

THE GENERATION Z'S EXPECTATIONS ON NEWS PRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC RELATIONS, REGIONAL OFFICE 7 ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

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Abstract

This research aimed to achieve three objectives: 1) to examine the expectations of Generation Z regarding media exposure to the presentation of government policy information through social media, 2) to investigate the relationship between those expectations and the formats and methods of presentation via social media, and 3) to develop an effective model for presenting government policy information through social media. The study employed mixed-methods research design. The sample consisted of 512 Thai Generation Z individuals (aged 13–28 years) selected through voluntary response sampling. Data was collected using an online questionnaire created on Google Forms and distributed via Facebook and TikTok. Data analysis utilized descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and reliability testing with Cronbach's Alpha.

Key findings revealed that Thai Gen Z exhibits a high level of engagement with news on social media platforms, with TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube being the most popular. Respondents placed the highest expectations on credibility, clear source citation, and mobile-friendly presentation. Pearson correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship ($r \approx 0.865$, $p < 0.05$) between expectations and acceptance of presentation formats. These findings informed the development of a concise, user-friendly, and credible communication model. Contributing factors included rapid technological access, short attention spans, and a preference for content relevant to daily life.

Keywords: *Expectations, Generation Z, Social Media*

Introduction

Over the past decade, technological transformation has propelled the world fully into the digital era. Online media have become a primary channel for disseminating news and information globally, ranging from daily updates and specialized reports to educational and entertainment content. The proliferation of internet technology and smartphones has fundamentally altered how individuals access information and engage in communication (Global Web Index, 2023). Among the demographic groups most central to this digital landscape is Generation Z—individuals born between 1997 and 2012—who have grown up immersed in technology from early childhood. Their daily lives are characterized by constant online

connectivity, using smartphones and digital devices for communication, information consumption, and various activities (Solomon, 2013; Dekawathanaphisal et al., 2014).

A distinctive feature of Generation Z's news consumption behavior is their emphasis on speed, timeliness, and accuracy. Exposed to vast amounts of information in short periods, they possess strong abilities to filter and select content that aligns with their specific interests and needs. Additionally, Gen Z highly values superior user experience (UX), preferring content presented in easily comprehensible formats, enriched with engaging multimedia such as short videos, infographics, and interactive elements (Monsikarn Kanchanachitra, 2014; Channonsiri Thorn, 2012). Consequently, understanding Generation Z's expectations toward news presentations on digital platforms is critically important, as it enables content producers and platform providers to refine communication strategies that precisely match this cohort's consumption patterns and preferences.

Online communication has become a pivotal factor influencing contemporary behavior and cognition, particularly among younger generations such as Gen Z, who integrate digital media into their daily routines. Numerous studies indicate that Gen Z spends more than 4–5 hours per day on the internet and social media for education, entertainment, socialization, and news consumption (Global Web Index, 2023). They tend to trust information from familiar sources such as influencers, peers within their networks, and regularly followed channels. Failure of official news providers and platforms to meet Gen Z's expectations may result in the loss of this audience to competing platforms that better satisfy their needs (Schroer, 2014; McDonald, 2011).

This research holds significant practical and academic value by illuminating the genuine needs of Generation Z across multiple dimensions—content, presentation style, credibility, and technological integration. Such insights enable government agencies and media organizations to adapt communication strategies to the evolving demands of contemporary audiences (Manussanan Hathsasak, 2014; Benjamin, 2008). Accordingly, the researcher investigated the topic “Expectations of Generation Z toward Government Policy Communication through Social Media Platforms,” with the following objectives:

1. To examine expectations regarding media exposure to government policy information presented via social media.
2. To determine the relationship between those expectations and the formats and methods of presentation on social media.
3. To develop an effective model for presenting government policy information through social media.

Conceptual Framework

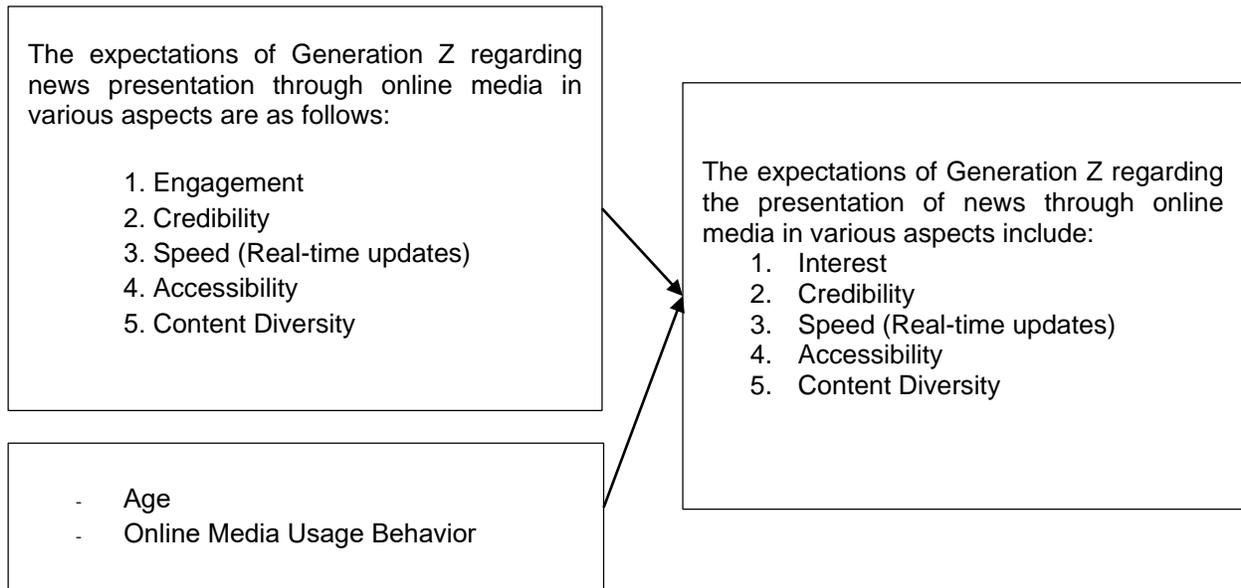


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study]

Literature Review

The study reviewed relevant concepts, theories, and prior research, organized into five main sections:

1. Characteristics and behavior of Generation Z
2. Media exposure concepts
3. Uses and gratifications theory
4. New media concepts
5. Expectation concepts

Generation Z comprises individuals born from 1995 onward, raised in an environment saturated with digital technology and convenience. They tend to pursue personal interests, dislike formality, prioritize speed and convenience, excel at multitasking, and remain open to novelty. Common traits include a preference for challenge, relatively short attention spans, and reliance on text-based communication via smartphones and computers (Schroer, 2014; McDonald, 2011; Solomon, 2013; Dekawathanaphisal et al., 2014; Monsikarn Kanchanachitra, 2014; Channonsiri Thorn, 2012). McQueen (2011) identified six defining characteristics of Gen Z: Tech Savvy, Prematurely Mature, Pampered, Empowered, Risk Averse, and Protected.

Media exposure refers to the process by which individuals selectively receive information from various channels in the digital age (Manussanan Hathsasak, 2014; Benjamin, 2008). Uses and gratifications theory explains that Gen Z primarily consumes media for personal utility and entertainment (Wellner, 2000; Grail Research, 2011). New media encompass interactive digital platforms such as TikTok and Facebook

(Manussanan Hathsasak, 2014). Expectation refers to anticipatory beliefs held by Gen Z regarding the outcomes of consuming news content (Global Web Index, 2023).

Related studies include Natthaphon Cherdsuk (2022), who found that Gen Z prefers Twitter for real-time news delivery, as well as research examining behavioral shifts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Objectives

1. To examine Generation Z's expectations toward government policy communication via social media platforms.
2. To analyze the relationship between those expectations and the formats/methods of presentation on social media.
3. To develop an effective model for presenting government policy information through social media.

Research Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, involving 512 Thai Generation Z participants aged 13–28 years, selected through voluntary response sampling. The instrument used was an online questionnaire hosted on Google Forms, comprising four parts: screening questions, media consumption behavior, expectations, and open-ended suggestions. Instrument quality was validated through Item-Objective Congruence (IOC > 0.5) and Cronbach's Alpha reliability (> 0.80). Data was collected from July to September 2025 via Facebook and TikTok.

Statistical analyses used descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation, t-test, and F-test). These tests were employed to examine the relationships between different demographic variables and the respondents' expectations regarding media exposure to government policy information on social media.

Research Results

Part 1: Media Consumption Behavior: The sample of 512 Gen Z respondents had high media consumption behavior, with TikTok (88.7%), Facebook (77.1%), and YouTube (66.0%) being the top platforms. Media consumption peaked during the evening (16:00–19:59) at 76% and at night (20:00–23:59) at 72.5%. More than half (51.6%) followed official government accounts at the highest level (Level 5).

Part 2: Expectations towards Government Policy Communication: The results show that Generation Z has high expectations for government policy communication. The highest expectations were for:

- Credibility of information sources: Mean = 4.65, 69.7% rated 5
- Clear source citation: Mean = 4.68, 69.9% rated 5
- Mobile-friendly readability: Mean = 4.70, 72.1% rated 5

- Other areas of high expectations included concise summaries (64.1% rated 5), use of engaging visuals and videos (63.7% rated 5), and content variety (64.1% rated 5).

Part 3: Pearson Correlation Analysis: A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between expectations and the acceptance of different presentation formats. The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation ($r \approx 0.865$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher expectations are closely related to greater acceptance of recommended formats (short videos, clear citations, infographics, etc.).

Conclusion

The empirical findings align closely with the theoretical framework and literature review. The strongest consensus among respondents was that Gen Z's expectations revolve around speed, accuracy, and superior user experience—directly corroborating McQueen's (2011) "Tech Savvy" and "Prematurely Mature" traits. Platform preferences (TikTok, Facebook) mirror Natthaphon Cherdasuk's (2022) findings on real-time news preference.

The very strong correlation ($r \approx 0.865$) between expectations and format acceptance validates Uses and Gratifications Theory (Wellner, 2000) and selective exposure concepts (Manussanan Hathsasak, 2014), demonstrating that meeting expectations with concise, credible, visually rich formats dramatically increases engagement. However, a minor divergence from Western-centric literature emerged: while multitasking is frequently highlighted internationally (Grail Research, 2011), Thai Gen Z respondents prioritized immediate practical concerns (credibility, mobile optimization, concise summary) over abstract behavioral traits, possibly due to cultural and technological access differences (Dekawathanaphisal et al., 2014). This suggests that context-specific rather than universal models may be required in Southeast Asia.

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