

## Research article

### Factors influencing the use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making among young adults

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#### ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social media has fundamentally transformed the manner in which young adults seek information, engage with content, and make decisions. This study aims to investigate the factors influencing the use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making, drawing on Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Employing a qualitative research design to gain in-depth insights into the motivations and meanings young adults attribute to using TikTok in travel decision-making, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with participants aged 18 to 35. Findings revealed that perceived usefulness, realistic content, ease of use, and trustworthiness were among the most significant motivational factors in travel decision-making. It is imperative for tourism stakeholders to engage with social media platforms, as user-generated content shapes perceptions of destinations and influences young travellers' destination choices. Implications include the necessity for tourism marketers to create authentic, credible, and relatable TikTok content that resonates with young travellers. This study contributes to ongoing debates regarding social media, specifically examining how TikTok influences young adults' travel-related decision-making. Further research could compare TikTok with other social media platforms in greater detail.

#### KEYWORDS

Social media; Technology Acceptance Model (TAM); travel decision-making; uses and gratifications theory (UGT)TikTok

## Introduction

Over two billion individuals worldwide utilise social media, rendering it an essential component of daily life and a cornerstone of digital communication (Chawla & Chodak, 2021). Recent trends in marketing research suggest that social media has significantly transformed traditional marketing practices (Bashar et al., 2024), with core marketing functions such as advertising, promotions, and branding predominantly executed using social media tools (Zhao et al., 2021). Social media has been positioned as a potent marketing instrument due to its accessibility, user-friendly design, real-time interaction, and global reach. With the proliferation of social media platforms, TikTok has emerged as a crucial resource for travel inspiration and decision-making (Sun, 2023). TikTok enables travel agencies to engage with consumers in real-time, in contrast to traditional marketing, which relies on static campaigns and delayed feedback (Gobbilla & Kiran, 2025). The interactive nature of TikTok allows travel agencies to analyse user interactions with TikTok content through likes, shares, and comments providing them with critical insights into consumer behaviours and preferences (Abbas et al., 2019). With TikTok's immediacy, marketers can employ personalised, trend-driven content to enhance their relationships with viewers and make dynamic adjustments to campaigns (Montag et al., 2021). In the realm of tourism, what initially began as a platform designed for entertainment has transformed into a medium where users exchange ideas, acquire new skills, explore novel destinations, and seek travel inspiration. Consequently, TikTok marketing significantly shapes how travellers conceptualise and organise their vacations. The platform's algorithm amplifies user-generated travel content, affording even small travel agencies around the globe increased visibility when their content resonates with consumers (Yudhistira &

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**HOW TO CITE:** Mabaso, N.S., Mpotaringa, M. & Tichaawa, T.M. (2026). Factors influencing the use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making among young adults. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 15(1), 253- 261. <https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.735>

ISSN: 2223-814X (Online) | © 2026 AJHTL



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Muflichah, 2022). Viral travel challenges and hashtags, such as #HiddenGems, introduce individuals to destinations they may not have previously considered, thereby directly influencing their travel plans and destination preferences (Rasel et al., 2025). Unlike other digital marketing strategies, TikTok provides a distinctive amalgamation of entertainment and authentic peer-like recommendations, which enhances credibility and trust (Wang, 2024).

Despite TikTok's burgeoning popularity, there exists a paucity of research regarding its effect on travel decision-making. Previous studies have predominantly concentrated on the roles of Instagram and YouTube in travel marketing, emphasising that users' travel plans are profoundly influenced by visually appealing, credible, and emotionally engaging messages, which promote engagement more effectively than text-based marketing (Borchers, 2019; Gon, 2021; Hidalgo et al., 2025). Rodríguez-Hidalgo et al. (2025) investigated the persuasive communication of Instagram influencers, revealing that an influencer's capacity to persuade is largely contingent upon their communication skills and physical attributes. Oğuz & Diamond (2024) examined the influence of trust in social media influencers on impulsive travel behaviours among Zanzibaris, finding that trust in these influencers significantly enhances perceived destination credibility, which in turn bolsters destination brand trust. When followers possess confidence in a destination's brand, they are more likely to make impulsive travel decisions. Furthermore, Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021) and Mainolfi et al. (2022) assessed the credibility and influence of social media on travel intentions, demonstrating that the credibility of Instagram influencers, as perceived through their expertise and attractiveness, positively impacts followers' parasocial interactions, which subsequently enhances their travel intentions. While these studies affirm the increasing importance of social media in travel decision-making, they primarily focus on Instagram and Facebook, overlooking TikTok, which has risen in prominence among young adults due to the nature of its short-form videos, algorithm, and user-generated content that vividly showcases locations, experiences, and services (Hou, 2018; Schellewald, 2023). Social media platform preferences vary across user groups (Hysa et al., 2021), highlighting the importance of marketers selecting platforms that align with the characteristics and behaviours of their target consumers. The impact of TikTok on travel decision-making among young adults remains under-researched, particularly in the South African context, and its effect on domestic tourism is unclear (Martins et al., 2025), despite domestic tourism playing a vital role in the economies of many developing nations (Nyikana & Bama, 2023). It is essential to understand the motivational factors that influence the use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making among young adults, specifically in Johannesburg, a major metropolitan area with a substantial population of young individuals who engage with social media and interact with TikTok travel content. This gap presents challenges for tourism marketers aiming to target and foster engagement on the platform. This study seeks to address this gap.

## Literature review

### *Social media and TikTok in tourism*

In today's digitally disrupted landscape, social media has emerged as a powerful tool influencing consumer behaviour (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021), significantly transforming how individuals seek information, evaluate their options, and make purchasing decisions (Dzreke & Dzreke, 2025). The earliest recorded use of the term "social media" in its contemporary context was in reference to Matisse, an online media environment in Tokyo, which predates its widespread adoption in the early 2000s (Aichner et al., 2021). In recent years, marketers have increasingly utilised social media platforms to connect, interact, sell goods and services, and conduct business with potential clients (Bashar et al., 2024). Companies leverage these platforms to enhance consumer engagement, establish direct connections with specific audiences, and fortify their online presence, thereby boosting revenue (Nusair et al., 2019). Conversely, travellers are increasingly turning to social media for inspiration prior to making reservations, as well as for peer reviews and destination comparisons. Literature highlighting the significance and influence of social media in tourism has indicated that tourists are increasingly inclined to utilise social media at various stages of their travel (Živković et al., 2014), with approximately 40% of travellers reporting an increase in the time spent browsing social media during COVID-19 (Hysa et al., 2021). As tourists plan their holidays, they employ technology to gather information about specific destinations, services, and attractions. Posts shared by digital influencers significantly impact decisions regarding travel destinations (Olavarria-Benavides et al., 2021). Followers and the travel community attribute considerable credibility to the content promoted across various social media platforms. In contrast, Guerreiro et al. (2019) argue that the opinions of digital influencers do not significantly affect users' assessments of travel options during the planning phase. They contend that the shared experiences of influencers are not a decisive factor in selecting between alternatives.

TikTok's algorithm-driven short-form videos, which offer brief, captivating insights into various locations, have established the platform as a powerful tool for influencing travel decisions, particularly

among teenagers and young adults (Maulana & Sandyawati, 2023). Unlike traditional marketing, the platform enables both individuals and tourism operators to present destinations in aesthetically pleasing and easily shareable formats, often generating viral interest in travel locations (Dramićanin et al., 2023; Tran & Rudolf, 2022). TikTok users value the unpolished portrayals of authentic experiences and perceive peer-shared videos as more credible than professionally produced advertisements (Nguyen et al., 2025). User-generated content (UGC) shapes loyalty and behavioural intentions by influencing destination image and satisfaction (Xu et al., 2023). Narrative and emotional content are highly persuasive and exert a greater influence on the perceived value of a destination than factual information (Cheung et al., 2022). Short videos enhanced with stories, music, and emotional cues allow individuals to experience locations in ways that stimulate curiosity, create a sense of virtual immersion, and inspire a desire to visit (Liu et al., 2023). Consequently, TikTok is an exceptionally powerful tool for tourism marketing due to its unique combination of entertainment and information, which enhances destination appeal and memorability (Yang et al., 2025).

## Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in a two-dimensional theoretical framework, comprising the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT). TAM posits that individuals determine their acceptance and utilisation of technology based on its perceived usefulness and ease of use. This model is pertinent to the current study as it seeks to elucidate why young adults utilise TikTok for travel-related decision-making across the planning, travelling, and post-travel stages. Within tourism research, TAM has been employed to understand how technologies such as travel booking applications, virtual reality tours, and online review platforms influence traveller behaviour and decision-making (Manis & Choi, 2019), as well as how telehealth (An et al., 2021) and intelligent contracts (McNamara & Sepasgozar, 2020) are embraced. The popularity of TikTok as a platform for travel content suggests that its utilisation can be advantageous, as it facilitates more informed decision-making, owing to its user-friendly nature (Gabriel & Park, 2024). UGT is appropriate for investigating the motivational factors influencing TikTok usage, as it underscores the significance of digital media in everyday life, the diversity of needs it addresses, and the active role of the audience (Wei et al., 2024). Initially developed in 1973 (Katz et al., 1973), UGT elucidates why individuals actively select specific media to satisfy particular needs and motivations. The theory posits that social media users are not passive consumers; rather, they are purposive seekers of content that provides psychological and social gratifications such as information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, and inspiration (Aksoy & Allahverdi, 2025). In the context of this study, UGT offers a relevant framework for identifying the various motivational factors influencing young adults' use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making, as it highlights the role of individual needs and the gratifications sought from social media platforms.

## Methodology

South Africa, specifically Johannesburg, was selected as the study area due to its reputation as one of the country's most vibrant economic hubs. Johannesburg serves as the primary metropolitan centre, well-known for its business, tourism, and digital innovation (Mbinza, 2024). Furthermore, Johannesburg is recognised as a major socio-economically diverse African city with a significant youth population, which constitutes the largest user base of TikTok (Kemp, 2023). The city's diversity is a critical factor in how TikTok is utilised for content creation and information sharing, as well as in shaping perceptions of authenticity. The study, guided by an interpretivist perspective that considers reality as socially constructed (Fletcher, 2017), adopted a qualitative research design, employing semi-structured interviews. This methodology allowed the researcher to identify subjective perspectives and delve deeper into emerging insights (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The target group comprised young individuals aged 18 to 35 residing in Johannesburg who actively use TikTok and engage with travel-related content. This demographic is particularly relevant, as Generation Z and Millennials represent the most active TikTok users globally, exerting a significant influence on digital tourism trends (Serrano-Malebrán et al., 2025) and are recognised as early adopters of social media (Ghaly, 2023). Research participants were selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling strategy whereby individuals were chosen based on their age, geographic location, and active TikTok user status. This method was deemed appropriate for the study, as it ensured that participants possessed the requisite knowledge and were capable of providing in-depth insights that aligned with the study objectives (Palinkas et al., 2015). To enhance participant recruitment, snowball sampling was employed, allowing participants to recommend peers who met the inclusion criteria. This approach is particularly effective for identifying digitally active young adults who are otherwise challenging to reach (Guest et al., 2020).

The primary data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview guide, with questions designed to elicit respondents' experiences, attitudes, and behaviours regarding TikTok use in travel decision-making (Ajayi, 2023). Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or online (via Zoom or Teams), depending on the participants' preferences, with confidentiality rigorously maintained. Data were transcribed manually by listening to the recordings and editing them, rather than employing transcription software, as this method facilitated a deeper understanding of the data. Initial analysis was conducted manually through repeated readings of the transcribed data to enhance familiarity, alongside note-taking, coding, and thematic analysis. Subsequently, Atlas.ti software was utilised to identify additional themes. The identified themes will be presented and discussed in the following section. Respondents are coded with the letter P, denoting participant, followed by a number that distinguishes participants (e.g., P1, P2), to protect the confidentiality of respondents without any additional significance.

## Results and discussions

### *Participants profile*

The study participants were males and females aged 21 to 35. In the study, frequency was grouped into 'sometimes' and 'frequent'. Sometimes being used occasionally (2-3 days a week), while frequently showing regular, ongoing use of the platform (more than 4 times a week). The analysis of TikTok usage frequency among the 23 participants was mixed: some reported frequent use, while others reported occasional use. This distinction is not unexpected, given that past research has shown that young people engage differently with TikTok, for example, young women, particularly in categories such as lifestyle and travel content (Karatsoli & Nathanail, 2020; Defi & Hufad, 2024). The results from the interviews with young individuals who actively use TikTok and engage with travel-related content are organised into four sub-sections for discussion based on the identified themes. The first theme focused on the usefulness of TikTok in getting travel-related information. The second theme focused on the realistic nature of travel content, and the third centred on TikTok as an easy-to-use platform. The fourth theme centred on the trustworthiness of TikTok travel content.

### *The usefulness of TikTok in acquiring travel-related information*

Participants described TikTok as an effective tool for travel decision-making, with subthemes encompassing convenience, authentic insights, and the quality of information. Beyond its entertainment value, participants found TikTok convenient for obtaining travel information. The platform facilitates rapid access to information through reviews, making it easy to engage with content, and is available 24/7. Participants stated: "*TikTok makes travel research quick and engaging. In under a minute, I can see if a place is worth my time.*" [P19] "*TikTok is a place that basically gets me the information that I need, and without having to ask someone else.*" [P14]. These accounts illustrate that TikTok is appreciated for more than mere entertainment; it also serves as a valuable source of relevant travel information in a convenient manner. These findings align with those of Siddiqui et al. (2025), who similarly identified that the convenience of using social media positively influences users' decision-making. However, while the previous study centred on the fashion industry, the current study extends this understanding to the tourism context, emphasising that convenience is crucial for travellers seeking fast, accessible, and user-friendly platforms for information gathering, such as TikTok. The usefulness of TikTok transcended mere convenience in obtaining travel information; it also encompassed access to reviews of destinations, accommodations, restaurants, and various activities through short-form content, as well as the provision of authentic insights. A participant remarked that: "*I get to see different reviews from people about a certain place, be it a hotel or a restaurant. So, the reviews are what make it a useful platform for me, because I can get different opinions from people from different walks of life.*" [P15] Another participant added: "*I know people think influencers are the ones that post travel content, but you can find a small account where the person has, like, 1000 or 500 followers, and they give you their personal experience of whatever destination you've chosen to travel, in an unbiased and unscripted point of view.*" [P5]

The utility of TikTok, as identified in this study, parallels the findings of Liu et al (2024), which assert that TikTok's short-form videos significantly influence destination choice by offering engaging and personalised content that users deem beneficial when making travel decisions. Conversely, some participants voiced concerns regarding the authenticity and accuracy of travel content on TikTok, noting that certain content is sponsored, which raises questions about the reliability of the information presented. This phenomenon is commonly observed in service industries, where influencers engaged in sponsored content often receive superior service compared to uninfluenced individuals. One participant articulated this concern: "*The disadvantage is that there are influencers who are there to mislead.*" [P22]. In support of the previous quote, one participant mentioned: "*The disadvantage is that not all the things that people put online*

will also show you the downside or the negative sides to the travelling experience” [P5]. Additionally, other participants emphasised TikTok's limitation in that consuming its content detracts from the feeling of experiencing something for the first time. Each experience may seem like one previously encountered or witnessed through someone else's narrative. Furthermore, given the vast number of TikTok users and its influence, previously undiscovered locations may become overcrowded. Echoing these observations, the following perspectives were shared: *“I think a disadvantage is that there would be no element of surprise, because I've seen it, or somebody else has seen it, and they've shown me”* [P11]. *“There could also be the fact that, because you are seeing it from an influencer's page, more than 100 more people are seeing it and going to the same place”* [P11]. *“Places can become overpopulated, and they lose their essence of what's fun about them, because everyone has been there, which can also lead to high prices”* [P10]. These findings resonate with the work of Alejo et al. (2025), who examined both the positive and negative impacts of TikTok on tourism destination selection among Generation Z and Millennials in Manila, providing insights into the platform's strengths and limitations.

Alejo et al. (2025) further cautioned that while TikTok serves as a viable platform for inspiration, it may fall short in delivering accurate information for informed decision-making. Regarding the quality of information, participants noted that TikTok offers highly visual, short-form, and interactive content, enabling a rapid comprehension of information about destinations compared to traditional travel sources. Participants expressed: *“Brochures are sales tools. Blogs can feel long-winded. TikTok feels like a friend's quick recommendations. It's direct and far more relatable”* [P19]. *“TikTok is more engaging because you get to see things from the consumer's perspective, unlike using brochures or travel blogs, which present things from the company's perspective”* [P13]. *“First of all, TikTok is easily accessible. I don't have to go to an actual mall to find a travel agency, so it is convenient”* [P16]. In this instance, participants perceive traditional travel sources as biased and time-consuming to engage with, as they tend to be more detailed and present one-sided communication, which lacks engagement in a business-to-consumer interaction. Additionally, such content can often be outdated and may not accurately reflect the current state of the destination. *“I would say with TikTok, you get to see videos. You get to see what the place really looks like, unlike with brochures, where sometimes the pictures don't do the place justice, or sometimes the pictures look nice, but they don't really resemble the actual place”* [P17]. Another participant remarked: *“TikTok shows more firsthand, current experiences, unlike travel blogs or websites, where you might see pictures from last year, for instance. If I'm going to watch a TikTok video, it has to be about something that happened now. I check the date and trust that this is what happened, or this is how it looks now”* [P11]. These findings are consistent with those of Zhou et al. (2023), who conducted a study comparing TikTok's influence on destination choice with that of traditional media. They found that TikTok's engaging content often exerts a more significant impact on the decisions of young tourists. Although TikTok content is more visually appealing, brief, and engaging, some participants utilise it for travel inspiration; for initial discovery, they rely on more traditional sources for information verification and detailed planning.

### ***Realistic content***

TikTok was perceived as a platform that delivers authentic content regarding travel experiences. Participants frequently relied on TikTok to inform their travel-related decisions, as they believed the content shared on the platform was genuine. Some participants expressed that: *“TikTok features authentic creators who cater to all kinds of lifestyles, and in South Africa, I love creators with whom I can relate both socially and financially”* [P21]. *“I think it's (TikTok) more realistic, ... other people's opinions on travelling are also important, because when I get to a certain place, it has to meet my expectations based on what the place promised to meet”* [P6]. In contrast to polished content, TikTok videos were often regarded as depicting the authentic side of travel, encompassing both positive highlights and everyday challenges. This sense of authenticity enhances the platform's credibility and encourages participants to utilise it as a practical tool for travel planning. This finding strongly suggests that participants' motivation to use TikTok for travel-related decisions is linked to their trust in its realistic content. These findings align with a study by Sujatmiko et al. (2025), which found that authentic user-generated content on social media fosters trust and influences travel decision-making.

### ***Ease of use***

The ease with which users can access information influences their perception of TikTok as an easy-to-use tool, motivating participants to make it their preferred platform for travel planning. The platform's layout facilitates quick access to data through short videos, rendering it less time-consuming than reading lengthy articles on Google or viewing extended videos on YouTube. Participants expressed the following sentiments: *“TikTok is easier to use and doesn't have a lot of complicated features that can distract me from the crucial information I'm looking for”* [P20]. *“I think it makes it much easier for you to pick a place, because you can*

*see it without having to go to the website, which saves you time compared to navigating the website. It's quick and easy to use*" [P11]. Although the study identified ease of use as a motivating factor, this contradicts the findings of Mariani et al. (2019), who argue that, for some social media users, simplicity of use is considered a baseline; hence, it does not actively motivate individuals, as it is often taken for granted rather than consciously recognised.

### **Trustworthiness of TikTok travel content**

Trustworthiness emerged as a significant factor in using TikTok as a travel planning tool and a platform for sourcing travel inspiration. It reflects the extent to which individuals perceive the credibility of information sources. The findings revealed a divergence in perspectives regarding the trust and reliability of TikTok content. *"The content is trustworthy, as the influencers I follow often conduct live videos to let us see the establishments they visit in real-time. This is why I believe that the places they visit are genuine and offer the services and experiences posted on social media"* [P20]. *"I find it (TikTok) super trustworthy because whatever I see actually turns out to be exactly what is put out there. Whenever I decide to go to a destination, I have never found it to be misleading or not what was advertised"* [P8]. Some participants emphasised that, although they find peer recommendations and reviews credible, they do not fully trust everything they see on TikTok, as it can be exaggerated, highlighting their cautious approach. Common statements noted were: *"I find TikTok to be maybe 70% to 80% trustworthy. Sometimes I think you need to see something for yourself before you are 100% sure"* [P18]. *"I would say 50/50, I'm in the middle, because some people can be scamming you, and some places may be too good to be true"* [P13]. *"I am sceptical, I must admit, especially when it involves international trips or content from pages that pose as agencies or people who are paid to give good reviews"* [P16]. These findings align with those of Ramos & Ramos (2025), who emphasised the importance of credibility in user-generated content on TikTok, noting that trust in the content significantly affects users' intention to purchase tourism products. Patterns in the findings indicate that perceived trustworthiness directly influences engagement. Users are more likely to act on recommendations from creators they deem trustworthy, while content perceived as exaggerated or promotional is often regarded with suspicion. Under the broader theme of the trustworthiness of TikTok travel content, reliability emerged as another important factor shaping how participants evaluate TikTok as a source of travel information. Participants indicated that they find the content reliable; however, they do cross-check information and recommendations with other platforms, such as destination websites and Google. A participant stated: *"I think it's more reliable because I think with YouTube, it's only that I can't find immediate answers or like an immediate recommendation. Although they found travel recommendations made on TikTok to be reliable, another participant went on to further explain. I do my own research. Let's say I want to travel to the Northwest. I first check places to visit, and that's when I see people's vlogs about that specific location. That's how I make my decision"* [P16]. Another participant added: *"TikTok is reliable, in a sense, because you would find that the real people there who have gone, they can see the so and so went there, and it's a real place, you know, with real prices, as opposed to googling it"* [P15]. These responses highlight how TikTok is perceived as a reliable source for travel information. Participants remain cautious and double-check information with multiple sources to ensure they are not misinformed. This behaviour reflects a balance between trust in TikTok's immediacy and scepticism towards the accuracy of online information. These findings align with previous research on online information and the credibility of e-word of mouth. Erkan & Evan (2018) found that social media users balance trust in content with active verification to avoid misinformation.

## **Implications**

This study offers several theoretical, managerial, and policy implications for tourism stakeholders, particularly concerning young people's use of social media for travel-related decision-making. Theoretically, the findings contribute to the growing body of literature on social media use in tourism by signifying that TikTok is primarily used as a source of travel inspiration and a platform for gathering travel information, rather than as a standalone decision-making tool. While the platform is valued for its ease of use, engaging content, and quick access to information, participants consistently emphasised the importance of credibility and authenticity when considering travel-related content. Consequently, participants must cross-check information with other travel sources, such as travel websites, brochures, and online review platforms, before making travel decisions. Managerially, the findings suggest that TikTok should be strategically positioned as an inspirational and engagement-oriented platform for tourism destination marketers. Tourism stakeholders, such as accommodation providers, tour operators, and travel agencies, can significantly benefit from creating TikTok travel content that resonates with users. It is essential to invest in more authentic, engaging content that reflects real-life travel experiences. The study can also assist tourism brands in

tailoring promotions to young travellers, who rely heavily on TikTok travel content for their travel decision-making. For destination management organisations (DMOs), the study highlights TikTok's influence on destination image. DMOs can leverage this platform by collaborating with credible content creators who provide first-hand presentations of destinations, thereby emphasising a realistic portrayal of a destination, which can help manage visitor expectations and strengthen destination credibility. Additionally, DMOs must maintain an active presence on the platform, as this will enable them to address misinformation as it arises and shape destination narratives. From a policy perspective, the findings indicate a need for clear guidelines governing travel-related content on social media platforms. Tourism authorities and regulators can support ethical digital tourism communication by promoting transparency in digital marketing practices. These guidelines may help reduce misinformation and enhance trust in destination-related information shared on social media platforms, particularly TikTok.

## Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the factors influencing young adults' use of TikTok for travel-related decision-making. The findings revealed that usefulness, realistic content, ease of use, and trustworthiness were among the most critical motivational factors in travel decision-making. Young adults valued TikTok for its ability to provide quick, engaging content that offered rapid inspiration without the need for lengthy searches. The platform's design was also user-friendly, encouraging the discovery of new areas. However, motivation was hindered by concerns about credibility; as a result, TikTok is used more frequently for travel inspiration than for making final decisions. This study is not without limitations. The chosen research design and sample size limit the generalisability of the findings. Although the qualitative research design enabled the study to delve deeper into understanding the factors influencing TikTok use for travel-related decision-making, it did not compare TikTok with other social media platforms. The focus on young adults aged between 18-35 excluded other age groups whose TikTok use may differ. Future studies could conduct a comparative analysis between TikTok and other social media platforms to better understand the type of influence and impact each platform has on travel behaviour. Researchers could also explore different age groups. A mixed-method research design is also encouraged.

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