demonstrate whether adding the mediating construct results in the relationship between the independent constructs and the dependent construct becoming insignificant. Thus, the following relationships between a) the independent constructs and mediating construct needs to be significant, b) the mediating construct and dependent construct needs to be significant, and c) the independent constructs and the dependent construct needs to be significant (Figure 1). The final model includes the independent, mediating, and dependent constructs, and to demonstrate full mediation the relationship between the independent constructs and dependent construct should now be insignificant.

Table 4: Measurement Accuracy Results

| Research Construct | | Descriptive Statistics | | Cronbach Test | | C.R. | AVE | Standardised Factor Loading |
|-----------------------|------|------------------------|-------|---------------|----------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|
| | | Mean | SD | Item-total | α | | | |
| Perceived Ease of Use | PEU1 | 4,42 | ,890 | ,684 | ,876 | 0.803 | 0.532 | 0.769 |
| | PEU2 | 4,60 | ,744 | ,651 | | | | 0.807 |
| | PEU3 | 3,81 | 1,146 | ,620 | | | | 0.882 |
| | PEU4 | 4,13 | 1,034 | ,754 | | | | 0.857 |
| | PEU5 | 4,21 | ,978 | ,683 | | | | 0.84 |
| | PEU6 | 4,31 | ,954 | ,740 | | | | 0.378 |
| Perceived Usefulness | PU1 | 2,77 | 1,139 | ,356 | ,791 | 0.871 | 0.469 | 0.747 |
| | PU2 | 3,91 | 1,181 | ,634 | | | | 0.872 |
| | PU3 | 3,96 | 1,170 | ,735 | | | | 0.543 |
| | PU4 | 3,45 | 1,256 | ,508 | | | | 0.773 |
| | PU5 | 3,80 | 1,130 | ,639 | | | | 0.601 |
| Self-Expression | SE1 | 2,66 | 1,298 | ,759 | ,890 | 0.902 | 0.648 | 0.735 |
| | SE2 | 2,78 | 1,390 | ,720 | | | | 0.78 |
| | SE3 | 2,15 | 1,267 | ,791 | | | | 0.684 |
| | SE4 | 2,51 | 1,343 | ,718 | | | | 0.717 |
| | SE5 | 1,92 | 1,198 | ,675 | | | | 0.841 |
| Information Sharing | IS1 | 2,34 | 1,332 | ,789 | ,924 | 0.919 | 0.694 | 0.835 |
| | IS2 | 2,30 | 1,309 | ,823 | | | | 0.803 |
| | IS3 | 2,63 | 1,430 | ,838 | | | | 0.852 |
| | IS4 | 2,23 | 1,296 | ,778 | | | | 0.763 |
| | IS5 | 2,60 | 1,399 | ,785 | | | | 0.764 |
| Social Interaction | SOC1 | 3,03 | 1,355 | ,796 | ,919 | 0.908 | 0.664 | 0.777 |
| | SOC2 | 3,13 | 1,332 | ,828 | | | | 0.817 |
| | SOC3 | 3,43 | 1,281 | ,794 | | | | 0.872 |
| | SOC4 | 3,19 | 1,334 | ,809 | | | | 0.851 |
| | SOC5 | 3,23 | 1,337 | ,726 | | | | 0.755 |
| Satisfaction | SAT1 | 4,00 | 1,111 | ,866 | ,938 | 0.935 | 0.741 | 0.878 |
| | SAT2 | 3,99 | 1,071 | ,835 | | | | 0.835 |
| | SAT3 | 3,68 | 1,237 | ,783 | | | | 0.841 |
| | SAT4 | 3,73 | 1,224 | ,863 | | | | 0.89 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| | SAT5 | 3,84 | 1,197 | ,827 | | | | 0.848 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | RUI1 | 3,59 | 1,472 | ,840 | ,884 | 0.886 | 0.663 | 0.815 |
| | RUI2 | 3,31 | 1,396 | ,703 | | | | 0.789 |
| | RUI3 | 2,98 | 1,475 | ,745 | | | | 0.737 |
| | RUI4 | 3,28 | 1,369 | ,707 | | | | 0.903 |

The first set of relationships tested were the relationships between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Information Sharing, Self-Expression, Social Interaction, with mediating construct, Satisfaction. When tested, the pathways between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Self-Expression, and Social Interaction, with Satisfaction was significant ($B = 0.395$, $p < 0.01$, $B = 1.147$, $p < 0.01$, $B = 0.152$, $p < 0.01$ and $B = 0.158$, $p < 0.01$, respectively). However, the pathways between Information Sharing on Satisfaction were insignificant ($B = 0.003$, $p = 0.941$).

Table 5: Regression weights for model a

| Regression weights | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|--------------------|------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Satisfaction | <--- | Perceived Ease of use | 0.395 | 0.07 | 5.681 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Perceived Usefulness | 1.147 | 0.206 | 5.581 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Information Sharing | 0.003 | 0.039 | 0.074 | 0.941 |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Self-Expression | 0.152 | 0.037 | 4.149 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Social Interaction | 0.158 | 0.04 | 3.972 | *** |

The results for the model containing the significant predictors indicated an adequate model fit as seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Model fit summary for independent constructs on Satisfaction construct

| Fit index | Value | Interpretation |
|-----------|--------|----------------|
| CMIN/DF | 2.912 | Good |
| SRMR | 0.2439 | Poor |
| CFI | 0.896 | Adequate |
| RMSEA | 0,075 | Good |

The next set of relationships tested were the relationships between Satisfaction, with dependent construct, Re-Usage Intentions. When tested, the pathway between Satisfaction, and Re-Usage Intentions was found to be significant ($B = 1.123$, $p < 0.01$). This indicated that Satisfaction is a significant predictor of Re-Usage intentions.

Table 7: Regression weights for model b

| Regression weights | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|---------------------|------|--------------|----------|-------|--------|-----|
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Satisfaction | 1.123 | 0.067 | 16.679 | *** |

The results for the model containing the significant predictors indicated a good model fit as seen in Table 8.

Table 8: Model fit summary for satisfaction on re-usage intentions

| Fit index | Value | Interpretation |
|-----------|--------|----------------|
| CMIN/DF | 5.631 | Adequate |
| SRMR | 0.0555 | Good |
| CFI | 0.958 | Good |
| RMSEA | 0.117 | Poor |

Next, the relationships between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Information Sharing, Self-Expression, Social Interaction, with the dependent construct, Re-Usage Intentions was tested. When tested, the pathways between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Self-Expression, Social Interaction, with Re-Usage Intentions were found to be significant ($B = 0.496$, $p < 0.001$, $B = 1.243$, $p < 0.001$, $B = 0.292$, $p < 0.001$ and $B = 0.149$, $p = 0.01$, respectively). However, the pathway between Information Sharing with Re-Usage Intentions were insignificant ($B = 0.054$, $p = 0.351$).

Table 9: Regression weights for model c

| Regression weights | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|---------------------|------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Perceived Ease of Use | 0.496 | 0.101 | 4.906 | *** |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Perceived Usefulness | 1.243 | 0.236 | 5.264 | *** |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Information Sharing | 0.054 | 0.058 | 0.932 | 0.351 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Self-Expression | 0.292 | 0.055 | 5.283 | *** |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Social Interaction | 0.149 | 0.058 | 2.559 | 0.01 |

This indicated that Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Self-Expression, Social Interaction were found to be statistically significant predictors of Re-Usage Intentions. The results for the model containing the significant predictors indicated a good model fit as seen in Table 10.

Table 10: Model fit summary for independent constructs on Re-Usage Intentions

| Fit index | Value | Interpretation |
|-----------|--------|----------------|
| CMIN/DF | 3.081 | Good |
| SRMR | 0.2447 | Poor |
| CFI | 0.882 | Adequate |
| RMSEA | 0.078 | Good |

When the full mediation model was tested, the pathways between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Information Sharing, and Social Interaction on Re-Usage Intentions were found to be statistically insignificant ($p = 0.09$, $p = 0.116$, $p = 0.261$ and $p = 0.738$, respectively). The pathways between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, Self-Expression, and Social Interaction on Satisfaction were found to be statistically significant ($p = 0 < 0.001$, $p < 0.001$, $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.001$, respectively). The pathway between Satisfaction and Re-Usage Intentions were found to still be significant ($p < 0.001$). These results demonstrate that Satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, and Social Interaction, on Re-Usage Intentions. The construct Information Sharing did not have any significant relationships with the mediator, Satisfaction, nor Re-Usage Intentions and the construct Self-Expression was significantly related with both the mediator, Satisfaction and Re-Usage Intentions.

Table 11: Regression weights for full mediation model

| Regression weights | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|---------------------|------|-----------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Satisfaction | <--- | Perceived Ease of Use | 0.396 | 0.07 | 5.697 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Perceived Usefulness | 1.127 | 0.2 | 5.623 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Information Sharing | 0.002 | 0.039 | 0.055 | 0.956 |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Self-Expression | 0.152 | 0.037 | 4.128 | *** |
| Satisfaction | <--- | Social Interaction | 0.158 | 0.04 | 3.973 | *** |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Perceived Ease of Use | 0.156 | 0.092 | 1.697 | 0.09 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Perceived Usefulness | 0.278 | 0.177 | 1.572 | 0.116 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Information Sharing | 0.055 | 0.049 | 1.125 | 0.261 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Self-Expression | 0.156 | 0.048 | 3.228 | 0.001 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Social Interaction | 0.017 | 0.051 | 0.335 | 0.738 |
| Re-Usage Intentions | <--- | Satisfaction | 0.87 | 0.099 | 8.794 | *** |

Table 12: Hypotheses testing results.

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Result |
|------------|---|--------------------|
| H1 | Perceived ease of use and Satisfaction | Supported |
| H2 | Perceived Usefulness and Satisfaction | Supported |
| H3 | Self-expression and Satisfaction | Supported |
| H4 | Information Sharing and Satisfaction | Unsupported |
| H5 | Social Interaction and Satisfaction | Supported |
| H6 | Satisfaction and Re-usage Intentions | Supported |
| H7a | Satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived ease of use and re-usage intentions. | Supported |
| H7b | Satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived usefulness and re-usage intentions. | Supported |
| H7c | Satisfaction mediates the relationship between information sharing and re-usage intentions. | Unsupported |
| H7d | Satisfaction mediates the relationship between self-expression and re-usage intentions. | Unsupported |
| H7e | Satisfaction mediates the relationship between social interaction and re-usage intentions. | Supported |

4.4 Results Discussion

Precisely, four (4) out of the five (5) predictor variables portrayed a positive significant influence on the consumer satisfaction of Generation Z TikTok users. The variables that were found to have a significant and positive effect on satisfaction were perceived ease of use; perceived usefulness; self-expression and social interaction. These results are consistent with previous studies where these factors have been found to significantly influence consumers satisfaction and reusage intentions for technology such as Arahita and Hatammimi (2015) in mobile banking; Al-Queisi *et al.* (2015) in internet banking; and Ma *et al.* (2019) in TikTok loyalty.

In addition, when examining the influence of information sharing on consumer satisfaction, the data indicated an insignificant relationship between the above-mentioned variables, hence the hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, it can be deduced that information sharing does not influence satisfaction in young adults' usage of TikTok. This finding is not surprising because unlike Facebook, previous studies have indicated that TikTok is not primarily used for information sharing, but rather for entertainment (Wuttaphan, 2022) and self-expression (Yang and Zilberg, 2020).

Furthermore, when examining the influence of consumer satisfaction on the re-usage intentions of TikTok, the analysis of the data revealed the existence of a significant and positive relationship, thus H6 was supported. Therefore, it can be deduced that consumer satisfaction plays a significant part in encouraging the re-usage intentions of TikTok amongst Generation Z users. This finding

is inconsistent with literature on satisfaction which indicates that when consumers are satisfied with products and services they use, they tend to have a higher inclination to reuse them in future (Ma *et al.*, 2019). Finally, when testing the mediation effect, the results from this study show that the construct Satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness, and Social Interaction on Re-Usage Intentions. The results also indicate that the construct Information Sharing had no significant relationship with either Satisfaction nor Re-Usage Intentions, while Self-Expression had a significant relationship with Satisfaction and Re-Usage Intentions and did not show evidence of any mediating effect from Satisfaction.

5. Managerial Implications

Practically, this study presents important insights for practitioners to enhance continued use of the TikTok application. The study is useful to marketers and product development teams to be cognizant of the factors, which would enhance customers' satisfaction with using the application thus leading to future reuse. For instance, consumers of TikTok would be satisfied with the service, which they perceive to be easy to use and useful. Moreover, Generation Z users in character are homogenous in their value for self-expression and social interaction as a group hence they would respond to similar marketing efforts.

In today's competitive and technologically advanced environment, businesses that succeed are those that are concerned about their customers' satisfaction, which ultimately influences the reuse intentions as evidenced in the study. These results of the study also encourage marketers involved in social media and digital marketing to devise as well as improve marketing strategies that enhance consumer satisfaction by incorporating key variables such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, self-expression and social interaction as key selling points in communication efforts.

Marketers can use this information to structure better algorithms, such as the one used by TikTok to gauge the attention of young adults better hence optimizing their satisfaction therefore leading them to reuse the application. The results can also benefit developers of social media applications in providing empirical evidence on the factors that would make their application 'sticky' and result in users returning.

6. Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research

There were several limitations that were observed during the undertaking of the research. Firstly, data were collected exclusively from students at a research-intensive university in Gauteng. In order for results to be more generalisable, the target population needs to extend to both students and non-students across South Africa. Secondly, most respondents were female which could distort some of the results. Finally, the study was conducted during Covid-19 and data was collected via an online questionnaire. With the researchers not being present some of the questions

could potentially be misinterpreted.

Future studies should be cognizant of these limitations. In addition, future researchers may wish to explore different methodologies, grounding theories and/or variables. In conclusion, our findings advance theory by suggesting that the TAM2, UTAUT, and UGT are useful tools in understanding Generation Z technology consumption behaviour in the context of a developing country.

The study findings offer support for the determinant factors of perceived usefulness, self-expression, and social interaction. These results provide useful insights to practitioners. Practitioners should consider highlighting these factors in their product development and promotion strategies to ensure customer satisfaction and the subsequent reuse of technology-based services. The lack of support for the variable information sharing indicates that the TikTok application is not used by Generation Z consumers as a means to share information, which implies that the target market is likely to be oblivious of this benefit when considering the use of services like TikTok.

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