



**TIK TOK & 18 VOTES: POST GE 15 ANALYSIS
AMONG
YOUNG CHINESE VOTERS
IN P49, TANJONG, PENANG**

ALBERT PAN KIT KEE

**A RESEARCH PROJECT
SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATION (HONS)
JOURNALISM
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**

OCT. 2023

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Sincerely,

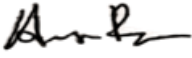
ALBERT PAN KIT KEE

DECLARATION

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal

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Tik Tok & 18 votes: Post GE 15 analysis among Young Chinese voters In P49, Tanjong,

Penang

Chapter 1: Introduction

Abstract

TikTok, a social media platform known for its short-form videos, has gained immense popularity among young people around the world. The application has been known for its influence on young people's behavior and perceptions, from shaping their opinions on various topics, including politics, to affecting their decision-making processes. In this research article, we will focus on the influence of TikTok on young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang state in Malaysia in the coming general election 2022 period. This study aims to explore the role of TikTok in shaping the opinions of young voters on political issues and their voting behavior. With the help of this research, we hope to gain a better understanding of how social media platforms, like TikTok, can influence political views and decision-making among young people.

1.1 Research Background

TikTok has become a global phenomenon, with over 3 billion downloads and 1 billion monthly users worldwide (Midson, 2022). In Malaysia, TikTok has become a popular platform among the youth, with nearly 50% of its global audience under the age of 34. Understanding the cultural significance and impact of TikTok in Malaysia is important, especially when it comes to analyzing the behavior and voting patterns of young Chinese voters in the Penang state after the General Election in 2022.

The Malaysian political landscape is diverse, with the population being composed of multiple ethnic groups. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022) the Chinese population in Malaysia has a significant impact on the country's politics, making up around 22.8% of the total population. Penang state, which has a predominantly Chinese population, has become a focal point of political analysis in Malaysia. The post-GE15 analysis of young Chinese voters in Penang state, and their behavior on social media platforms like TikTok, can provide important insights into the current political climate in the country.

TikTok, with its algorithmically-driven feeds and experiences, has emerged as a unique platform that is explicitly driven by its For You algorithm (Bhandari & Bimo, 2022). TikTok has become a powerful tool for communication, entertainment, and cultural expression among Malaysian youth. Young Chinese voters in Penang state, who are heavy users of TikTok, may be influenced by the content they consume on the platform. The impact of TikTok on young Chinese voters and their voting behavior in Penang state, in the context of post-GE15 analysis, is an important research topic that can provide valuable insights into the evolving political climate in Malaysia.

In conclusion, TikTok has become an integral part of youth culture in Malaysia, with young Chinese voters in Penang state being heavy users of the platform. Understanding the cultural significance and impact of TikTok on these voters, and their voting behavior in the context of post-GE15 analysis, is an important research topic. It can provide valuable insights into the current political climate in Malaysia, especially in the context of the diverse and multicultural nature of the country's population.

1.2 Problem Statement

TikTok is a social media platform that has become increasingly popular among young people in recent years (Galer, 2020). The platform allows users to create and share short videos, and its global reach has made it a popular tool for entertainment, education, and activism. However, the impact of TikTok on political participation and voting behavior is not well understood, particularly in the context of young Chinese voters in Penang state after the 2022 general election.

The main problem addressed in this research article is the lack of research on the relationship between TikTok use and political participation among young Chinese voters in Penang state. Although previous studies have examined the use of social media in political campaigns and voter behavior, there is limited research on the impact of TikTok specifically (Dilon, 2020). Understanding the ways in which TikTok affects political engagement and voting behavior among young people in Penang state could provide valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping democratic participation.

Moreover, the research article aims to examine the impact of the 2022 general election on young Chinese voters in Penang state. The election was marked by a significant shift in

the political landscape of Malaysia, with the opposition coalition making significant gains. However, the impact of this election on young Chinese voters and their political engagement has not been extensively studied. By focusing on this particular demographic in Penang state, the research article aims to shed light on the factors that influenced voting behavior and the impact of the election on future political participation (Dudenhoefer, 2022).

Overall, this research article seeks to address a significant gap in the literature on TikTok and political participation, with a particular focus on young Chinese voters in Penang state after the 2022 general election. By providing a detailed analysis of the impact of TikTok and the election on political behavior, the research article aims to contribute to a better understanding of the role of social media in shaping democratic participation among young people.

1.3 Research Objective

- RO1: To examine the extent to which TikTok has influenced the political attitudes and behaviors of young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang state post GE 15
- RO2: To investigate the potential risks and challenges associated with using TikTok for political purposes, including the spread of misinformation.
- RO3: To assess the effectiveness of political campaigning on TikTok.

1.4 Research Questions

- RQ1: How has the use of TikTok affected the voting behaviors of young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjung, Penang state after GE15?
- RQ2: : How likely are young Chinese voters to share political content from TikTok campaigns with their social media followers?
- RQ3: What are the key elements of an effective political campaign on TikTok?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H1: Young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjung, Penang state who use TikTok are more likely to engage in political discussions, share political content, and participate in political activities compared to those who do not use TikTok, due to the platform's interactive and engaging nature.

H2: Exposure to political content on TikTok significantly affects young Chinese voters' perception of political issues and candidates, leading to either increased or decreased support for certain candidates and causes.

1.6 Research Significant

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

In Malaysia, the available research on the influence of TikTok is limited, and it is challenging to find any relevant studies or journals in the Malaysian context. This study aims

to address this gap in the literature and provide a reference for future research on the topic. Given the scarcity of studies on the subject in Malaysia, this paper has the potential to provide a valuable resource for academicians.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

This research on the impact of TikTok on young Chinese voters in Penang state carries practical significance in illuminating the function of social media in political campaigns and voting conduct. Given TikTok's popularity among the youth and its vast reach on a global scale, comprehending its usage by political campaigns and its influence on young people's voting choices is crucial. Furthermore, gaining insights into the values, attitudes, and actions of young people through their utilization of TikTok can inform upcoming political campaigns and policymaking decisions.

1.7 Research Limitation

In conducting research on Tik Tok and 18 votes: Post GE 15 analysis among young Chinese voters in Penang state, it is important to consider the limitations of the study. Firstly, it is important to note that the study only focuses on the Chinese population. While this is necessary to investigate the experiences of this particular demographic, it is important to acknowledge that the findings may not be generalizable to other ethnic groups in Penang state or to the population as a whole. It is important to be transparent about the scope of the study and any potential limitations this may have on the findings.

Secondly, the study only includes participants between the ages of 18-25. While this age group is important to understand the experiences and opinions of young voters, it is important to acknowledge that the findings may not be applicable to older age groups. It is important to be clear about the age range of the participants and the potential implications this may have on the findings.

By acknowledging these limitations, the study can be more transparent and nuanced in its findings, and other researchers can build on this knowledge by taking into account the unique perspectives and experiences of other ethnic groups and age groups in future research.

1.8 Research Scope

The purpose of this research is to identify the areas in Penang with the highest Chinese voter populations and examine the voting behavior and preferences of young Chinese voters aged between 18 and 30 years old in these areas. Specifically, the location with the highest Chinese voter populations, P49 Tanjung, will be the focus of this study. According to the 14th General Election Malaysia (GE14 / PRU14), The location had a Chinese voter population of 70%.

It is noteworthy that a significant proportion of young voters lack understanding in political matters in Malaysia. A report by Institute of Strategic & International Studies in 2022 revealed that 60% of youth involved in the UNDI18 program lacked a strong grasp of political issues (Min Hui, 2022). Therefore, the findings of this research could provide valuable insights for political parties and policymakers in understanding the voting behavior and preferences of this particular demographic group in Penang.

Literature Review

[2.1 social media](#)

The 15th General Election came with a hung parliaments without clear winner, Barisan Nasional (BN), the longest governing party was defeated again in majority of the parliamentary seats. With only 30

seats less than half of the other political party. Pakatan Harapan with the highest seats, 81 seats and comparative with a new emerging political party Perikatan Nasional (PN), a collation composed of the Malaysian United Indigenous Party (Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia; BERSATU), Malaysian Islamic Party (Parti Islam Se-Malaysia; PAS) and Malaysian People's Movement Party (Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia; GERAKAN) had more than double of BN seats, 74 seats in total. The results of the election were mainly due to the online campaigning has become increasingly important in recent years, with the COVID-19 pandemic forcing many political parties to shift their campaign strategies to digital platforms (Mohamed & Abdul Manan, 2020). Social media has become an increasingly important tool for political campaigns, with parties using platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and especially TikTok to engage with voters and spread their message.

The social media phenomenon started with MySpace in 2003, allowing users to create profiles, connect with friends and share content. Although MySpace was soon overtaken by newer platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, social media has since become an integral part of modern communication, transforming the way we connect and share information. During periods of political turmoil and the Covid-19 Pandemic, individuals are more likely to turn to mass media as a trustworthy source of information. As a result, the social media's potential influence on people's attitudes and beliefs is significantly increased (Taib & Vivian, 2022). Social media are used by young voters as a tool to express their views and opinions on politics through social media, there is a significant group of people who actively use these platforms to share their political opinions, views, and news, expressing their support for specific political parties or ideologies. Which leads us to the latest social media usage, where Trump uses social media extensively to express his ideologies and express support when he loses 2020 presidential election. Trump was able to get mob of his supporters through Facebook attacked the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. (Timberg et al., 2021).

Around 80% of internet users in Indonesia belong to the age groups of 20-24 years and 25-29 years (Susilo & Putranto, 2018). According to a recent study by the Association of Internet Service Providers Indonesia, the 20-24 age group has 22.3 million internet users, which accounts for 82

percent of the group's total population. Similarly, the 25-29 age group has 24 million internet users, equivalent to 80 percent of their total population (Untari et al., 2020). Social media is not only used for communication by Indonesian youth but also for sharing their daily activities and grievances. Additionally, social media is used for transactions, finding partners, and displaying social status. The internet has become a fundamental necessity for Indonesian teenagers, especially those in junior high and high school, to support their learning and entertainment needs. The effects of technology and communication, particularly social networking, have an impact on adolescents. Even more so with how they are affected by political ads on social media to influence their voting behaviour.

According to the "Digital 2023 Malaysia" report by Datareportal, Malaysia has a high rate of social media usage, with 84% of the country's population using social media as of January 2021 (Kemp, 2023). The most commonly used social media platforms in Malaysia are YouTube, Facebook, and WhatsApp, followed by Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

The report emphasizes that social media has a significant impact on consumer behavior in Malaysia, as 74% of internet users in the country utilize social media for product and service research before making a purchase.

Furthermore, the report highlights the growing influence of social media in Malaysian politics, with government agencies and political parties using social media platforms to engage with voters and supporters.

Overall, the report suggests that social media has become an integral aspect of daily life in Malaysia, with a vast majority of the population actively using social media for various purposes such as information sharing and political expression (Kemp, 2023).

2.2 TikTok

In the year 2022, the total count of TikTok users in Malaysia has witnessed a surge, with a current

estimation of 14.4 million users (Salleh, 2022). Koyak (2021) explain that TikTok is one of the fastest growing apps and as the leading social media application, is prevalently used by individuals aged 16 to 30. The user base of TikTok primarily comprises the generation of humans born after the Millennials, colloquially referred to as Generation Z. This generation is responsible for 60% of TikTok's usage, and although our understanding of Generation Z is limited, we do know that this particular age group has started to shift away from Facebook. The prevalence of TikTok among individuals aged 25 and below may seem inconsequential; however, it is imperative to note that Generation Z is the most significant cohort in history, surpassing even the Baby Boomers.

Unlike most social media platforms, TikTok boasts a user base that is predominantly female in the United States, with women comprising 60% of the platform's users. The only other social media platform that comes close to this is Pinterest. According to a report by The New York Times in 2019, several high schools have begun to establish extracurricular clubs dedicated solely to TikTok (Lorenz, 2020). There has been a trend of political agents who employ TikTok as a platform to disseminate politically-tinged content (Cervi & Marín-Llado, 2021). TikTok users have also proclaimed that their "Foryoupage", the app's general page, has been privy to content contingent on their political predilections via likes, viewing time and comments left on videos (Cervi & Marín-Llado, 2021).

TikTok has garnered widespread usage across various regions and has accrued over 300 million users in the Asia-Pacific region, excluding China and India. This staggering figure highlights the immense popularity of the app, indicating that it has gained traction among individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultural spheres.

TikTok rapidly gained immense popularity, becoming the most downloaded app in both 2019 and 2020, with a staggering 693 million and 850 million downloads, respectively. Despite launching in 2017, it managed to claim the seventh spot among the most downloaded apps of the decade and is emerging as a formidable challenger to Facebook's dominance in the social networking sphere in the

West (Iqbal, 2023).

However, TikTok has had to navigate through a series of controversies, including being banned by India and Pakistan in 2019 for "morality issues," which were eventually lifted (Singh, 2020). But the ban was reinstated by India in June 2020, along with several other Chinese-based apps, due to escalating tensions between the two countries.

On May 13, 2022, a report by The Vibes mentions there was a posting of hate content on TikTok in Malaysia. Some social media users are blaming supporters of Perikatan Nasional for the incident. In addition, there are reports of children in schools discussing the risks associated with supporting a government that includes DAP (Shah Mohsen, 2022). Some believe that these discussions are the result of false narratives that have been spread through indoctrination.

Muhammad Khalil, the son of party president Tan Sri Abdul Hadi Awang, has credited the social media platform TikTok for the Islamist party's success in winning 49 seats during the 15th general election (GE15) under the Perikatan Nasional (PN) coalition (Morden, 2022). He believes that this is a sign that political Islam is gaining popularity in Malaysia, and the "conservative religious politics" of PAS are becoming more appealing to young and first-time voters. This suggests that PAS's strategy of using social media to reach out to voters and promote its ideology has been successful. It also highlights the importance of social media in shaping public opinion and influencing election outcomes.

TikTok has emerged as a powerful social media platform that has the potential to influence the youth's voting behavior and shape their political views. Its ability to reach a large and diverse audience through short, engaging videos has made it a popular tool for political campaigns and propaganda. However, as seen in the case of Malaysia, there are concerns about the spread of hate content and false

narratives on the platform, which can potentially indoctrinate young and impressionable minds. It is crucial to address these concerns and ensure that the content on TikTok is factual and free from hate speech. With proper regulation and responsible use, TikTok can be a valuable tool for engaging and informing young voters, and for promoting a healthy and informed democracy.

2.3 Undi 18 GE-15

According to the Official Undi 18 website, Undi18, a Malaysian youth movement, successfully fought to modify Federal Constitution Article 119(1), lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 (Lee, 2021). The Malaysian Students' Global Alliance launched the campaign in 2016 as a student-led effort, and it has since organised town halls, seminars, and public engagements to raise awareness of youth democratic representation. Undi18 has met with lawmakers from all political parties and believes in crossing party lines for young empowerment. The movement won a historic Constitutional Amendment with unanimous agreement from both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament in July 2019, thanks to the backing of YB Syed Saddiq Syed Abdul Rahman (Halid, 2021).

In most European countries, the voting age is 18 years. It had become the most common voting age, and it remains the same today. Ever since 1946, Czechoslovakia became the first country to lower their minimum voting age to 20 and since then most countries have started to lower their minimum voting age. The most prevalent voting age of 18 is linked to military enlistment, as it is the age when citizens are typically eligible to join the military. Therefore, those who are able to serve their country are inclined to exercise their right to vote during elections.

Switzerland is one of the European countries where direct democracy and federalism are prominent features. Any Swiss citizen who is 18 years or older, excluding individuals incapacitated due to mental illness or disability as outlined in article 136, section 1 of the federal constitution, can participate in National Council elections, including voting and being a candidate (Von Wyl, 2022).

Additionally, there is a push from the Switzerland Parliament to lower the voting age to 16. There exists a divide between the younger generation and the government, as the former is more inclined to

protest publicly rather than engage in institutional democracy by means of voting in elections or referendums, initiating political actions, or joining political parties (Wälterlin, 2020).

This divide highlights a disparity between politically active youth and established democratic institutions. Interestingly, lowering the voting age to 16 is not seen as a pressing concern among Swiss youngsters.

The minimum age for voting in some other parts of the world, such as Asia, is 17 years old, as seen in Indonesia where it is the lowest in the Southeast Asian region and globally (Gnanasagaran, 2018). The country has not expressed interest in allowing their military and police personnel to vote. Meanwhile, in the West, Guatemala does not permit active-duty armed forces members to vote and confines them to their barracks on election day.

During the 2014 legislative elections in Indonesia, the complicated election process and unclear eligibility rules resulted in inadequate voter education for young people (Gnanasagaran, 2018). Although the minimum voting age is 17, married individuals with an ID can also vote, which led to confusion among young voters who lacked information on their designated districts and the large number of candidates running for over 19,000 seats. As a result, it was predicted that young voters would not participate much in the elections.

To address this issue, online voter education and electoral information emerged as an alternative source of information for young voters. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that 11.7% of voters in Indonesia's 2014 Elections were first-time voters, highlighting the need for more resources to educate young people about the importance of voting (Osman et al., 2014). Interestingly, Indonesia has a large population of young people, making it one of the most active nations on social media, which has prompted political parties and candidates to conduct their election campaigns online. By leveraging social media platforms, parties and politicians can reach out to more young voters and provide them with the necessary information to make informed decisions on election day.

Malaysia experienced a significant milestone in its journey towards democracy when the Undi 18 bill was passed by the Parliament, enabling citizens aged 18 and above to participate in voting and

contesting for political positions. This historic moment was further amplified by the unanimous approval of the bill without any exceptions. The bill was also endorsed by the upper house of the Parliament on July 25, 2019. Nonetheless, various studies indicate that the engagement of young people in conventional politics has been on the decline in recent times, as stated by Norhafiza Mohd Hed & Maria T Grasso (2019), Sloam (2016), and Sloam & Henn (2019). In the past few decades, there has been a global trend of decreasing voter turnout especially among young voters which seems to reinforce that young voters engagement with politics through the conventional way is decreasing (Solijonov, 2016; Blais, 2014)

Additionally, many Malaysian researches only concentrate on specific age categories, primarily those above 21 years old, as noted by Norhafiza Mohd Hed & Maria T Grasso (2019). Ming, Azhar, Hazri, and Mulakala (2012) discovered that their study included respondents aged 17 to 19 years old, albeit their ratio to the overall number of respondents was minimal. This could be attributed to the fact that individuals under 18 years old are not legally authorized to vote. However, with the implementation of Undi18, the number of eligible voters has increased, and it is expected that around 1.2 million additional voters will participate in the upcoming GE15. This group of young voters, also known as the Undi18 group, has caught the attention of political parties, who are now competing for their support in the upcoming 15th general election (Jaafar, 2022).

2.4 Young Chinese Voters

According to the United Nations, "youth" refers to anyone aged 15 to 24, however the Commonwealth extends this to people aged up to 29. These definitions, however, are not established. According to the United Nations Population Division, the worldwide population of young people aged 10 to 24 accounts for 23.6% of the world's total population of 7.8 billion in 2021. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the number of people aged 15-30 in Malaysia in 2018 is expected to be approximately 15.1 million, which is 46.64 percent of the total population in the country. (Bernama,

2019). According to Ahmad and Zin in 2021, the Youth Development and Societies Act 2007 (Act 688) defines youth in Malaysia as those aged 15 to 30 years old as of 2018 (Yunus & Landau, 2019). As a result, this study of young Chinese voters' political identities will focus on those aged 18 to 30, taking into account the Ministry of Youth's new age group formed in 2018 and Malaysia's new minimum voting age, which will take effect in December 2021.

The Malaysian Department of Statistics Official Portal reported that the Chinese make up the second largest ethnic group in Malaysia, comprising 22.6% of the population (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2021). Thus, it is crucial to comprehend the factors that impact the goals of the Chinese struggle. Moreover, analyzing Chinese politics would enable one to grasp how these factors affect the political conduct of the Chinese community and translate into voting behaviour that supports or opposes the current government. More than 71% of the young voters indicated their preference for multi-racial political parties, which represented the interests of all Malaysians regardless of ethnicity or religion

The political behavior of Malaysian Chinese voters has been widely described as adhering to the "pendulum swing" theory (Khadijah, and Loh 2016). This characterization suggests that the majority of Malaysian Chinese voters tend to alternate their political support between one side and the other at successive generations. Specifically, they may either favor increased representation in the government or a stronger opposition depending on the circumstances. This pattern of political behavior has been observed and studied by scholars and experts in Malaysian politics.

Additionally, Chin et al. (2015) conducted a study that presents a contrasting perspective on the voting behavior of Chinese Malaysian voters. The authors concluded that Chinese Malaysians make rational and dynamic political decisions. Based on their survey conducted in July 2013, they tend to support political parties that can effectively represent their ethnic rights and fulfill their desire to live in a well-governed society. Despite the current rejection of BN by Chinese Malaysians, their voting patterns may change in the future as their decision-making is not static.

Prof James Chin, an academic director at the Asia Institute in the University of Tasmania and a

political analyst, has stated that Chinese voters' demands in Malaysia have not changed since the 1970s (The Star, 2022). They request equal treatment, recognition of Chinese culture, and a government that is free from corruption. The youth voters, on the other hand, are more concerned about issues such as employment, property prices, and college fees, and they prioritize economic opportunities over their rights and benefits. The Chinese community as a whole wish for a stable country that can produce better economic outcomes by adhering to the rule of law. Due to the allocation of seats, particularly in rural areas, Sabah, and Sarawak, the Chinese often perceive the election as unfair. Voters who are automatically registered are not inclined to vote because they are typically apolitical and have not enrolled themselves as voters. As a result, the turnout rate for these registered voters is expected to remain low unless an outstanding candidate wins their hearts or a candidate forces them to back his or her opponent. In conclusion, understanding the political behavior and demands of young Chinese voters is crucial to comprehending the complex political landscape in Malaysia. While some scholars suggest that the Chinese community adheres to a "pendulum swing" theory in their political support, others argue that Chinese voters make rational and dynamic decisions based on their desire for equitable treatment, cultural recognition, and clean governance. Young Chinese voters prioritize economic prospects over their rights and benefits, but also show a preference for multi-racial political parties that represent the interests of all Malaysians. With the incoming state poll set to take effect in June 2023, it will be interesting to observe how these young voters shape the political landscape in Malaysia and whether their demands and preferences shift over time.

2.5: Theoretical Framework (Rational Choice Theory)

In accordance with Merriam (1997), a theoretical framework is an integral component of any study, as it offers a foundation for research and facilitates the research process. It enables researchers to determine appropriate research methodologies, examine data, identify gaps in the literature, and establish hypotheses for empirical testing. Although quantitative research approaches necessitate a theoretical foundation to test hypotheses, qualitative studies can also employ a theoretical framework.

This framework entails presenting a specific theory and integrating empirical and conceptual research on the subject (Creswell, 2003).

This study employs a theoretical framework based on the Rational Choice Theory (RCT) to investigate the voting patterns and the impact of TikTok on the voting habits of young Chinese voters in Penang state (Levine & Palfrey, 2007; Simon, 1955; Weakliem & Heath, 1994). The RCT is a widely used framework in social sciences that assumes individuals make rational choices based on their preferences and the available information (Simon, 1955). By applying the RCT to this study, a conceptual framework can be developed to grasp the rational decision-making process underpinning the voting behaviors of young Chinese voters in Penang state. Specifically, the RCT can be used to identify the factors that influence young Chinese voters to vote in a particular way, such as their preferences, beliefs, and the available information. Furthermore, the RCT can be used to investigate the impact of TikTok on the voting habits of young Chinese voters in Penang state by understanding how TikTok influences their preferences, beliefs, and the available information, and how these factors, in turn, influence their voting behaviors. Overall, the RCT provides a useful framework for investigating the voting patterns and the impact of TikTok on the voting habits of young Chinese voters in Penang state, and can inform the research design and analysis of this study.

2.5.1 Rational Choice Theory

In present-day academic discourse, Rational Choice Theory is understood as a framework that proposes criminal behavior to be driven by a self-centered assessment of the pros and cons of different options, with the preferred option being the one believed to offer the highest possible benefit. The advocates of this theory also emphasize the importance of an individual's self-interest, commonly known as self-regarding preference in the field of economics.

According to Smith (1759), the framework suggests that individuals act based on their own self-interests, and that in a free market economy, self-interested competition drives the workings of the

"invisible hand."

According to Rational Choice Theory, individuals act rationally when voting or making decisions that serve their economic interests, while politicians seek election or re-election. This theory is both predictive and prescriptive, as it allows individuals to pursue their self-interests while anticipating the consequences of their actions. The theory assumes that individuals make decisions that will result in the best possible outcomes. The cost-benefit principle, which has been extended to political science, particularly in the context of voting behavior, forms the basis of this theory. (Paternoster et al., 2017) suggest that when confronted with a voter who states that their motivation for voting is due to a sense of civic duty, a rational choice theorist would disregard the voter's interpretation and instead apply their own version of rational choice theory, assuming that the decision to vote is driven by a cost-benefit analysis that serves to maximize the voter's self-interest.

Rational choice theory is a powerful tool for forecasting and analysing voter behaviour, as well as for comparing different actors such as people, political parties, and governmental bodies. Rational choice theory has proven to be an effective tool in predicting and analyzing voter behavior, while also facilitating comparisons between various actors, such as individuals, political parties, and governmental entities. As an illustration, Aldrich (1993) argues that rational choice theory allows individual voters to evaluate a political party's policies and image as the subject of their rational choice analysis.

Downs (1957) argues that voters engage in logical decision-making processes when deciding whether to vote and whom to vote for. The rational choice approach is centered on the idea that voters make rational decisions by considering the qualities of candidates and political parties before casting their ballots. Rational Choice Theory posits that individuals are rational when making decisions, including when voting, and that they act in their self-interest. Politicians seeking re-election are also believed to take actions that would increase their chances of being re-elected. The underlying assumption is that decisions are made to maximize benefits while minimizing costs. This cost-benefit principle has been applied to the field of political science, particularly in the study of voting behavior.

Based on this, the rational choice theory has three main principles. Firstly, it assumes that all voter decisions are rational and guided by self-interest, with the goal of maximizing their action for the most benefits (Smith, 1991). Secondly, it is possible to predict the effects of a voter's decision based on various options within the consistent framework of the democratic political system. Lastly, while consistency is a significant aspect, some degree of uncertainty is necessary to allow for multiple possibilities and contribute to a democratic society. Therefore, the rational choice theory relies on consistency, uncertainty, and rationality to explain the behavior of voters, political parties, and governments during an election that is not based on ideology.

Boudon (1998) argues that there are limitations to Rational Choice Theory, as it has been unable to adequately explain certain significant phenomena. These limitations are known as "empirical objections" to the theory. The constraint of Rational Choice Theory lies in the difficulty individuals face in making informed decisions due to limited information and uncertainty. This may necessitate alternative decision-making methods. For instance, although an individual's vote has an infinitesimally small probability of affecting the outcome of an election, people still choose to vote. Therefore, it is challenging to attribute the motivation behind such behavior to the expected outcomes of specific actions.

Despite its flaw, rational choice theory remains a valuable instrument for analyzing voting patterns in Malaysia. However, the effect of social media channels, such as TikTok, on the voting behavior of young Chinese voters in Penang is not yet understood. Therefore, the objective of this study is to establish a correlation between the use of TikTok and the voting habits of young Chinese voters in Penang following the 2022 General Election.

The findings of this research will reveal the potential influence of social media on young voters' political engagement and contribute to a more comprehensive comprehension of the function of technology in shaping democratic processes.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a tool that integrates relevant theories, empirical research, and concepts to advance and systematize knowledge about related concepts or issues. Its primary purpose is to define a concept, map out the research terrain or conceptual scope, systematize relations among concepts, and identify gaps in literature. A conceptual framework provides a systematic approach to understanding complex ideas and their relationships, particularly when a concept lacks a comprehensive understanding and integrated framework within the research community. The framework describes the relationship between the main concepts of a study and is arranged in a logical structure to provide a visual display of how ideas in a study relate to one another. By bringing together relevant concepts, theories, and empirical research, a conceptual framework advances the understanding of the concept and its relationships with other concepts. (Adom et al., 2018; Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2009).

In order to analyze the Young Chinese Voters behaviors, the study will employ the Rational Choice Theory models. The associations between TikTok, rational choice and the voting trend are represented in Figure 1 as below:

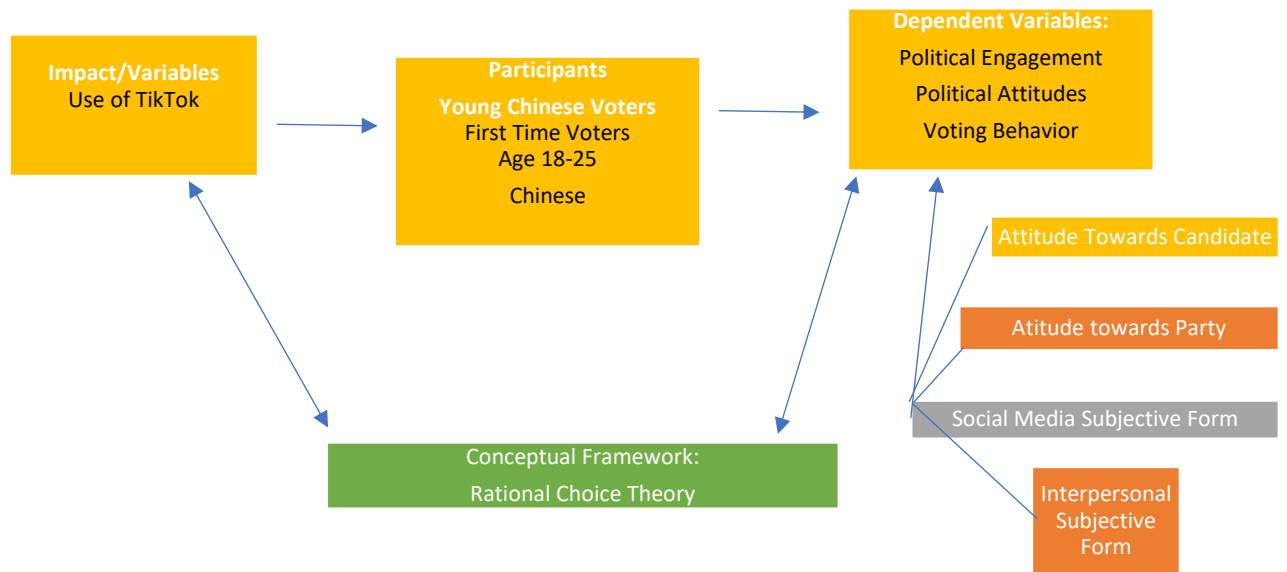


Figure 1: Impact of TikTok on Political Attitudes and Voting Behavior of Young Chinese Voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang.

Several studies have been conducted on the voting patterns of Chinese voters in Malaysia, as evidenced by the works of Pandian (2014) and Hed & Saunders (2020). However, it has been observed that most of these studies have primarily focused on young voters aged 21 and above, particularly those of Chinese descent, and have explored their voting patterns in relation to their political identity. Notably, there is a dearth of research on the voting behavior of individuals aged 21 and below, particularly those belonging to the UNDI 18 group. This gap in the literature presents an opportunity for further investigation into the impact of social media, specifically TikTok, on the political attitudes and voting behavior of young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang state. By addressing this gap, the study can provide valuable insights into the role of social media in shaping democratic participation and political views among young people in Malaysia, and can inform political campaigns and elections in the region.

It has been observed that previous academic studies have overlooked the constituencies selected for this study, specifically Tanjong, and have instead focused on larger cities, particularly in Lembah Klang. Consequently, the research questions outlined in the preceding chapter are of utmost importance and require urgent attention. The literature review conducted for this study has revealed a scarcity of resources, particularly in the field of political science, which further highlights the significance of this research.

Methodology:

3.1 Research Design:

According to Swaen (2022), a conceptual framework is a model that illustrates the relationship between relevant variables pertaining to a problem. This framework serves as the basis for the entire study, as hypotheses are developed and tested based on it to confirm the theory formulated.

This research will adopt the quantitative research is the most generally employed approach in the social sciences, and it entails the use of methods, tools, and assumptions to examine psychological, social, and economic phenomena through the examination of numerical patterns (Patton, 1987). There are several types of research in this category, including descriptive, correlational, experimental, and causal-comparative research. Because this is a quantitative study, it is critical to comprehend the link between independent and dependent variables. The study also comprises data collecting in order to detect and analyse conclusions by recognising patterns in the data. Heale and Twycross (2015) suggest

that surveys or questionnaires are an effective method of collecting data when the researcher has a clear understanding of what is required and how to measure the variable of interest. This approach can also facilitate the generalization of findings from the study participants to a broader population.

3.2 Sample and Sampling:

The population targeted for a survey represents the total group whose data will be collected (Etikan, 2017). A sample, on the other hand, is a pre-selected portion of the population. The process of selecting persons for the sample, which includes determining the subjects to be investigated, is known as sampling (Acharya et al., 2013). Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the two types of sampling procedures. In this study, the study population consists of individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 who identify as members of the Chinese community residing in Penang state. To ensure that the sample is representative of the population, we will use simple random sampling and snowball sampling to select participants. This method involves selecting participants randomly from the population, ensuring that each member has an equal chance of being selected.

According to Krejcie and Morgan's table, the research selected a sample of eligible voters from a specific geographic location. The sample size was determined to be 384 for a population of 100,000 or more, as recommended by the table. This research will aim for 400 sample for a more accurate result. For a population size of 2,800, the recommended sample size was 338, which was used to calculate the sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

Prior to data collection, it's crucial for researchers to determine if their sample size is sufficient to produce accurate and dependable results (Chua Yan Piaw, 2020). In order to verify the appropriateness of the sample size recommended by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the research team conducted statistical power analysis using Cohen's (1988) method. The recommendation by Memon et al. (2020) for a minimum of 200 cases further reinforces the significance of having an adequate sample size.

The target population for this study consists of young Chinese voters aged 18 to 25 from one

parliamentary constituency in Penang state: P49 Tanjong (approximately 49,586 registered voters (84.17%). This decision is based on the enormous number of voters in these districts, as well as the fact that more than 70% of registered voters in both areas identify as Chinese.

3.3 Data Collection:

In this research, quantitative data collection methods will be employed, given its critical role in the research process. Despite being considered an older research technique, surveys remain the most commonly used data collection method in social research today. The study will specifically target registered voters in their respective parliamentary constituencies, which will be selected through simple random sampling methods (Acharya et al., 2013). These techniques will ensure that every respondent has an equal and known probability of being selected for the study.

This research will utilize a quantitative research approach and employ descriptive research methods to analyze the data collected. Descriptive analysis is a statistical technique that aids in identifying the optimal solution to research problems. Measures such as mean, median, percentage, and frequency will be used to analyze the collected data (Izenman, 2009).

Data will be collected using a questionnaire survey instrument, which will be administered to the selected participants. A questionnaire is a structured research tool that consists of a series of questions and prompts intended to obtain data and information from respondents (Levenstein et al., 1993). Compared to other research instruments, questionnaires can be assessed in a more objective and scientific manner (Lederman et al., 2002). Moreover, the standardized nature of questionnaires enables researchers to conveniently collect and analyze relevant data (Marshall, 2005). Hence, questionnaire is selected for this study.

(Oreiro et al., 2019) suggest that questionnaires are a suitable research instrument as they allow for standardization and efficient collection of relevant data. In this particular study, a questionnaire was deemed the most appropriate data gathering method. Questionnaires can be categorized into two types:

structured and non-structured. A structured questionnaire, according to Bolarinwa (2015), is a highly reliable data gathering instrument that delivers quantitative data that is both easy to analyse and reduces deviations. As a result, a structured questionnaire was employed as a research instrument in this study to obtain quantitative data.

The survey will be distributed through a Google survey questionnaire, which will be distributed physically or email to the eligible voters who will then have the option to complete the questionnaire anonymously. The questionnaire will consist of three sections with 5 questions each. Section A consists of acquiring data on how TikTok affects the voting behaviors of young Chinese voters in Penang state after GE15. The questionnaire includes questions on considering a candidate's TikTok account, influence of political content, frequency of engagement, and the impact on political knowledge and motivation. Section B acquiring data on questions on the frequency of encountering political misinformation, its impact on voting behaviors, confidence in distinguishing accurate information from misinformation, likelihood of reporting misinformation, and the potential effectiveness of fact-checking tools. Section C is acquiring data includes questions on the likelihood of engagement with humor or satire, focus on policy issues, use of user-generated content, utilization of influencers, and the likelihood of sharing political content with social media followers. The study aims to identify the most effective strategies for political campaigns on TikTok. All questions in the questionnaire were adopted and modified from past studies to suit this study. English will be the medium use as most of the participants would be urbanite and should not have any issues. It is also the lingua franca of South East Asia countries even in Malaysia its commonly use (Seidlhofer, 2005; Kirkpatrick et al., 2016).

Due to the unavailability of updated data on the GE15 election in Penang state, as it will only be held in July 2023, we will be using the most recent election results available to us, which are from the GE14 electoral results. It is assumed that the data from the previous election will not differ significantly from the upcoming election. Please refer to Table 1.

Table 1: Total Number of Sample Populations

Parliamentary	DUN	Registered voters	Chinese voters	Population	Sample
P49	N 26	14,476	75.97%	10,997	75
Tanjong	Padang Kota				
	N 27	20,069	92.12 %	18,487	255
49,586	Pengkalan Kota				
410	N 28	15,041	81.45%	12,250	80
	Komtar				
	TOTAL	49,586		41,734	

3.4 Data Analysis:

Data analysis involves the process of assessing and interpreting collected data to extract relevant information for further study. This may include various steps such as measuring variability, evaluating relationships, and testing hypotheses to draw conclusions (Ibrahim, 2015). In this study, the researcher will utilize the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS) 29, the latest version of the statistical software platform, to analyze the research findings. According to Suresh (2015), SPSS is particularly important for social science research, especially for survey-based data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential analyses will be conducted using SPSS. The researcher will employ Pearson Correlation Analysis to examine the relationship between TikTok usage and the political participation of the respondents as outlined in RQ3. Additionally, descriptive analysis will be used to

calculate the mean of variables for RQ1 and RQ2. Three independent variables—TikTok usage, political interest, and political knowledge—will be analyzed using SPSS to determine the mean, and Pearson Correlation Analysis will be used to assess the relationship between these variables and political participation. This analysis is commonly used to measure the significance and strength of the relationship between variables (Turney, 2022). Ultimately, this approach aims to determine whether these variables significantly impact the political participation of Tanjong Chinese youth on the social media platform TikTok.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and anonymity and confidentiality were ensured during the data collection and analysis process.

3.6. Questionnaire questions

Research Questions	Questionnaire question
Research Question 1: How has the use of TikTok affected the voting behaviors of young Chinese voters in Penang state after GE15?	1. To what extent do you agree that TikTok has influenced your political beliefs? (Likert 7-point scale)
	2. How often do you come across political content on TikTok? (Structured question)
	3. Have you changed your political views

	<p>as a result of content you have seen on TikTok? (Structured question)</p>
	<p>4. Do you believe that TikTok has made you more informed about political issues? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>5. How likely are you to vote in the next election as a result of political content on TikTok? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
<p>Research Question 2: What are the common types of misinformation spread through TikTok in relation to political issues?</p>	<p>1. Have you come across any political content on TikTok that you believe to be false or misleading? (Structured question)</p>
	<p>2. How often do you fact-check political content on TikTok before sharing it? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>3. To what extent do you believe that misinformation on TikTok can influence political attitudes and behaviors? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>4. Have you ever shared political content on TikTok that you later found out to be false or misleading? (Structured</p>

	question)
<p>Research Question 3: What are the key elements of an effective political campaign on TikTok?</p>	<p>5. How likely are you to report political content on TikTok that you believe to be false or misleading? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>1. To what extent do you believe that political campaigns on TikTok can influence your voting behavior? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>2. What types of political content on TikTok are most likely to capture your attention? (Structured question)</p>
	<p>3. How often do you engage with political content on TikTok by liking, commenting, or sharing? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>4. How likely are you to participate in a</p>

	<p>political campaign on TikTok by creating and sharing your own content? (Likert 7-point scale)</p>
	<p>5. What do you believe are the most important factors for a political campaign to be successful on TikTok? (Structured question)</p>

3.7. Summary

Chapter three meticulously solidifies the research design and methodology. The survey instrument, meticulously crafted from established measures within relevant literature, aims to illuminate the anticipated research outcomes. This rigorous approach ensures precise alignment with research objectives, targeted exploration of research questions, and rigorous testing of proposed hypotheses. A pilot study further honed the survey's efficacy in preparation for the forthcoming data collection phase. Additionally, thorough reliability testing validated the accuracy and consistency of both variables and questionnaire items.

The subsequent chapter will shift focus to the insightful presentation and discussion of the study's findings. In-depth analysis of the results will be undertaken, fostering meaningful discourse and illuminating conclusions that draw together the entirety of the research journey.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher utilized the snowball sampling technique to distribute a survey questionnaire and initially selected 400 responses for analysis. However, upon identifying that 10 survey responses did not meet the required criteria, an additional 10 responses were chosen to replace the disqualified ones. The disqualified responses typically indicated a lack of engagement with TikTok in their daily routines. In the Google Form setup, individuals who do not use or are not interested in TikTok were instructed to conclude their participation as they did not meet the eligibility criteria for the research. Consequently, the total number of respondents for this study stands at 410 young Chinese voters.

4.1.1 Demographic Profile

This study draws upon a sample of 410 young Chinese individuals who, as first-time voters, actively engage with political information on TikTok through searching, receiving, and sharing content. Given this homogeneity in key demographic aspects, the subsequent table focuses on further characterizing the sample through variables such as TikTok usage frequency, age, and type of school attended.

Tanjong Demographic		Frequency	Percentage
How often do you use TikTok?	Always	210	51.2%
	Seldom	65	15.9%
	Sometimes	135	32.9%
Age	18-20	245	59.8%
	21-24	115	28.0%
	25 and above	50	12.2%

Type of School Attended	National School (SMK)	150	36.6%
	National-type Chinese School (SJKC)	140	34.1%
	Private Chinese School (Independent Chinese School)	120	29.3%

Table 2: Demographic Information

Table 2 outlines findings from a survey of 410 respondents, highlighting the widespread adoption of TikTok within the Chinese youth community in Tanjong. A considerable 51.2% of participants indicated daily usage of TikTok, while 32.9% reported occasional use, and 15.9% mentioned infrequent engagement. These statistics underscore a conspicuous trend, indicating a prevalent and frequent involvement with TikTok among the surveyed cohort.

Furthermore, the age breakdown presented in Table 2 indicates that a majority of respondents (245 individuals) belong to the 18-20 age bracket. This demographic concentration strongly implies a distinct preference for TikTok among young Chinese individuals in Tanjong, particularly within the 18-20 age group.

Additionally, the data sheds light on a notable aspect concerning UNDI 18 Chinese first-time voters, with almost 52% relying on TikTok for their political information consumption. This trend aligns with prior research, such as the findings from Musa (2022), revealing a comparable pattern. Musa's study demonstrated that 69% of teenagers and young adults aged 13 to 24 in Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines predominantly use TikTok as their primary information source. Importantly, this research implies that the inclination towards TikTok as a platform for news and political information consumption is also prevalent among Chinese new voters in Tanjong.

In summary, the data presented in Table 2 indicates a substantial and consistent preference for frequent TikTok usage among young Chinese individuals in Tanjong, particularly within the 18-20 age group. This aligns with broader regional patterns and underscores the significance of TikTok as a prominent medium for political information consumption, especially among first-time voters.

4.2 Data Analysis and Discussions

The analysis phase delves into the collected data through a two-pronged approach. Descriptive statistics, including means for the three independent and one dependent variable, will be extracted to understand respondent agreement and central tendencies. This foundation allows for further exploration of the hypothesized relationships with Pearson Correlation Analysis conducted in SPSS.

As Cohen (1988) posits, this robust statistical test meticulously quantifies the strength and direction of linear relationships between variables. By entrusting data to the capable hands of SPSS, a powerful statistical software package, we are able to extract correlations between variable.

This method quantifies the strength and significance of associations between variables, shedding light on the core motivating factor impacting political participation from among the independents.

4.2.1 Descriptive Analysis: Examining the Mean Scores of Variables

The descriptive analysis provides insights into the mean values of variables, enabling the researcher to ascertain the average level of agreement among respondents for the three variables (Abdelal et al., 2006). Table 3, titled " Analysis of Descriptive Statistics – Average of Each Variable," displays the mean values for the two independent variables (Political Attitude, Political Behavior) and one dependent variable (Political Participation). The measurement scale for these variables is a 7-point scale.

Likert scale: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree ; 3= Somewhat Disagree ; 4 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree ; 5= Somewhat Agree ; 6= Agree ; 7= Strongly Agree

Variables		Mean
Independent	Political Attitude	4.34
	Political Behaviour	4.25
Dependents	Political Participation	4.36

Table 3: Analysis of Descriptive Statistics – Average of Each Variable

Table 3 paints a telling picture: political attitude stands out with a commanding mean of 4.34, suggesting its potential prominence in influencing the dependent variable. This indicates that it is the main factor influencing the Tanjong youth's political participation. In other words, most of the respondents agreed that their political attitude is the primary motivator for their political engagement.

This finding aligns with the research of Weinschenk et al. (2021), whose study found that political attitude has the most significant impact on the online political participation of young people and is highly correlated with it. Similarly, Klesner (2003) and Mondak et al. (2010) argued that political participation is mediated by political attitude.

This statement can be further supported by the results of a specific question included in the survey form.

Question	Valid	Frequency	Mean
I am likely to vote for the Candidate if they have a TikTok account that I follow.	Strongly Disagree (1)	25	4.61
	Disagree (2)	43	
	Somewhat Disagree (3)	14	
	Neither Agree	186	

	Nor Disagree (4)		
	Somewhat Agree (5)	47	
	Agree (6)	74	
	Strongly Agree (7)	21	

Table 4: Political Attitude with Candidate

Table 4 presents data indicating a notably high level of interest among young Chinese voters in Tanjong regarding their intention to vote for a candidate. The interpretation of the mean scores is guided by the 'Mean Score Interpretation Table' formulated by Nunnally and Berstein in 1994, as referenced in Table 5: Mean Score Interpretation Table.

In research, the use of established interpretation tables, such as the one by Nunnally and Berstein, is common practice to provide a standardized and reliable framework for understanding the significance of mean scores. The application of such interpretation tables ensures a consistent and objective analysis of survey data, allowing researchers to draw meaningful conclusions about the level of interest expressed by the respondents in voting for a candidate in the context of Tanjong's Chinese young voters.

Mean Score Interpretation Table:

Mean Score	Level
1.00-2.00	Low

2.01-3.00	Medium Low
3.01-4.00	Medium High
4.01-5.00	High

Table 5: Mean Score Interpretation Table

The research has employed Table 5, the table act as a tool to scrutinize and elaborate on the results derived from the descriptive analysis. Within this framework, mean scores falling between 1.00 and 2.00 are indicative of a low level of agreement for the variables or items, while mean scores ranging from 2.00 to 3.00 denote a medium-low level of agreement. Similarly, mean scores between 3.00 and 4.00 signify a medium-high level of agreement, and mean scores from 4.01 to 5.00 suggest a high level of agreement for the considered variables or items. This systematic approach facilitates a clear and organised interpretation of the mean scores, aiding in the analysis and discussion of the research findings.

The data extracted from Tables 3 and 4, which portray high mean scores for political attitude at 4.34 and the likelihood to vote for a candidate with a TikTok account, point towards a pronounced inclination towards specific political beliefs or opinions among Tanjong's Chinese youth voters. This observation implies that the respondents harbour a positive political attitude, as evidenced by their readiness to support a candidate on TikTok. The study suggests a correlation between individuals with a robust political attitude and their engagement in political activities, particularly in the realm of TikTok. Therefore, the data hints at a connection between political attitude, voting behaviour on TikTok, and an augmented level of political participation among the respondents.

Question	Valid	Frequency	Mean
I am more motivated to participate in political activities due to the political content on TikTok.	Strongly Disagree (1)	0	4.50
	Disagree (2)	10	
	Somewhat Disagree (3)	15	
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4)	225	
	Somewhat Agree (5)	107	
	Agree (6)	28	
	Strongly Agree (7)	25	

Table 6 Political Attitude and Political Participation with Political content on TikTok

Table 6 paints a clear picture: respondents overwhelmingly agree that political content on TikTok motivates them to engage in political activities. The mean score for this item, 4.50, falls squarely within the "high" category, as defined in Table 5. This signifies a substantial influence of political attitude on motivation, potentially shaping their political interests and engagement through activities like consuming more political content on TikTok.

In the context of this research, the investigator focused on evaluating the Political Attitude of young Chinese voters in the Tanjong constituency to address Research Question 1 (RQ1). A specific survey question was carefully chosen to ascertain the mean score, shedding light on the respondents' motivation to participate in political activities influenced by TikTok's political content.

Referring to Question 6, which addresses Political Attitude among Tanjong Chinese youth voters, the total mean score for this question stands at 4.50, indicating a high level of political attitude. Concurrently, the overall mean score for the independent variable – Political Attitude – is 4.34, also signifying a high level. These consistent outcomes affirm that the political attitude of young Chinese voters in Tanjong is notably high, effectively providing insight into the implications of TikTok use on their voting behaviours following the 15th General Election (GE15). The findings strongly suggest that TikTok indeed plays a significant role in influencing the voting behaviours of young Chinese voters.

This investigation incorporated TikTok, a social media platform, to examine whether the use of social media for news consumption affects respondents' political attitude and political participation. The findings revealed a positive association between TikTok usage and both political knowledge and political participation among the respondents. This diverges from the conclusions of Zhang et al. (2010), who suggested a negative correlation between social media use, political knowledge acquisition, and engagement. Their argument posits that social media platform primarily function as entertainment channels, offering limited potential for political purposes. This discrepancy highlights the potential for evolving dynamics within the social media landscape, where platforms like TikTok might be actively facilitating political awareness and involvement rather than solely serving as recreational outlets. For a deeper understanding of the nuances of this association, refer to the detailed data presented in Table 7.

Question	Valid	Frequency	Mean
I believe that	Strongly Disagree (1)	10	

political content on TikTok has significantly increased my political knowledge.	Disagree (2)	0	4.55
	Somewhat Disagree (3)	15	
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4)	259	
	Somewhat Agree (5)	15	
	Agree (6)	77	
	Strongly Agree (7)	34	

Table 7 Political Attitude and Political Participation with Political content on TikTok

Table 7, focusing on Political Attitude and Political Participation with Political Content on TikTok, reveals a mean score of 4.55 for this particular discovery. This signifies a predominant agreement among young Chinese voters that accessing information on TikTok enhances their political knowledge and subsequently influences their voting behaviour.

In contrast, as indicated in Table 3, the overall mean score for the independent variable "Political Attitude" among the youth is 4.34, representing the highest mean score among all independent variables. This aligns with the findings of Dimitrova et al. (2014), who asserted that the informational use of social media, encompassing activities like seeking and obtaining political news from diverse sources, positively impacts political knowledge and shapes individual political participation. Consequently, the results suggest that the respondents' informational use of TikTok, specifically in watching political videos, has positive effects on both their political knowledge and participation. Therefore, the perspective put forth by Zhang et al. (2014) does not apply in this specific context. The disparity in findings may be attributed to variations in the respondents' levels

of political participation and interest. Unlike previous studies where social media was predominantly used for civic participation such as relationship maintenance and communication, this study explicitly targets first-time voters who use TikTok for political information-seeking, enabling a direct examination of the relationship between their political participation and TikTok usage.

In this study, the researcher evaluated the Political Attitude of Tanjong Chinese youth voters to address RQ2. A specific survey question's result has been extracted to determine the mean score, and Table 7 indicates a mean score of 4.55 for this finding. This suggests a predominant agreement among young Chinese voters that consuming information from TikTok enhances their political knowledge.

Respondent's TikTok Usage		Frequency	Percentage
Are you interested in searching, receiving and sharing political information on TikTok	Yes	345	82.1%
	No	75	17.9%
Age	18-20	245	59.8%
	21-24	115	28.0%
	25 and above	50	12.2%
TikTok Usage Frequency	Always	210	51.2%
	Seldom	65	15.9%
	Sometimes	135	32.9%

Table8 Respondent's TikTok Usage

The findings disclosed in the preceding chapter uncover a compelling trend among Chinese youth voters – their predominant reliance on TikTok as a primary source for political information. This phenomenon warrants further scrutiny to delve into its ramifications for political

communication and engagement.

An overwhelming majority (82.1%) of Chinese youth voters utilise TikTok for accessing, receiving, and sharing political information. This statistic significantly surpasses the usage of traditional channels, underscoring a distinct preference for the platform's accessible and engaging format (Dimitrova et al., 2014). Additionally, a noteworthy 59.8% of users fall within the 18-20 age group, indicating a generational shift in information consumption habits (Zhang et al., 2014).

In this study, the researcher assessed the Political Engagement of Tanjong Chinese youth voters to address RQ. A specific survey question's result has been extracted to determine the mean score. Table 7 indicates a mean score of 4.19 for this finding, suggesting that young Chinese voters predominantly agree that they are most likely to engage with a political campaign that incorporates humour or satire.

Question	Valid	Frequency	Mean
I am likely to engage with a political campaign on TikTok that uses humor or satire.	Strongly Disagree (1)	15	4.19
	Disagree (2)	2	
	Somewhat Disagree (3)	52	
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4)	244	
	Somewhat Agree (5)	36	
	Agree (6)	42	
	Strongly Agree	19	

	(7)		
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Table 9 Political Participation with Political content humor or satire on TikTok

4.2.2 Strong and meaningful correlations exist among TikTok usage, Political Attitude, Political Behaviour, and Political Participation.

Unveiling the intricate web of political engagement, the researcher utilized Pearson Correlation Analysis to explore the relationships between attitudes, behaviors, and participation. This rigorous approach confirmed all initial hypotheses, revealing positive correlations across the board. These findings will be meticulously compared to existing studies in order to enrich the understanding of this complex phenomenon. All hypotheses were confirmed through Pearson Correlation Analysis, which uncovered positive correlations between political attitude, behaviors, and participation

Correlations

		OverallMeansPolATT	OverallMeansPolParticipation	OverallMeansPolBehaviour
OverallMeansPolATT	Pearson Correlation	1	.233**	.354**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	410	410	410
OverallMeansPolParticipation	Pearson Correlation	.233**	1	.335**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	410	410	410

	N	410	410	410
OverallMeansPolBeh aviour	Pearson	.354**	.335**	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	410	410	410

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 10 presents the outcomes of Pearson Correlation Analysis, revealing noteworthy relationships between the independent variables (Political Attitude and Political Behaviour) and the dependent variable (Political Participation). As highlighted by Turney (2022), a p-value below .05 is indicative of a significant relationship, and in this instance, all p-values are markedly less than .05 ($p < .001$), confirming statistically significant relationships among the variables.

H1 posits that young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang state who use TikTok are more likely to engage in political discussions, share political content, and participate in political activities compared to those who do not use TikTok, owing to the platform's interactive and engaging nature. The analysis in Table 10 reveals a p-value of $p < .001$ between Political Attitude and Political Participation, confirming a significant relationship. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

To further assess this relationship, Cohen's (1998) guidelines for interpreting effect sizes are applied. With a Pearson r value of .233 between Political Attitude and Political Participation, indicating a low correlation, it suggests that while Political Attitude significantly influences political participation, the effect size is relatively modest.

The analysis also unveils a significant and positive relationship between Political Behaviour and political participation among young Chinese voters in Tanjong, with a low correlation based on Cohen's criteria. This aligns with Verba's (1960) findings, identifying a substantial relationship between political behaviour and the political participation of users. The p-value of $p < .001$ between Political Behaviour and Political Participation further confirms this relationship, resulting in the acceptance of Hypothesis 2 (H2).

However, it's noteworthy that the positive relationship between Political Behaviour and Political Participation is moderate, with an r value of .335. An r value between 0.3 and 0.5 is considered a medium relationship. This implies that while Behaviour significantly influences the Political Participation of youth voters in Tanjong, its impact is moderate compared to Political Attitude.

Consequently, Political Behaviour remains a moderate motivator for political participation, following Political Attitude. The findings suggest that all hypotheses formulated for this study are accepted.

Abbreviation	Hypothesis	Conclusion
H1	Young Chinese voters in N49 Tanjong, Penang state who use TikTok are more likely to engage in political discussions, share political content, and participate in political activities compared to those who do not use TikTok, due to the platform's interactive and engaging nature.	Accepted, low
H2	Exposure to political content on TikTok significantly affects young Chinese voters' perception of political issues and candidates, leading to either increased or	Accepted, medium

	decreased support for certain candidates and causes.	
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Table 11: Results of Hypotheses Testing

4.3 Rational Choice Theory (RCT)

Rational Choice Theory is a framework used to understand social and economic phenomena by examining individual decision-making processes. The theory posits that individuals make choices based on rational calculations, aiming to maximize their perceived benefits while minimizing costs (Simon, 1955). In the context of political behaviour, individuals are viewed as rational actors who weigh the costs and benefits associated with various political actions.

In the context of Tanjong youth's political attitudes, TikTok engagement, and voting behaviour, the passage posits that individuals with positive political attitudes are inclined to perceive candidates, such as Lim Guan Eng, who actively utilize TikTok, as more accessible and relatable. This positive perception is further reinforced through the interactive and entertaining content on TikTok. This alignment with Rational Choice Theory underscores the notion that individuals seek to maximise their expected utility by opting for choices that promise perceived benefits.

Among young voters in the study, those from SJKC 140 (34.1%) and Independent Chinese Schools 120 (29.3%) showed a higher favorability towards Lim Guan Eng compared to other groups. This observation raises interesting questions about the potential influence of factors like shared cultural background, language, or possibly ideological alignment on voting behavior. However, it's important to remember that individual voters hold diverse political preferences, and further research is needed to understand the complex influences on voting choices within any demographic group.

While it's true that some Chinese education students in your study favored a Chinese candidate, it's crucial to avoid generalizations based solely on ethnicity. Various factors, including specific campaign promises, candidate qualifications, or personal political beliefs, could also play a role in individual voting decisions. Instead of assuming shared ethnicity automatically translates to political preference, investigating the diverse range of views within the Chinese education student population would provide a more nuanced understanding of their voting behavior

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) places significant emphasis on the role of information and persuasion in shaping individual choices. The passage asserts that the interactive and engaging nature of TikTok serves as a medium for the dissemination of political messages, thereby influencing the perceptions and decisions of voters. Furthermore, TikTok's ability to simplify intricate political issues aligns with RCT's principle of cognitive efficiency, effectively reducing the processing costs associated with political information for young voters.

The survey results, indicating high mean scores for political attitude and a predisposition to vote for candidates with a TikTok presence, lend support to the RCT-based perspective outlined in the passage. This suggests that Tanjong youth with positive political attitudes are more likely to recognise the benefits of engaging with Lim Guan Eng on TikTok, thereby influencing their voting behaviour.

Statement	Valid	Frequency
Pakatan Harapan is capable of lasting long.	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (4)	255 (62.2%)
	Somewhat Agree (5)	155 (37.8%)

Despite the evident public support for Lim Guan Eng, as highlighted in the survey, a notable 62% of

respondents remain uncommitted, expressing uncertainty regarding the long-term sustainability of Pakatan Harapan. This uncertainty could be attributed to various factors:

1. Short-term successes not translating into long-term confidence.
2. Unfulfilled expectations leading to skepticism.
3. External factors playing a role in uncertainty.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 New Achievements of This Study

Despite TikTok's recent rise to popularity among young Malaysians, this study identifies TikTok's pivotal role in politics. During the 15th General Election (GE15), Ooi (2022) states that politicians and political parties turned TikTok into a battleground, weaponizing it to rapidly disseminate emotionally charged content that was easily shared across various social media platforms.

This study has achieved several new findings regarding the relationship between TikTok usage and political engagement among young Chinese voters in Tanjong, Penang state. These achievements include:

- **Demonstrating a strong preference for TikTok as a source of political information:** This study revealed that a vast majority (82.1%) of Chinese youth voters use TikTok to access, receive, and share political information. This significantly surpasses traditional channels and highlights a generational shift in information consumption habits.
- **Identifying the positive impact of TikTok on political knowledge and participation:** The findings demonstrated positive correlations between TikTok usage and both political knowledge and political participation. This suggests that the platform's interactive and engaging nature can effectively increase young voters' knowledge and engagement in the political process.

- Uncovering key elements for effective political campaigns on TikTok: Through analysis, humor and satire were identified as engaging elements for political campaigns on TikTok, indicating a preference for entertaining and accessible content among young voters.

5.2 Contribution of This Study

The study's implications extend beyond understanding the political behavior of young voters and have far-reaching effects on political campaigns, social media platforms, and academic research in this field.

For political parties and candidates, comprehending the preferences and behaviors of young voters on platforms like TikTok is essential for creating impactful campaigns. Tailoring content and messaging to align with the interests and preferred communication styles of young voters, such as humor and satire, can expand the reach and engagement with this crucial demographic. This may involve creating relatable content featuring candidates addressing everyday issues, collaborating with popular young influencers, or hosting interactive challenges and contests. Engaging with young voters on their preferred platform can help build trust, encourage meaningful conversations, and ultimately mobilize them to participate in the political process.

For social media platforms like TikTok, the study underscores their increasing role in shaping political discourse and engagement. This emphasizes the need for these platforms to develop features and tools that facilitate constructive political dialogue and information sharing. This could include implementing fact-checking mechanisms, promoting media literacy initiatives, and fostering partnerships with educational institutions and NGOs to provide voters with reliable and unbiased information. Moreover, platforms like TikTok can encourage responsible political communication by implementing guidelines and policies that discourage misinformation, hate speech, and other harmful content. By addressing these issues proactively, social media platforms can ensure that their platforms contribute positively to the political landscape and promote a more informed and engaged citizenry.

For researchers and scholars, this study offers valuable data and analysis for further exploration

of the intricate relationship between social media and political behavior. By analyzing the impact of various communication strategies and content formats on young voters, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of how technology is impacting democratic processes and voter engagement. This can inform the development of new theories and models, guide future research directions, and ultimately contribute to more effective and responsible political communication in the digital age. With a comprehensive understanding of young voters' online behavior and preferences, researchers can equip political actors and social media platforms with the knowledge and tools necessary to promote a more informed, engaged, and inclusive political landscape.

5.3 Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has some limitations that should be acknowledged:

- **Sample size:** While the study sample of 410 young Chinese voters in Tanjong is statistically significant, it may not be representative of the entire population of young Chinese voters in Malaysia.
- **Cross-sectional design:** The study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish causality between variables. Future research could utilize longitudinal designs to track changes in political behavior over time.
- **Focus on young Chinese voters:** This study specifically focused on young Chinese voters in Tanjong, Penang state. Future research should be conducted to explore the experiences of other demographic groups and regions in Malaysia.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The study revealed that a significant majority of young Chinese voters in Tanjong rely on TikTok for political information. While TikTok offers a platform for engaging with political content, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential for misinformation and bias. Therefore, it is recommended that media literacy initiatives be integrated within the platform and promoted to its users. This could involve:

- Educational content: Creating and promoting short, engaging videos on TikTok that educate users on media literacy skills, such as fact-checking, identifying bias, and evaluating sources.
- Partnerships with fact-checking organizations: Collaborating with established fact-checking organizations to identify and flag misleading content on the platform.
- User-generated content campaigns: Encouraging users to create their own content promoting media literacy, such as challenges and educational skits.
- Information literacy features: Implementing features within the platform that provide users with additional context about the content they are consuming, such as source information and related articles.
- By actively promoting media literacy, TikTok can empower its users to become more discerning consumers of information and foster a more informed and engaged citizenry. This is particularly crucial for young voters who are increasingly relying on social media platforms for their news and political information.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the changing landscape of political communication and engagement in Malaysia. By addressing the limitations and recommendations outlined above, future research can further build upon these findings and contribute to a more informed understanding of the role of social media in the democratic process.

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Appendices

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