

Research Article | Araştırma Makalesi

# The Virtual World Platform “TikTok”: A Study On Generation Z Sanal Dünya Platformu “TikTok”: Z Kuşağı Üzerine Bir Araştırma



Seher KARATAŞ (Dr.)  
Independent Researcher  
Türkiye  
shr.byr14@hotmail.com



Enderhan KARAKOÇ (Prof. Dr.)  
Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Faculty of  
Communication  
Ankara/Türkiye  
enderhankarakoc@aybu.edu.tr

Başvuru Tarihi | Date Received: 20.02.2024  
Yayına Kabul Tarihi | Date Accepted: 10.06.2024  
Yayınlanma Tarihi | Date Published: 30.07.2024

Karataş, S., Karakoç, E. (2024). The Virtual World Platform “TikTok”: A Study On Generation Z. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, 11(2), 517-537  
<https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesiletisim.1440628>

## Abstract

Social media has an important place in the lives of individuals. It enables people to connect with each other, to be aware of their environment and the world, to have fun and often use social media platforms to stay informed. TikTok, a popular application among all segments of society, is one of them platforms. In TikTok, a global platform, young people constitute the largest segment of users. In this study, it is aimed to reveal the use of social media and TikTok by Generation Z. In the study employing a quantitative research methodology, a single survey model, one of the general survey models, was utilized. The data were collected via a face-to-face survey of 387 secondary school students born between 2006 and 2010 in Konya. The research findings showed that WhatsApp was the preferred social media platform among the participants. In addition, half of the participants were found to use TikTok and usage among Generation Z has increased compared to previous studies. Furthermore, half of the respondents do not create videos on the platform, preferring instead to share videos inspired by current trends. The research findings indicated that the participants' primary objective was to engage in entertainment-oriented TikTok video creation, social media usage, and TikTok-related activities. It was also found that half of the respondents do not trust TikTok when using TikTok.

**Keywords:** Social Media, TikTok, Generation Z, Usage Habits, Secondary School Students.

## Öz

Sosyal medya bireylerin hayatında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. İnsanlar birbirleriyle bağlantı kurmak, çevresinden ve dünyadan haberdar olmak, eğlenmek ve bilgilenmek için sosyal medya platformlarını sıklıkla kullanmaktadır. Toplumun tüm kesimleri arasında popüler bir uygulama olan TikTok da bu platformlardan biridir. Küresel bir platform olan TikTok'ta kullanıcıların en büyük dilimini ise gençler oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, Z kuşağının sosyal medya ve TikTok kullanımının açığa çıkarılması amaçlanmıştır. Nicel araştırma yönteminin kullanıldığı çalışmada, genel tarama modellerinden tekli tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Veriler, Konya'da 2006-2010 yılları arasında doğan 387 ortaöğretim öğrencisi ile yüz yüze anket yapılarak toplanmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, WhatsApp'ın katılımcılar arasında ilk tercih edilen sosyal medya platformu olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca, katılımcıların yarısı TikTok kullanmaktadır ve kullanım süresi önceki çalışmalara kıyasla Z kuşağı arasında artmıştır. Katılımcıların yarısının TikTok'ta video çekmedikleri ortaya çıkan bulgular arasındadır. TikTok videosu çeken katılımcılar ise trend videolardan esinlenerek video çekmekte ve paylaşmaktadır. Araştırmada katılımcıların TikTok videosu çekerken, sosyal medya kullanırken ve TikTok'ta vakit geçirirken amaçlarının eğlence olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılan katılımcıların yarısı TikTok kullanırken TikTok'a güvenmedikleri de araştırmanın ortaya koyduğu sonuçlar arasındadır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Sosyal Medya, TikTok, Z Kuşağı, Kullanım Alışkanlıkları, Ortaöğretim Öğrencileri.



## Introduction

Individuals, who are social creatures, are in constant interaction with others in order to fulfill their socio-psychological needs in society. Individuals who have been exposed to social media, especially after the year two thousand, carry out their socialization stages through virtual platforms. Individuals who grow up in such an environment become uniform (Çalapkulu & Sarı, 2022). The concept of generation is used to define communities born in the same years who have experienced similar social events and troubles. Generations classified according to age and sociological facts reveal the necessity of evaluating the classification according to different dimensions with factors such as technology, social values, working conditions and education (Ardıç & Altun, 2017).

Since the twentieth century, generations have had periods of 20-25 years apart and each generation is given a different name (Duygulu, 2018). In a world of rapid change, differences between generations are also changing. Generation Z, which is a part of technology, naturally differs from other generations (Taş et al, 2017). With technological advances, the digital age/revolution period has begun. The transition from limited information to a world of information that goes beyond borders has started to change the lives and lifestyles of generations. The generations that cause the start of a new digital age are born into these technologies. Therefore, the most prominent events shaping Generation Z and Alpha are technological inventions and discoveries (Kayıkçı & Kutluk Bozkurt, 2018). Since Generation Z was born in a social media environment, it shows a different dependence on social media tools compared to other generations (Dalaylı, 2021). Generation Z frequently uses social media platforms to share their daily activities, locations they have visited, and to view the stories of others. They have a strong connection with social media. The online behaviour of this generation is constantly active throughout the day.

Generation Z uses social media mostly for entertainment, communication and research. The humor factor is of great importance for Generation Z. In order to properly guide Generation Z, which reflects our future, we need to know how much they use social media and their interest in social media platforms (Sarıoğlu & Özgen, 2018) determining the attitude of Generation Z towards social media and their intentions in using social media is ai med. In the digitalizing world the communication tools and environments are increasingly raising in number and becoming diversified. In this study which we made over Generation Z, the generation is especially chosen for it is distinct from the other generations in terms of its familiarity to technological equipments. In the study it is examined with what degree does Generation Z use social media for distinct aims such as being informed-receive information, socialisation, organising activities and collaboration. Our survey is prepared based on results of a questionnaire made with 200 members of Generation Z. In the study, a survey was performed with the students from a state university in Istanbul, and from two different high schools, one state high school and the other high school connected with a foundation, containing questions about their social media uses. Additionally in depth interviews were made with 14 persons whose ages change between 15 and 18, and detailed questions were asked about their social media uses." container-title": "Journal of International Social Research", "DOI": "10.17719/jisr.2018.2856", "ISSN": "1307-9581", "issue": "60", "journalAbbreviation": "jisr", "language": "tr", "page": "1067-1081", "source": "DOI.org (Crossref. Developments in technologies have affected many generations. The interest of the generations born in digitalization in social media has also become in need of research.

TikTok, a product of popular culture, is among the newest and most demanded applications among young people and is used for different purposes (Bahçeciöglü, 2023). The global effect of the social media platform TikTok has resulted in an increase in literature pertaining to the platform (Gouveia & Chabata, 2023). The academic literature on Generation Z and TikTok examines the ways in which Generation Z uses TikTok, including their behaviours, preferences and interaction habits on these platforms. These studies typically examine how Generation Z utilises TikTok in a distinct manner from other social media platforms, the types of content they favour and the role of the platform in their interactions. Furthermore, the studies encompass the effects of TikTok on Generation Z and the manner in which their usage habits fluctuate contingent on variables such as age, gender, and geographical location.

There are 28 studies on TikTok in the TR Index database. The limited number of studies on TikTok and Generation Z (Kizilkaya, 2022; Soyudoğan & Abdalli, 2023; Tam, 2022b; Yetkiner & Öztürk, 2020) makes this study unique and important. The theoretical framework of the study is based on Generation Z's use of social media and TikTok. In the study, it was aimed to reveal the social media use of Generation Z with the assumption that Generation Z uses social media and TikTok. For this purpose, data were collected and evaluated from Konya-based secondary school students. In the study conducted on the axis of TikTok and Generation Z, first, the duration of social media usage and general data on the use of social media platforms were given, and then the use of TikTok by Generation Z was tried to be revealed.

### **1.A Conceptual Framework: TikTok and Generation Z - The Duo of the Digital Age**

Technological developments have become an indispensable element of the system in many areas. With the transition from Web 1 to Web 2, interactivity has increased and it has become an area where millions of comments are written during the day. With the rapid increase in internet usage, a new generation born in the internet age has emerged. In contrast to the austere and cautious Generation X, social media has become the indispensable passion of Generations Y and Z, who are consumption-oriented and constantly use social media (Karahisar, 2013; Süer et al., 2017). While digital innovations break new ground in many fields, individuals seek a place in this technology. While Generation X (1965-1980) and Generation Y (1981-1996) are trying to adapt to digital technologies, Generation Z (1996-2012) was born in the period when digital technologies were intensively experienced and met technology from the moment they were born.

Globally, Generation Z (Gen Z) and Generation Alpha (2012- 2025) make up more than a third of the world's population (Willoughby, 2020). Digitalization with new media increases its impact every day and causes individual transformation. Since new media reaches people of all ages, it is necessary to open a parenthesis for children and young people (Kırık & Altun, 2019). Generation theory is quite old although, it is new. Each generation has distinct characteristics. Generations are shaped according to the socio-cultural characteristics and development levels of each country (Ardıç & Altun, 2017). While the country, culture, language, etc. left as a legacy in generational transitions are transferred to other generations, social conflicts and social problems experienced are desired to be at a minimum level (Duygulu, 2018). Generation Z, the most talked about but least understood generation in the world, refers to those born between 1997 and 2012. Generation Z is the first generation of true digital natives and they are in a fully wired communication (Hall, 2021).

Although Generation Z is a generation that has mastered online posting and social media platforms, it is seen as a generation that is weak in interpersonal communication. The generation, which is open to technological innovations, provides digital communication better than other generations. Generation Z, known for their dependence on social media, are illequipped in terms of their lack of experience in the physical world (Dalaylı, 2021). Generation Z's relationship with technology brings along some problems. The combination of digital environments that instill many emotions in individuals during adolescence has increased the use of social media by Generation Z (Çalapkulu & Sarı, 2022). Although Generation Z individuals are intertwined with technology, they do not spend much time outdoors and prefer online communication. Generation Z individuals, who cannot imagine a life without cell phones and computers, show a sense of belonging and a tendency to give up quickly. They can be defined as a generation that acts individually instead of teamwork and can make pinpoint shots without getting lost in details (Taş et al., 2017). While the use of social media is becoming important all over the world, the pros and cons of social media use for Generation Z, who were born into this technology, are coming to light. Groundbreaking platforms that affect individuals in many psychological, physical, and sociological aspects are often used for purposes other than their intended purpose and influence individuals.

The importance of online technology is particularly emphasized in new methods for learning and education. This is especially important among Generation Z, which is focused on getting information from the internet and searching for information quickly (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). Spending long periods of time on social media platforms that Generation Z actively uses brings changes on individuals. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapcat, Ekşi Sözlük, TikTok, Facebook, Twitter, which have been very popular in recent years, affect the behaviors and thoughts of Generation Z individuals (Kaya, 2022). They use Snapchat and TikTok to stay up-to-date about their friends' lives and access global news (Hall, 2021). TikTok is an application that supports innovation. TikTok offers short and versatile videos with lots of audio and custom visualizations (Jain & Arakkal, 2022) TikTok is also changing the way Generation Z uses social media. With Generation Z, TikTok is not only an entertainment social network with unlimited content, but can also be used as a product marketing and monetization tool (Ngo et al., 2022).

TikTok is a new type of social media. Due to its multifunctional features and video form, TikTok is becoming universally popular and reaching a large number of users (Tang et al., 2021). TikTok was produced by Chinese engineers in 2016 and quickly gained popularity among young people for creating short videos on social media. In 2017, ByteDance executives launched TikTok as an international version of the app. The platform's popularity skyrocketed during the pandemic, especially among Generation Z due to its fast, flashy and catchy broadcasts (Raphael, 2023). TikTok is a new social media platform compared to other platforms and allows people to create, share and consume short video content. TikTok has seen rapid growth worldwide over the past few years, with more than 2 billion downloads and nearly 800 million active users (Schellewald, 2021; Singh & Blase, 2020). TikTok was the most downloaded mobile app in 2021 (We Are Social, 2022).

According to recent analysis by GSMA Intelligence, there are currently 5.56 billion unique mobile subscribers worldwide, which is equivalent to 69.1% of the global population. This represents a 2% increase with 7.150 million new users since the last century. Additionally, 64.5% of the world's population report using the internet. Currently, 60.6%

of the world's population are active social media users, with a global total of 88 billion. Among social media platforms, 11 percent of TikTok users still use Twitter and 18 percent still use Instagram (Kemp, 2023a).

Research from GWI (Global Web Index) reveals that the global social media user now uses an average of 7,5 different social media platforms every month. Whatsapp, Instagram, WeChat are among the favorite social media platforms. In 2021, TikTok, the world's most downloaded mobile app, is a very popular app among young users. Almost 24 percent of female internet users aged 9-16 said that TikTok is their favorite social platform, while 55.64 percent only declared their membership to the platform. Facebook, on the other hand, remains the most popular global choice among males aged 16-24 (Kemp, 2022).

Social media now accounts for the largest ever share of total online time, with almost 4 out of every 10 minutes spent online now dedicated to social media activities. TikTok, one of the world's most used social media apps, had the highest average monthly usage per user during 2022. Users spend an average of 23,5 hours per month using TikTok. Turkish users of the TikTok platform spend approximately 20,9 hours per month (We Are Social, 2023). At a global level, Data.ai's figures show that the typical Android user spends close to one full day per month using TikTok's mobile app during 2022, which equates to a total of around 17 waking days per year spent using TikTok alone (Kemp, 2023b).

TikTok videos embrace a playful self-reflexivity about time that embodies Generation Z's self-awareness, sense of unity and collective spirit (Stahl & Literat, 2023). According to a central survey of around 10 online platforms conducted between April 14 and May 4, 2022, two-thirds of young people report using TikTok. This is followed by Instagram (62%), Snapchat (59%), Twitter (23%), Twitch (20%), WhatsApp (17%) (Vogels & Gelles-Watnick, 2023). In the world, Generation Z frequently uses social media platforms and TikTok is among the popular applications among young people.

The popularity of TikTok is a notable phenomenon in many countries, and it is possible for governments to impose bans or restrictions on access to the platform. One of the most significant reasons for the banning of TikTok in various countries is the concern over the protection of user data and privacy. One of the most significant considerations is the potential for user data to be shared with the Chinese government. Another significant factor in the banning or restricting of access is the difficulty in regulating content. Some content on TikTok is not in accordance with the cultural or political norms of countries and may contain harmful content. Given that children and adolescents lack the capacity to effectively manage their time, they are susceptible to becoming absorbed in the content on the platform, engaging in interactions through participation in trending videos. This can foster a sense of community among the participants and lead to addiction to the platform.

In a study conducted in 2021 on the technologies used by children, the rate of internet use by children was 82.7%. Among the participants who regularly use the internet, 31.3% stated that they use the internet for social media. The rate of social media use among participants aged 11-15 is 95.9%. While the rate of smartphone use among children aged 11-15 is 53.9%, they state that they check their smartphones every half hour (TÜİK, 2021).

The widespread use of social media platforms among young people brings along many studies. In this study, which is carried out with the assumption that Generation Z is

dependent on social media because it was born and raised in the digital world, the social media use of Generation Z and the use of TikTok application are tried to be revealed.

## 2. Method

This study examines TikTok, one of the social media platforms that have come to the fore frequently in recent years, within the framework of the use of Generation Z. The basis of the research is based on quantitative research method. In addition to the quantitative research method, qualitative research method is also used. Quantitative research data is supported by qualitative research data. While literature review is used as a qualitative research data collection technique, questionnaire is used as a quantitative research data collection technique (Karasar, 2012). The scales to be used in quantitative research are applied to students in the 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade range.

This research aims to measure the impact of TikTok application on Generation Z. For this purpose, the frequency of social media and TikTok usage of Generation Z individuals will be analyzed. Since there are few studies on Generation Z and TikTok application, this study is important in terms of filling the existing gap on the effect of TikTok application, which is a virtual world platform in Türkiye, on Generation Z, creating an environment for thinking and discussion on the subject and contributing to the literature. This section includes subheadings including the research problem, research model, research group and sample, data collection tools and research questions, and data analysis.

### Ethics Committee Permission

Within the framework of the decision taken during the meeting by Selçuk University Faculty of Communication Scientific Ethics Evaluation Committee dated 13/09/2021 and numbered E131318; the study does not contain any ethical issues.

### 2.1. Research Problem

In recent years, developing technological opportunities and easy access to these technologies have led to change and transformation in communication tools. The use of smartphones, internet and social media platforms affects the habits of users. The connection of the generations that open their eyes to the world through the cameras of smartphones with social media is becoming in need of research. Generation Z, which will be discussed in our study, is connected to the digital world, they are easy to give up because they get bored quickly, they are not determined and ambitious, they may be disloyal to the organizations they work for, but they can be much more prominent than other generations in other issues such as creativity and seeking rights (Aydin & Başol, 2014).

Generation Z, born into technological developments, has different equipment compared to other generations. Their use of new communication technologies and social media also comes to the fore. Thanks to technological opportunities, they are equipped with a wealth of experience compared to other generations. The use of social media has also gained importance with new communication technologies. The fact that the generation born after 2000, which has been using TikTok the most recently, imitates the videos in the application, emulates the people in the videos and sometimes wants to share videos with fatal consequences has led to the emergence of this problem. In this study, social media and TikTok usage habits are examined based on the problematic of how much Generation Z, which uses social media and TikTok intensively, is affected by social media.

## 2.2. Research Model

In this study, the single survey model, which is one of the general survey models representative of the system, is used. The survey model is a research approach that describes a past or present situation as it is. In the general survey model, which is based on a sample taken from a group in order to make a general judgment about the universe, it is aimed to reveal the instant situation, frequency distribution, average value with single survey (Karasar, 2012). The main purpose of this study is to address the use of TikTok by revealing the interest of Generation Z in social media.

## 2.3. Research Group and Sample

The population is the totality of the elements to which the results of the research are to be generalized. The sample represents small clusters selected from the population according to certain rules (Karasar, 2012) According to the Ministry of National Education (2021-2022) data, the number of secondary education students (including open education) in Konya is 179,400 (MEB, 2024). According to this number, 179,400 secondary education (high school) students constitute the population of the study. Looking at the theses on Generation Z, the sample size was calculated as 324 people (Kırık & Köyüstü, 2018). Considering this data, the sample of the study consists of 387 people representing the universe. Generation Z includes everyone born between 1997 and 2012 (Loria vd., 2023).

This study, which is handled by field research method, consists of secondary school students in three central districts of Konya (Selçuklu, Meram and Karatay), taking into account the age range of Generation Z. The study deals with the use of social media and TikTok by 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade students of Generation Z between the ages of 14-17, that is, born in 2006-2010.

For this research, ethics committee approval was obtained from Selçuk University Faculty of Communication Ethics Committee with the document dated 09.09.2021 and numbered E.131318.

## 2.4. Data Collection Tools and Research Questions

In the research, a questionnaire form is used as a data collection tool and the questions are divided into three sections: In the first part, the participants are asked questions about their social media usage time, the importance they attach to social media, the most used social media platform and the frequency of social media usage. In the second part, the participants are asked about their TikTok usage time, reasons for using TikTok, whether they recommend it to their friends, whether they share videos on TikTok and their trust score on TikTok, and in the last part, demographic questions such as school, class, gender, etc. are asked to the participants. Considering the purpose and starting point of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

**RQ1.** What is the frequency of social media use by Generation Z?

**RQ2.** Which of the social media platforms do Generation Z use the most?

**RQ3.** Which areas are Generation Z interested in on social media?

**RQ4.** What is the frequency of TikTok use by Generation Z?

**RQ5.** Why does Generation Z use TikTok?

**RQ6.** Does Generation Z share videos on TikTok?

**RQ7.** Do Generation Z trust TikTok?

## 2.5. Data Analysis

The field research was conducted through face-to-face survey technique with the participants on June 12-16, 2023, one week before the summer vacation in order not to interfere with the students' classes. The research data in the questionnaire form were digitized in the SPSS program and then analyzed with the 25.0 program. The data of the research were analyzed with Frequency Analysis.

## 3. Findings and Interpretation

This study first includes the results of the descriptive analysis of the social media usage habits of Generation Z, and then addresses the use of TikTok by Generation Z.

### 3.1. Some Demographic Information of Participants

Of the participants, 59,9 percent were female and 40,1 percent were male. Since the field research was conducted one week before the summer vacation, 42,6 percent of the participants were 9th grade students, 38,5 percent were 10th grade students, 57 percent were 11th grade students and 16 percent were 12th grade students.

When the educational status of the fathers of the students participating in the study is examined, it is seen that 37,7 percent of them are primary school graduates, 33,1 percent are high school graduates, 15,5 percent are university graduates, 5,4 percent are literate, 2,8 percent are graduate students, and 0,5 percent have literate education. It was observed that 4,9 percent left this question unanswered. When the educational status of the mothers of the participants is examined, it is seen that 49,4 percent have primary school education, 29,5 percent high school education, 8,0 percent university education, 6,7 percent literate, 1,8 percent graduate education, 1,0 percent illiterate education. It was observed that 3,6 percent left this question unanswered.

### 3.2 Descriptive Analysis of Generation Z's Social Media Usage Habits

The data of the descriptive analysis of daily social media usage time indicates that the participants stated that they used social media for a minimum of 17 minutes and a maximum of 840 (14 hours) minutes during the day. It was determined that the participants used social media for an average of 267,81 (4 hours 46 minutes).

When the share of social media in internet usage by country is considered, it is 39,22 percent in Türkiye. While a typical internet user spends more than 2,5 hours a day using social media platforms, the average number of social media platforms used each month in Türkiye is 7,6 (Kemp, 2023b). Looking at the duration of social media use of Generation Z, nearly half of the participants stated that they use social media more than 4 hours a day, and the results coincide with the findings of the study (Bayramoğlu & Gultekin, 2023). These data also reveal the answer to the research question **(RQ1)**.

**Table 1.** Participants' Social Media Use Practices

	Key Findings	Number(n)	Percent(%)
With which device do you mainly connect to social media?	Mobile Phone	363	93,8
At what time of the day do you check social media?	Whenever I'm free	177	45,7



	Key Findings	Number(n)	Percent(%)
Participants' Feelings When They Are Separated from Social Media	I get bored	216	5,8
Respondents' Areas of Interest on Social Media	Entertainment	252	59,9

It is seen that almost all of the respondents (93,8 percent (n=363) connect to social media via mobile phones. It is seen that 2,8 percent (n=11) connect to social media via desktop computers, 1,8 percent (n=7) via tablets and 1,6 percent (n=6) via laptops.

When asked at what time of the day do you check social media, 45,7 percent (n=177) of the respondents answered "any time they are free", 30,7 percent (n=119) answered "always", 14,7 percent (n=57) answered "when I receive notifications", 5,7 percent (n=22) answered "when I wake up", and 3,1 percent (n=12) answered "after breakfast".

When the participants stay away from social media for a long time, 55,8 percent (n=216) feel bored, 25,3 percent (n=98) feel that it is not a problem, 7,5 percent (n=29) feel lonely, 5,9 percent (n=23) feel bad, and 5,4 percent (n=21) feel helpless.

When we look at the distribution of the areas that the participants are interested in social media, 59,9 percent (n=232) are interested in entertainment, 15,8 percent (n=61) are interested in sports, 9,6 percent (n=37) are interested in books and magazines, 5,9 percent (n=23) are interested in fashion, 5,7 percent (n=22) are interested in technological devices and 3,1 percent (n=12) answered the question as other. The questions were answered by 387 (n=100) participants.

The results of the descriptive statistics indicate that the majority of participants in the study on Generation Z's use of social media and TikTok primarily access these platforms via mobile devices. This data coincides with the findings of the study that concluded that young people own or have access to a smartphone (Dhiman & Chaudhary, 2022). In the social media questions asked to the sample participants, it was concluded that they check social media whenever they are free and that they get bored when they are separated from social media (Doğan & Erkan, 2019). While it was found that a significant portion of the participants were interested in entertainment on social media, the data of the study also coincide with the data of the study that Generation Z uses social media for entertainment (Sarioğlu & Özgen, 2018). The information that the area that the participants are interested in on social media is entertainment also includes the answer to the research question (RQ3).

**Table 2.** Descriptive Analysis of the Social Media Accounts Used by the Participants

	Number	Average	SD
WhatsApp	378	3,93	2,84
Instagram	377	3,89	1,28
Youtube	381	3,34	1,03
TikTok	373	2,54	1,57
Twitter	371	1,85	1,16
Facebook	369	1,25	,73
Linkedin	366	1,20	,70

In the analysis of the most frequently used social media tools of the participants in the study, it was seen that WhatsApp (Avg.=3.93), Instagram (Avg.=3.89), YouTube (Avg.=3.34), TikTok (Avg.=2.54) and Twitter (Avg.=1.85) on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 never and 5 always. The social media applications that the participants use the least are Facebook (Avg.=1.25) and LinkedIn (Avg.=1.20).

WhatsApp, which is the most used application among social media platforms, also reveals the answer to the research question of the study **(RQ2)**. Instagram, Youtube, TikTok are among the other social media platforms most used by the participants. In studies that overlap with the results of the data, according to the results of the Global Web Index (GWI) research, WhatsApp ranked first among the most popular applications (Kemp, 2022), while in another study, Generation Z stated that they used Instagram and Youtube intensively before TikTok (Tam, 2022b). GWI's data reveals that Instagram remains the "favorite" social media platform among internet users aged 16 to 24 (We Are Social, 2023). The excessive use of applications such as WhatsApp, which is frequently used as a communication tool, brings along many problems such as loss of interest in the real world and addiction (Dhiman & Chaudhary, 2022). One of the ways to minimize the addiction problems of Generation Z, born and raised in technology, is to integrate them into social spaces.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Analysis of Participants' Attitudes Towards Social Media

	Number	Average	SD
I check my social media account before going to bed	376	3,61	1,42
I spend more time on social media than planned	374	3,22	1,31
I can't stop using social media for a long time	381	3,01	1,26
I review my social media account when I get together with my friends in a chat environment or with my family during a visit.	381	2,73	2,47
I have problems with my family about the time I spend on social media	378	2,63	1,37
When I am not on social media, I intensively think about being on social media	381	2,63	1,31

The results of the 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "never" and 5 represents "always," indicate that participants reported checking their social media accounts before going to bed (Avg.=3.61), spending more time on social media than planned (Avg.=3.22), being unable to stop using social media for extended periods (Avg.=3.01), and reviewing their social media accounts when with friends and family (Avg.=2.73). The participants provided low ratings for the statements pertaining to their familial relationships and the time they spend on social media. The mean rating for the statement regarding familial discord over social media usage was 2.63, while the mean rating for the statement regarding the depth of contemplation about social media use when not engaged with it was also 2.63.

Considering the attitudes of the people included in the sample towards social media, it was found that they checked their social media accounts before going to bed and spent more time on social media than they planned. Spending 3-6 hours a day on social media, checking social media accounts at bedtime and as soon as they wake up in the morning

may indicate social media addiction (Yılmaz, 2019). This situation may reveal that Generation Z is addicted to social media according to the results of the data obtained in the study.

### 3.3. Descriptive Analysis of TikTok Usage Habits of Generation Z

The data on the usage of TikTok among social media platforms of the participants indicates that while 51,4 percent of the participants stated that they use TikTok social media platform, 48,6 percent stated that they do not use it. Looking at the participants' use of TikTok among social media platforms, half of them use TikTok. In a study conducted abroad, it was concluded that two-thirds of young people use TikTok (Vogels & Gelles-Watnick, 2023).

The descriptive analysis of the participants' TikTok usage periods indicates that participants who said yes to the use of TikTok from social media platforms stated that they use TikTok for an average of at least 10 minutes, at most 605 minutes (10 hours) and an average of 145, 53 minutes (2 hours 42 minutes) per day. In the study conducted in 2022, it was determined that Generation Z spent an average of 1 hour 45 minutes a day on TikTok (Tam, 2022b), while in the study whose data was collected in 2023, it was concluded that the participants spent an average of 2 hours 42 minutes a day on TikTok. This situation reveals that the time spent by Generation Z on TikTok has increased over time. The fact that Generation Z uses the TikTok platform for an average of 2 hours and 42 minutes also provides the answer to the research question (RQ4) of the study.

**Table 4.** Participants' Reasons for Opening a TikTok Account

	Number	Percent(%)
I came across your videos on the internet	75	19,4
I heard from friends	52	13,4
I heard about it on social media	35	9,0
I became a member by researching myself	20	5,2
Other	4	1,0
Total	186	48,1
Unanswered	201	51,9
Total	387	100,0

Among the participants, 19,4 percent stated that they decided to get a TikTok account when they came across videos on the internet, 13,4 percent when they heard about it from their friends, 9 percent when they heard about it on social media, and 5,2 percent by researching it themselves. Based on these data, it was concluded that the participants who use TikTok created a membership by coming across TikTok videos on the internet.

**Table 5.** Descriptive Analysis of Participants' Reasons for Using TikTok

	Number	Avg.	SD
For fun and relaxation	188	3,67	1,28
To spend my free time	188	3,63	3,25
Because I'm curious about trending videos	186	3,09	1,49
To get rid of the boredom of everyday life	188	3,03	3,19
To listen to music	186	2,84	1,45
To follow celebrities	186	2,35	1,42
Because I feel incomplete when I don't watch videos	186	2,27	1,47
In order to express myself	187	2,18	1,38

	Number	Avg.	SD
To meet new people	185	2,09	1,39
Because people who use TikTok seem more sincere to me	185	2,01	1,42
To share videos and increase the number of followers	187	1,90	1,29
To communicate with my friends	187	1,72	1,17

The results of the 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "never" and 5 represents "always," indicate that participants primarily use TikTok for entertainment purposes. This is evidenced by the high mean scores for "to have fun and relax" (Avg.=3.67) and "to evaluate their free time" (Avg.=3.63). Additionally, many users are drawn to the platform out of curiosity about trending videos (Avg.=3,09) or to escape the stresses of daily life (Avg.=3,03). Some users also use TikTok to listen to music (Avg.=2,84) or follow celebrities (Avg.=2,35). Additionally, participants reported using TikTok because they feel incomplete without watching videos (Avg.=2,27), to express themselves (Avg.=2,18), and to meet new people (Avg.=2,09). They also perceived TikTok users as more sincere (Avg.=2,01). Participants gave low scores for using TikTok to share videos and increase the number of followers (Avg.=1,90) and to communicate with friends (Avg.=1,72).

The study found that participants who used social media for entertainment and leisure also used TikTok for relaxation and fun. This is consistent with the study's overall result, which showed that social media users engage with TikTok for entertainment and relaxation (Omar & Dequan, 2020) this study investigated how people use TikTok in terms of consuming, participating and producing behaviors, and examined the role of personality traits and users' motivation as predictors to this integrated usage behavior. An online survey was conducted to recruit 385 TikTok users using online network sampling technique. Our findings suggest that it was users' motivations, not personality traits, that have significant influence on TikTok use. Results show that users' motivations – namely archiving, self-expression, social interaction and peeking – are significant predictors to TikTok usage behaviors but differ in levels and influence. This study contributes to both the theoretical and the empirical understanding of media use in a user-generated media (UGM. Table 5 data indicates that participants use TikTok for fun and relaxation (**RQ5**), answering the study's research question.

According to the distribution of participants recommending TikTok to their friends when asked whether they would recommend TikTok to their friends, 37 percent of the participants said that they would not recommend TikTok to their friends, while 27,6 percent said that they would. This question was left unanswered by 35,4 percent of the participants.

The distribution data of the participants' TikTok video sharing status indicates that while 49,9 percent of the participants stated that they do not share videos on TikTok, 13 percent stated that they do. 37,2 percent of the participants left this question unanswered. The answer to the question "Does Generation Z share videos on TikTok?" (**RQ6**) is answered with 49,9 percent of the participants answering no.

According to the distribution of the number of videos shared by participants on TikTok accounts; 11,1 percent of the participants who answered 'yes' to the question 'do you share videos on TikTok' stated that they shared TikTok videos in their accounts between 1 and 50; 2,6 percent of between 51 and 100; 1,6 percent of between 300 and over and 0,3 percent of between 101 and 200.

According to the distribution of participants' identification of TikTok video content of the TikTok users surveyed, 8,5% reported creating video content inspired by trending videos, 4,7% by producing original content, 2,1% by being inspired by their friends' TikTok videos, and 0,8% by internet content. The study concludes that users who share videos are often inspired by trending content. The study's findings align with the observation that participants tailor their video content to social media trends (Tam, 2022a). Young people who are captivated by the trend of creating videos on TikTok express themselves through short videos and establish a social media presence.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Participants' TikTok Video Sharing Purposes

	Number	At Least	Most	Average	SD
I make TikTok videos for fun	65	1,00	5,00	2,69	1,64
I feel better when I make TikTok videos	64	1,00	5,00	2,18	1,47
I share the video monthly on TikTok	66	1,00	5,00	2,16	1,38
I share the video weekly on TikTok	66	1,00	5,00	2,15	1,48
I make TikTok videos to be popular	64	1,00	6,00	2,03	1,53
I share the video daily on TikTok	65	1,00	5,00	2,03	1,45
I constantly share videos to increase my TikTok followers	65	1,00	5,00	1,93	1,32

The results of the 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "never" and 5 represents "always," were analysed in relation to the participants' TikTok video sharing purposes. The participants gave high scores to the questions that they shoot their videos for fun (Avg. =2.69), that they feel good when they shoot TikTok videos (average score = 2.18), and that they share videos on TikTok monthly (Avg.= 2.16). Participants share videos on TikTok weekly (Avg.=2,15), take videos to be popular (Avg.= 2,03) and share videos daily (Avg.= 2,03). Participants gave a low score to the question that they constantly share videos to increase their number of TikTok followers (Avg.=1,93).

Based on the research findings, it was determined that the participants who shot videos on TikTok shot the videos for fun. The finding that the purpose of Generation Z while spending time on social media, using TikTok and shooting TikTok videos is entertainment was clearly seen in the study.

**Table 7.** Descriptive Analysis of Participants' Level of Trust in TikTok

	Number	At least	Most	Avg.	SS
Level of trust in TikTok	328	1,00	10,00	3,50	2,60

The research findings indicate that participants rated their trust in TikTok at a level of 3,50 on a ten-point Likert scale. Another study found that Generation Z does not consider TikTok to be a reliable application and even deemed it corrupting (Tam, 2022b). Half of the participants from this generation who use TikTok reported that they do not trust the application. Despite the trust issue, the study revealed that TikTok is still being used.

According to Table 7 data, it can be concluded that Generation Z does not trust TikTok (RQ7), which is one of the research questions.

**Table 8.** Generation Z Statistics Obtained in the Study

1. Key Points
2. Generation Z uses social media for an average of 4 hours and 46 minutes a day.
3. Generation Z uses WhatsApp the most among social media platforms
4. 51,4 percent of Generation Z uses TikTok
5. 19,4 percent of the Generation Z have opened an account after coming across TikTok videos on the internet.
6. Generation Z uses TikTok for an average of 2 hours and 42 minutes a day
7. 27,6 percent of Generation Z would recommend TikTok to their friends
8. 13 percent of Generation Z shares videos
9. Generation Z trusts TikTok at a level of 3,50.

### Conclusion

This research revealed the extent of Generation Z's use of social media and TikTok. The study, which collected data from 387 secondary school students using a face-to-face survey technique, employed a single survey model among the general survey models. The results of the descriptive statistics indicated that Generation Z, the first generation of digital natives, spends the majority of their online time on social media and TikTok, one of the most popular social media platforms in recent times. While the data from the study on the use of TikTok by Generation Z in Türkiye (Tam, 2022b) revealed that participants spent 1 hour and 45 minutes on TikTok, the study found that they spent 2 hours and 42 minutes on the platform. The participants were found to use WhatsApp the most among the social media platforms, with the findings coinciding with the Global Web Index (GWI) research result (Kemp, 2022). However, GWI's 2023 data revealed that Instagram is the most popular social media platform (We Are Social, 2023). In the findings of the study, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok were ranked after WhatsApp. With regard to the participants' use of TikTok, it can be observed that approximately half of them use the platform. In the study conducted by Vogels and Gelles-Watnick (2023), it was found that two-thirds of young people use TikTok. In researches varying according to country, age and demographic characteristics, it can be concluded that Generation Z is dependent on social media when the duration of social media usage and attitudes are taken into consideration, and the use of TikTok, which has recently become popular, has increased.

One potential solution to the addictive tendencies of the current generation, which was born during a period of intensive technological advancement and has become inextricably linked to social media, is to integrate these technologies into their social lives. The majority of respondents indicated that they connect to social media via mobile phones. This data is consistent with the findings of studies that young people have smartphones (Dhiman & Chaudhary, 2022), experience boredom when separated from social media and spend time on social media when they have free time (Doğan & Erkan, 2019). Generation Z even communicates with their friends by playing games on the internet or on platforms where communication is established. Those who view social media as an integral part of their identity and feel dependent on it, and who use social media with a mobile device in the morning and before going to sleep at night, can reduce their social media addiction by staying offline, engaging in hobbies, and increasing their interaction with people.

Those who share videos on TikTok are inspired by trending videos. This finding is consistent with the result that participants shoot videos by adapting the trends in social

media to their content (Tam, 2022a). Another study found that TikTok content offers a usage area that will entertain individuals, fill their free time, and satisfy the user's sense of pleasure (Söğüt & Öngel, 2022). The study's findings indicate that the primary objective of TikTok and social media users is to engage in entertainment and to spend their free time. This aligns with the responses of participants who stated that they use TikTok to relax and have fun, which is consistent with the findings of Omar & Dequan (2020) and Sarioğlan & Özgen (2018). For Generation Z, the term 'video' is synonymous with entertainment. This generation, which prefers to consume videos for entertainment purposes, is prone to feelings of loneliness, which can give rise to a number of psychological issues. These include a lack of socialisation, difficulty in communicating and feelings of insecurity.

The study revealed that the generation with a strong connection to social media does not trust social media. These data are consistent with the finding that Generation Z does not view the TikTok application as a corrupting influence (Tam, 2022b). The data indicate that Generation Z, a generation that is inextricably linked to social media, does not trust TikTok. The study data indicates that Generation Z is aware of the potential harms associated with excessive social media use and the content on TikTok, which is sometimes created at the expense of their well-being to be trendy. This awareness leads to a lack of trust in TikTok.

Generation Z may face time management issues as their time spent on social media platforms may detract from other activities. Short and ever-changing content can be distracting for Generation Z, reducing their ability to focus for long periods of time. TikTok usage among young people can lead to self-esteem problems as they compare their own lives to the perfect lives they see on the platform.

In order to gain an understanding of the social media usage habits and experiences of Generation Z, it is essential that their parents are willing to engage in open communication with them. It is imperative that young people are educated on the necessity of safeguarding themselves from the potential dangers of the online environment. This can be achieved through the provision of training programmes on internet safety and privacy. It is recommended that families establish clear boundaries and guidelines regarding social media usage within the family unit. It is recommended that parents utilise social media in a healthy manner, with an awareness of their role as role models. It is important to inform children that excessive use of social media can be harmful and to emphasise the importance of allocating time for other activities.

The study presents the results of a descriptive analysis on TikTok and Generation Z. It reveals that despite their strong connection with social media, Generation Z does not trust it. In particular, participants distrust TikTok due to their awareness of the potential harms of overuse and the sometimes dangerous tendencies depicted in the videos. The study focuses on students born between 2006-2010, aged 14-18, attending secondary education institutions. Future research could explore the usage of TikTok across different age groups and investigate its potential impact on addiction.

## References

Ardıç, E., & Altun, A. (2017). Dijital Çağın Öğreneni. *Uluslararası Sosyal Bilgilerde Yeni Yaklaşımlar Dergisi*, 1(1), 12-30. Article 1.

- Aydin, G. Ç., & Başol, O. (2014). X Ve Y Kuşağı: Çalışmanın Anlamında Bir Değişme Var Mı? *Ejovoc (Electronic Journal of Vocational Colleges)*, 4(4), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.17339/ejovoc.41369>
- Bahçecioğlu, E. H. (2023). Popüler Kültür Odağında Sosyal Medyada Akım Trafiki: "TikTok" Örneği. *Etkileşim*, 12, Article 12. <https://doi.org/10.32739/etkileşim.2023.6.12.228>
- Bayramoğlu, G., & Gultekin, F. (2023). Z Kuşağının Sosyal Medya Bağımlılığının Yaşam Doyumu Üzerine Etkisi (*The Effects of Social Media Addiction of Generation Z on Life Satisfaction*). *Turkuaz Uluslararası Sosyo-Ekonomik Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 5 (1), 27-53.
- Çalapkulu, Ç., & Sarı, A. (2022). Bireylerin Bağımlı Alışkanlıklarında Sosyal Medya Kullanımı. *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi*, 10(2), 892-914. Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.19145/e-gifder.1109284>
- Dalaylı, F. (2021). Jenerasyon farklılıkları ve dijital bağımlılık: x ve z kuşağı karşılaştırması," Y. Adıgüzel ve M. Bostancı (eds.), *Dijital iletişimi anlamak II* içinde ss.184-205. Palet Yayınları.
- Dhiman, A., & Chaudhary, G. (2022). Online Addictions and Their Repercussions-With Special Reference to Gen Z. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*, 14(3), 1263-1278. <https://doi.org/10.9756/INT-JECSE/V14I3.150>
- Doğan, S., & Erkan, İ. (2019). Z Kuşağının Sosyal Medyaya Yönelik Algılarının Metafor Analizi Yoluyla İncelenmesi. *Yaşar Üniversitesi E-Dergisi*, 14, 146-155. <https://doi.org/10.19168/jyasar.633557>
- Duygulu, S. (2018). Yeni Medya Teknolojilerinin K-Kuşağının Ebeveynleri İle Olan İletişimine Etkisi. *TRT Akademi*, 3(6), 632-652. Article 6.
- Gouveia, S., & Chabata, T. T. (2023). Dynamics of Social Media Metrics and Fashion Sub-Culture Among Young South African Tiktok Users. *Communitas*, 28, 38-52. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.38140/com.v28i.7461>
- Hall, E. (2021, Haziran 22). *Let's Talk About Generation Z: Social Media, Activism and Consumerism*. [https://news.kisspr.com/2021/06/22/lets-talk-about-generation-z-social-media-activism-and-consumerism\\_24113.html](https://news.kisspr.com/2021/06/22/lets-talk-about-generation-z-social-media-activism-and-consumerism_24113.html)
- Jain, P., & Arakkal, J. (2022). Perceived Popularity of TikTok among Gen-Z. *Cardiometry*, 896-902. <https://doi.org/10.18137/cardiometry.2022.24.896902>
- Karahisar, T. (2013). Dijital Nesil, Dijital İletişim ve Dijitalleşen (!) Türkçe. *AJIT-e: Academic Journal of Information Technology*, 4(12), Article 12. <https://doi.org/10.5824/1309-1581.2013.3.006.x>
- Karasar, N. (2012). *Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemi* (23. bs). Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Kaya, A. (2022). Z kuşağıyla birlikte dijitalleşen dil üzerine bir inceleme. *Sosyal, Beşeri ve İdari Bilimler Temel Alanı & İletişim Çalışmaları*, 191-202.
- Kayıkcı, M., & Kutluk Bozkurt, A. (2018). Dijital Çağda Z Ve Alpha Kuşağı, Yapay Zeka Uygulamaları ve Turizme Yansımaları. *Sosyal Bilimler Metinleri*, 01, 54-64.
- Kemp, S. (2022, Ocak 26). *Digital 2022: The World's Favourite Social Media Platforms*. DataReportal – Global Digital Insights. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-favourite-social-platforms>



- Kemp, S. (2023a). *Digital 2023 July Global Statshot Report—DataReportal – Global Digital Insights*. Digital 2023 July Global Statshot Report,. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-july-global-statshot>
- Kemp, S. (2023b). *Is social media really dying?* DataReportal – Global Digital Insights. <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-deep-dive-the-worlds-top-social-media-platforms>
- Kırık, A. M., & Altun, E. (2019). Yeni Medya ve Z Kuşağı İlişkisi Bağlamında Youtube Kids Uygulamasının İçeriksel Analizi. *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 7, 111-120. <https://doi.org/10.18506/anemon.526344>
- Kırık, A. M., & Köyüstü, S. (2018). Z Kuşağı Konusunda Yapılmış Tezlerin İçerik Analizi Yöntemiyle İncelenmesi. *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi*, 6(2), 1497-1518. Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.19145/e-gifder.443304>
- Kizilkaya, Z. Z. (2022). Gençlerin TikTok Kullanım ve Doyumu Üzerine Nitel Bir Araştırma. *Anemon Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 10(1), 231-247. Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.18506/anemon.962352>
- Loria, K., Lee, S., & York, A. (2023). *Here's which generation you're part of based on your birth year—And why those distinctions exist | Business Insider India*. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.in/heres-which-generation-youre-part-of-based-on-your-birth-year-and-why-those-distinctions-exist/articleshow/63369501.cms>
- MEB, (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı). (2024). *Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri—Öğrenci Sayısı*. <https://istatistik.meb.gov.tr/OgrenciSayisi/Index>
- Ngo, T. T. A., Le, T. M. T., Nguyen, T., Hieu, Le, T., Giang, Ngo, G. T., & Nguyen, T. D. (2022). The Impact Of Sns Advertisements On Online Purchase Intention Of Generation Z: An Empirical Study Of Tiktok In Vietnam. *Journal Of Asian Finance, Economics And Business*, 9(5), 497-506. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2022.Vol9.No5.0497>.
- Omar, B., & Dequan, W. (2020). Watch, Share or Create: The Influence of Personality Traits and User Motivation on TikTok Mobile Video Usage. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (ijIM)*, 14(4), 121-137. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i04.12429>
- Raphael, R. (2023, Haziran 23). *The Rise and Rise of TikTok*. <https://www.greenbook.org/insights/executive-insights/the-rise-and-rise-of-tiktok>
- Sarioğlu, E. B., & Özgen, E. (2018). Z Kuşağının Sosyal Medya Kullanım Alışkanlıkları Üzerine Bir Çalışma. *Journal of International Social Research*, 11(60), 1067-1081. <https://doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2018.2856>
- Schellewald, A. (2021). Communicative Forms on TikTok: Perspectives From Digital Ethnography. *International Journal of Communication*, 15(0), 1437-1457. Article 0.
- Singh, S., & Blase, M. (2020). *Protecting the Vote: How Internet Platforms Are Addressing Election and Voter Suppression-Related Misinformation and Disinformation*. New America. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26363>
- Soyudoğan, M., & Abdalli, R. H. (2023). Sympathizing with Gen-Z: Reflections of Social Media Culture in TikTok. *Gaziantep University Journal of Social Sciences*, 22(4), 1113-1136. Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.21547/jss.1340168>.

- Söğüt, Y., & Öngel, A. (2022). Examination of TikTok Application in the Axis of Uses and Gratifications Approach, User Experience and Entertainment Culture. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, 9(2), 667-690. <https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesiletisim.1030922>
- Stahl, C. C., & Literat, I. (2023). #GenZ on TikTok: The collective online self-Portrait of the social media generation. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 26(7), 925-946. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2022.2053671>.
- Süer, S., Sezgin, K., & Oral, B. (2017). Z Kuşağındaki Öğrencilerin İnternete İlişkin Algılarının Belirlenmesi: Bir Metafor Çalışması. *Elektronik Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi*, 6(12), 190-203. Article 12.
- Szymkowiak, A., Melović, B., Dabić, M., Jeganathan, K., & Kundi, G. S. (2021). Information technology and Gen Z: The role of teachers, the internet, and technology in the education of young people. *Technology in Society*, 65, 101565. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101565>.
- Tam, M. S. (2022a). Türk TikTokerların İçerik Paylaşım Pratikleri Üzerine Nicel Bir Araştırma. *TRT Akademi*, 7(14), 182-211. Article 14. <https://doi.org/10.37679/trta.1008427>.
- Tam, M. S. (2022b). Z Kuşağının TikTok Kullanım Pratikleri ve Motivasyonları. *Yeni Medya*, 2022(13), 148-167. Article 13. <https://doi.org/10.55609/yenimedya.1163922>.
- Tang, L., Omar, S. Z., Bolong, J., & Zawawi, J. W. M. (2021). Influence Of Tiktok Usage Toward Positive Emotion And Relationship. İçinde *Breaking The Barriers, Inspiring Tomorrow* (ss. 271-280). Che Su Mustaffa, Mohd Khairie Ahmad, Norhafezah Yusof, Mohd Baharudin Mohd Hadza, Nursafwah Tugiman. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2021.06.02.36>
- Taş, H. Y., Demirdöğmez, M., & Küçükoğlu, M. (2017). Geleceğimiz Olan Z Kuşağının Çalışma Hayatına Muhtemel Etkileri. *OPUS Uluslararası Toplum Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7, 1031-1048. <https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.370345>
- TÜİK, (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu). (2021). *Çocuklarda Bilişim Teknolojileri Kullanım Araştırması, 2021*. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Cocuklarda-Bilism-Teknolojileri-Kullanim-Arastirmasi-2021-41132>
- Vogels, E., & Gelles-Watnick, R. (2023, Nisan 24). Teens and social media: Key findings from Pew Research Center surveys. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/04/24/teens-and-social-media-key-findings-from-pew-research-center-surveys/>
- We Are Social. (2022, Ocak 26). *Digital 2022: Another Year of Bumper Growth*. We Are Social UK. <https://wearesocial.com/uk/blog/2022/01/digital-2022-another-year-of-bumper-growth-2/>
- We Are Social. (2023). *The Changing World of Digital in 2023—We Are Social UK*. <https://wearesocial.com/uk/blog/2023/01/the-changing-world-of-digital-in-2023/>
- Willoughby, L. (2020, Ağustos 2). *Meet Gen Z. Who Are They? How Can You Reach Them?* <https://www.greenbook.org/insights/brand-strategy/meet-gen-z-who-are-they-how-can-you-reach-them>

- Yetkiner, B., & Öztürk, B. (2020). Kullanımlar ve Doyumlar Yaklaşımı Bağlamında İnönü Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin TikTok Kullanımı. *Iğdır Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 24, 215-235. Article 24.
- Yılmaz, D. (2019, Temmuz 22). *Yatmadan önce sosyal medya hesaplarını kontrol edenler dikkat! Uzmanlar uyarıyor—Mynet trend*. <https://www.mynet.com/yatmadan-once-sosyal-medya-hesaplarini-kontrol-edenler-dikkat-uzmanlar-uyariyor-190101169897>.

# The Virtual World Platform "TikTok": A Study On Generation Z

Seher KARATAŞ (Dr.)

Enderhan KARAKOÇ (Prof. Dr.)

## Extended Abstract

Social media has become an integral part of people's daily lives. It is effective in various areas such as communication, entertainment, news, marketing, and trade, and has a profound impact on our lives. With the emergence of digital technologies, social media platforms have become increasingly popular among young people. Generation Z has integrated social media, smartphones, and other digital tools into their daily routines. Social media platforms are viewed by Generation Z as a means of entertainment, communication, and creativity. Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok are examples of such platforms that allow young people to share photos and videos and interact with communities by sharing their daily routines in their instant stories. These platforms play a critical role in shaping their lifestyles, communication habits, and cultural expressions. TikTok is a social media platform that focuses on short video sharing. It has become popular among young people due to its creative content production and ability to reach large audiences quickly.

TikTok is a platform that has gained significant interest from Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012, and plays a crucial role in shaping the digital world. It is popular with this generation because of its unique feature of sharing short videos, which provides them with a compatible platform for their digital lifestyle. Although TikTok has encouraged creativity among young people and provided an opportunity to gain fame quickly, it has also faced criticism regarding privacy concerns, content control, and addiction. It is important to note that these criticisms are not unfounded and must be addressed by the platform.

This study examines the relationship between Generation Z and social media, with a focus on the use of the TikTok application. The research aims to measure the impact of TikTok on Generation Z, given their dependence on social media due to being born and raised in the digital world. The analysis focuses on the frequency of social media and TikTok usage among Generation Z individuals. The study aims to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1.** What is the frequency of social media use by Generation Z?
- RQ2.** Which of the social media platforms do Generation Z use the most?
- RQ3.** Which areas are Generation Z interested in on social media?
- RQ4.** What is the frequency of TikTok use by Generation Z?
- RQ5.** Why does Generation Z use TikTok?
- RQ6.** Does Generation Z share videos on TikTok?
- RQ7.** Do Generation Z trust TikTok?

The study examines the social media usage of Generation Z and TikTok. It reveals that participants spend an average of 267.81 minutes (4 hours 46 minutes) on social media, with a minimum of 17 minutes and a maximum of 840 minutes (14 hours). Although most participants accessed social media through mobile devices, the study found that they checked their accounts during free time and experienced boredom when away from social media for extended periods. The study concluded that participants were primarily

interested in social media for entertainment purposes.

The most frequently used social media platforms among the participants were WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. The study concluded that participants who reported checking their social media accounts before going to bed showed signs of social media addiction. 51.4% of the participants reported using TikTok, spending an average of minimum 10 minutes, maximum 605 minutes (10 hours) and an average of 145.53 minutes (2 hours 42 minutes) on the platform per day. The study concluded that participants who opened an account after encountering videos on the internet used TikTok for entertainment and relaxation. Additionally, the study found that participants who created video content on TikTok were inspired by trending videos and created content for fun. Furthermore, the study revealed that participants do not recommend TikTok to their friends and do not trust the platform.

Based on the study's findings, TikTok is a popular application among Generation Z due to its platform for quickly consuming short video shares and entertaining content. The study also revealed that Generation Z uses social media and TikTok as a means of having fun and utilising their free time. The study found that participants lacked trust in TikTok due to concerns over privacy, content control, and awareness of fake content. The impact of TikTok on levels of social media addiction was also identified, as it enables young people to exist effectively in the digital world and can influence their way of life.

**Keywords:** Social Media, TikTok, Generation Z, Usage Habits, Secondary School Students.

Bu makale **intihal tespit yazılımlarıyla** taranmıştır. İntihal tespit edilmemiştir.

This article has been scanned by **plagiarism detection softwares**. No plagiarism detected.

Bu çalışmada "**Yükseköğretim Kurumları Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Yönergesi**" kapsamında uyulması belirtilen kurallara uyulmuştur.

In this study, the rules stated in the "**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**" were followed.

Yazarların çalışmadaki **katkı oranları** eşittir.

The authors' **contribution rates** in the study are equal.

Çalışma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile **çıkar çatışması** bulunmamaktadır.

There is no **conflict of interest** with any institution or person within the scope of the study.

#### **Etik Kurul İzni | Ethics Committee Permission**

Within the framework of the decision taken during the meeting by Selçuk University Faculty of Communication Scientific Ethics Evaluation Committee dated 13/09/2021 and numbered E131318; the study does not contain any ethical issues.

Selçuk Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Bilimsel Etik Değerlendirme Kurulu'nun 13/09/2021 tarihli toplantısında alınan E131318 sayılı karar çerçevesinde çalışma etik açıdan bir sakınca içermemektedir.