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Social Media Usage: A Comparison Between Generation Y and Generation Z in India

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ABSTRACT

Social media is an important part of young generations' digital lives and has become much more than a social connection tool. This research offers comprehensions into usage of social media among Gen Y and Gen Z and investigates the usage of social media's features such as socialization, information, entertainment, education, and shopping. Various previous studies are available which attempted to investigate the usage of social media by Gen Z and Gen Y independently. This study is the first that attempted to compare the usage between Gen Z and Gen Y. This is an empirical study comprising 293 respondents from Gen Y and Gen Z, who were selected purposively. The findings suggest that Gen Z use social media more than Gen Y for education, entertainment, shopping, and socialization whereas social media usage of both the generations for information seeking are equal. This study offers recommendations for companies from India to consider incorporating social media marketing actions to encourage their brands and products to specific age groups.

KEYWORDS

Consumer Behavior, Generation Y (Millennials), Generation Z, India, Segmentation, SMP, SNS, Social Media Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, social media have intruded people's everyday life with incredible speed to turn out to be one of the most significant means of communication through technology (Arli, 2017; Lau, 2017). Over a period, social media have evolved as an interactive social platform for conversation and collaboration, as well as for sharing information and expertise (Singh et al., 2010). In today's era, the popularity of social media has increased significantly. Billions of users worldwide are using social media (Laudon & Traver, 2016). Facebook (FB), YouTube (YT) and WhatsApp (WA) are mostly used social media platforms (SMP) globally. On Facebook, more than one hundred billion messages shared every day (*Company Info*, 2020). More than 2 billion people in over 180 countries use WhatsApp (*About WhatsApp*, 2021). With over 560 million active internet users, India is the world's second-largest digital marketplace (Keelery, 2021). Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp are among the most popular social media sites in India, based on usage reach (Diwanji, 2020). The regular use of Twitter and comments from other Twitter users seems to have a beneficial impact on the finances raised by the start-up (Singhal & Kapur, 2022). This signifies the importance of this study from marketers' point of view. With the surge in the SMP usage, the past decade has witnessed

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paradigm shift in digital advertising, marketing communication and interactive media for reaching out massive customers. One of the upcoming marketing trends that can be witnessed in the next days is for brands to remain organic and honest.

In India, social media was accessed by more than 50 percent of the population in 2020. According to predictions, 67 percent of the population will have access to social networks by the year 2025 (Tanushree, 2022). Around 1.8 billion individuals, or approximately 23 percent of the world's population, are members of the millennial generation, often known as generation Y (Gen Y). Millennials, make up 440 million people, or 34%, of India's overall population. India has over the past several years grown to be the largest millennial market in the world, attracting interest in Indian millennials from all over the world (Priyam, 2021). Deloitte also published research in 2021 that included information on the growing influence of generation Z (Gen Z) in the post-pandemic consumer landscape. Thus, it is necessary for academics and marketers to know how Gen Z and Gen Y access information, interact using web - based technologies, and use social media. This study served aforesaid mentioned purpose and revealed generational differences that exist between Gen Y and Gen Z for social media usage in India.

The usage of SMP varies from generation to generations. Various studies attempted to understand usage of SMPs for every generation (Bolton et al., 2013; Curtis et al., 2019; Dimock, 1019; Leung, 2013). Most of these studies were conducted in developed countries (García et al., 2020; Martín-Rojas et al., 2020; Schaefer et al., 2019; Seemiller & Grace, 2017). Further, these studies emphasized on SMP usage of each generation separately rather than comparing among the generations. Therefore, this study is an attempt to bridge this gap. Research on social media is still in its nascent stages in the emerging countries like India particularly in context of newer generations. Further, Gen Z and Gen Y also called as Millennials are emerging demographic cohort with increasingly substantial internet access and online presence and, therefore, understanding their social media usage is significant to marketers. It is important to understand basic differences and distinctions across generations for use of social media. This is of utmost importance for marketers to devise their offerings and promotions specific to targeted generations. Companies may also use this research to gain an improved understanding of their customers' social media habits, as well as what types of content on which platforms will most likely appeal to their target demographic.

Social media are increasingly has been used to keep up with the latest information in a fast-paced world nowadays. Companies, executives, academics, and governments are all interested in how Gen Y and Gen Z use social media since it has an impact on their behaviour across a wide range of industries. Social media also empowers these generations to interact with brands and companies.

Even though there has been huge development in the field of social media usage of late, it is little known how Gen Z and Gen Y assess and use different aspects of social media. For academicians and marketers, it is imperative to understand how Gen Z and Gen Y consume information, how do they communicate through internet technologies, how do they use social media. This information would help organizations to understand their customers in better way, to design/alter their offerings, marketing communications and offer more value to prospects.

The objective of this research is to offer understandings into usage of social media among Gen Z and Gen Y and to investigate usage of social media's features like, socialization, information, entertainment, education, and shopping. The structure of the paper is divided into 6 sections. First Section presents an introduction to the study and its objectives, while the second Section presents a literature review and the development of hypotheses. Subsection 2.1 provides information about social media, whereas subsection 2.2 presents information about generations, which include discussion on Gen Y and Gen Z. Subsection 2.3 provides justification for developed hypotheses. While section 3, 4, 5, and 6 describes methodology, results and discussion, conclusion, and originality/value respectively.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 About Social Media

Social media users can generate individual public profiles, engage with real-life friends, and meet new individuals based on common interests via social media (Griffiths et al., 2014). Another expert pronounced users generally upload basic information about themselves and engage with other members in a number of ways and on a variety of topics on social media, which is a member-based online platform (Mahajan, 2009; Pempek et al., 2009). Although authors use the word “Social Media (SM)” to describe this concept, the term “social networking sites (SNS)” is often used in common parlance, and the two words are often interchanged.

D. M. Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networking sites (SNS) as –

“Social Networking Sites are web-based services that allow individuals to- 1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, 2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and 3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.”

Facebook is mostly utilized for socialization, primarily with friends with whom people had previously developed offline relationships (Pempek et al., 2009). Facebook is also used for sociability and recognizing about the social activities happening in among social networks. When using social media platforms, people frequently feel compelled to stay in touch with friends and/or updated with news on areas of interest (Quan-Haase & Young, 2010). Furthermore, Social media has been used for information dissemination to the public (Roengtam et al., 2017).

Individuals can use social media regularly and in practically every setting in daily life because of the widespread availability of internet enabled mobile devices (Müller et al., 2020). There are ten uses and gratifications of social media which include: “social interaction, information seeking, pass time, entertainment, relaxation, communicatory utility, convenience utility, expression of opinion, information sharing, and surveillance/knowledge about others” (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Furthermore, N. Park et al. (2009) noted needs for contributing to groups within social media like Facebook are “socializing, entertainment, self-status seeking, and information”. In addition, Gupta and Bashir (2018) had premeditated social networking usage and categorized into four factors: “academic, socialization, entertainment and informativeness”.

Facebook, Instagram and Twitter were identified as the most popular social networking sites (Jambulingam et al., 2014). On social media platforms like YouTube, MySpace, Facebook, and Wikipedia, consumers are considered to be actively participating in the creation and marketing of content (Heinonen, 2011). Lim et al. (2014) found, considerable inconsistencies in social media satisfaction and usage of Twitter and Facebook. Additionally, the best strategies for developing social media sites and growing a user base were established by Bowman (2019). Gen Y are more likely to utilize social media to construct their own identities, which has a significant impact on their expectations for service as well as their behaviours, involvement with brands and companies, and involvement in the production of value (Bolton et al., 2013).

2.2 Generations

There are many classifications of generation groups available in the literature. Lyons et al. (2015) suggested one of the alternative classifications.

- a) Generation Y (also known as millennials) - born in 1981–1994,
- b) Generation Z - born in 1995 and onwards

For this study, the authors have adopted above classification. Since there is dearth of research on Gen Y and Gen Z in Indian context, this paper investigates social media usage by these two generations.

2.2.1 Generation Y (Millennials)

Generation Y also referred to as millennials has witnessed the dominant part of the technological advances and grew up with it, for example, Personal Computers and the Internet. This generation uses social media, mobile devices and different apps to keep in touch with their friends and families (Lazarevic, 2012). Generation Y consumers use social media and engage actively in mobile technologies (Zhang et al., 2017). In addition, Gen Y uses social media to communicate with other consumers and express their opinions regularly (Bolton et al., 2013). Social media marketing activity has become an important marketing strategy to reach Gen Y consumers (Balakrishnan et al., 2014). Muskat et al. (2013) found Generation Y usually consider others' recommendations as a substantial factor in making choices. They are also ready to pay a superior price for fair-trade products (Aksoy & Özsönmez, 2019).

2.2.2 Generation Z

Generation Z are young adults who were born in 1995 or later (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014). There is debate among researchers for defining Gen Z. Many assertions that Gen Z began in the mid-1990s (Turner, 2015). According to a Bloomberg analysis from 2019, Gen Z accounted for 32% of the world population, with India's population of Gen Z being 472 million (Verma, 2020). Gen Z is the first group who has grown-up in the era of internet revolution. Engrossed in the online world since birth, Gen Z exceeds Gen Y in daily actions on social media with 2 hours 55 minutes spent per day (*Who Uses Social Media the Most?*, 2019).

Gen Z combines the practicality and work ethic of previous generations with the lofty ambitions and technological prowess of the younger generation (Wilson, 2019). Gen Z is shaping up to be a largely inspirational to others where they are fierce activists, proponents of sustainable products, and more interested in curating their social media pages (Ryerson & Olito, 2020).

2.3 Usage of Social Media

2.3.1 Socialization

Socialization means communicating with family, friends, and peers (C. S. Park, 2015). Obtaining a sense of belonging, establishing a basis for dialogue, connecting with family, friends, and colleagues, and gaining insight into the circumstances of others are all motivations for socialization (D. Boyd, 2008). People are accessing information and connecting through social media on their smartphones at growing rates (Havřík, 2017; Heinrichs et al., 2011; Kapoor et al., 2018; Singhi & Bajaj, 2017). The primary motivation for using social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp is to remain in touch with or communicate with friends, as well as to look for folks and social activities (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Many research studies mentioned that people join social media because they want to integrate and socialize with others (Kim et al., 2010). Positive psychological outcome like self-efficacy and psychosocial wellbeing are also gained from engagement on social media (Abosag et al., 2020; Keenan-Devlin, 2010; Yang, 2016). In addition, Instagram users have five primary social and psychological motives to use: social interaction, archiving, self-expression, escapism, and peeking (E. Lee et al., 2015). Wei et al. (2020) suggested a free platform satisfies consumers' innate demands for self-determination, resulting in SNS fulfilment. Social media have been extensively used by young generations to communicate with a wide range of people, including friends, relatives, partners, coworkers, old friends, old connections, and new acquaintances (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Facebook is acting as another place where Generation Y and Generation Z users meet new people and satisfy their need for social interactions (Bodroža & Jovanović, 2016). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H_7 : There is difference between Gen 'Z' and Gen 'Y' in the usage of social media for socialization (SOC).

2.3.2 Information

Many scholars explored the usage of social media for seeking information, and interestingly, some found motives that allow users from continuing its use. Typically, social media explored for information sharing where posts and pictures commonly shared among users. Munar and Jacobsen (2014) investigated involvement of user-generated content and experiences on social media. Although social media is used actively to generate information and send messages, it is also used passively for things like watching material, reading other people's posts, and looking for information/events/individuals (Verduyn et al., 2015). In addition, social media can also be used to search for information about bargains, deals, or items, as well as events, festivals, and celebrations. It is also used to pursue for news about companies (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

When a real-life buddy shares a news piece on social media, it is viewed as an opinion leader, (Turcotte et al., 2015). They were able to keep up with events because of social media, which provided them with access to a greater range of news and information. Users' ability to produce and receive tailored news streams is being expanded by these social media technologies (Hermida et al., 2012).

Today's social media platforms provide new ways to get news stories. Reading and spreading news on social media have become a popular pastime because people can now take part in the creation and dissemination of news to a greater level. C. S. Lee and Ma (2012) revealed that individuals who were motivated by knowledge, socializing, or achieving a certain level of status were more inclined to share content on social media sites. Therefore, it was hypothesized as:

H_2 : There is difference between Gen 'Z' and Gen 'Y' in usage of social media for seeking information (INF).

2.3.3 Entertainment

Social media is a fun way to spend time. Playing games, listening to music, and watching videos are some of the entertainment options (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Several studies found social media has the entertainment value (de Vries et al., 2012; N. Park et al., 2009). The entertainment is the degree to which social media users find an online platform engaging and enjoyable (Khan, 2017). Users frequently use social conversations to satisfy their requirements for "escapism, diversion, aesthetic gratification, or emotional release" (Ducoffe, 1995). Scrolling through timelines on social media is also used to pastime. The impact of a social media advertisement improved when it supplied informative and entertainment material. (Saxena & Khanna, 2013). The most important aspect in people's continuous use of social media is enjoyment (Lin & Lu, 2011). Therefore, it was hypothesized as:

H_3 : There is difference between Gen 'Z' and Gen 'Y' in usage of social media for entertainment (ENT).

2.3.4 Education

Both generations (Gen Z & Gen Y) are using social media in education to access more valuable content, interact with learning communities, and access other educational systems that make learning more convenient. Increased social media communication has a favorable impact on classroom conversations as well as student involvement and cohesion with their peers (Ross et al., 2009). The studies have also shown that using social media has a favorable impact on college students' (Gen Y) habits and attitudes. Students use Facebook for academic purposes, notably to communicate with classmates and obtain information about assignments (Vettor & Kosinski, 2000). Further, Hung and Yuen (2010) found valuable learning experiences in schools where social media was utilized as an addition to traditional teaching methods. Twitter is also utilized in the classroom to help students become more engaged and faculty to become more active and collaborative (Junco et al., 2011). Integrating social media tools into classroom activities proved to provide numerous advantages over conventional classroom approaches,

such as real-time contact outside the classroom, interacting with specialists, partnership relationships, and increased creativity (Cheston et al., 2013; George & Dellasega, 2011). Therefore, it was hypothesized as:

H_4 : There is difference between Gen 'Z' and Gen 'Y' in usage of social media for education (EDU).

2.3.5 Shopping

The way sellers and buyers communicate has changed because of social media (Papasolomou & Melanthiou, 2012). Organizations are using social media exponentially to provide product and service information and keeping public social media profiles to increase their social network visibility (Hanna et al., 2011; Parveen et al., 2015). The impact of social media on a company's reputation, sales, and even existence is enormous (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

Parveen et al. (2015) investigated the influence of social media on organizational performance in terms of improving customer relations and customer service activities, improving information accessibility, and reducing value in terms of promoting and customer interactions.

Brands that closely resemble a person's self-concept are viewed favorably by consumers. Brand resemblance and friend liking increase satisfaction with social media (Abosag et al., 2020). In South Africa, Facebook advertising has a positive influence on awareness and knowledge across Gen Y (Duffett, 2015). Mishra (2019) also examined the impact of a brand's social media marketing activities and online social interaction proclivity on customers' social media engagement with brand-related information.

Social media provides an innumerable of prospects for marketing tactics for entrepreneurs with celebrity endorsement (Fink et al., 2020). According to Casaló et al. (2021), fashion brands usually launch resourceful campaigns on Instagram to engross their followers and customers. Retailers and advertisers can use social media sites like LinkedIn to promote products that are appropriate for professionals (Vithayathil et al., 2020). J.-S. Park and Ha (2021) reported consumer community engagement is an effective measure of social media performance for brands. Customers are increasingly using social media to contact retailers with feedback, problems, and aspirations (Kapoor et al., 2018). Kudeshia et al. (2016) revealed liking the fan pages on social media is essentially converted into WOM (Word of Mouth), and it results into purchase proposition. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) argued communication created by users on social media had an affirmative influence on both brand equity and brand attitude toward products which eventually persuading the purchase intention towards brands. Therefore, it was hypothesized as:

H_5 : There is difference between Gen 'Z' and Gen 'Y' in usage of social media for shopping (SHOP).

Understanding differences between Gen Z and Gen Y regarding their usage of social media are important for marketers. Gen Y grew up at the period when technology began to make its way into houses and when social media was first introduced to advanced economies (Dimock, 1019). Therefore, In India, Gen Y has embraced technology and social media at a faster rate than previous generations. In contrast Gen Z were born into a social media culture and thus it is obvious that their behavior towards social media would be different than Gen Y. Gen Z use social media more as compere to Gen Y (Curtis et al., 2019).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Measurements

The authors adapted a list of items from previous studies (Gupta & Bashir, 2018). These statements were presented to a panel of experts (two sociologist, two academicians, two students from Gen Z, and two citizens from Gen Y). As per the opinion of the panel items for SOC, INF, ENT, EDU, and SHOP were finalized. The scale items used in this study are presented in Table 6 in appendix. Validity and reliability of all scales were assessed (Table 1).

Table 1. Scale Scores

AVE	EDU	ENT	SHOP	SOC	INFO	DV	CR	R ^a	No. of items
EDU	0.61					0.78	0.88	.885	5
ENT	0.495	0.50				0.71	0.83	.781	4
SHOP	0.485	0.452	0.50			0.65	0.75	.824	5
SOC	0.540	0.571	0.277	0.43		0.70	0.79	.729	4
INFO	0.392	0.464	0.148	0.482	0.57	0.75	0.80	.781	3

Note: Diagonal values are AVE.

R^a = Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient, AVE= Average Variance Extracted, DV= Discriminant value, CR= Composite Reliability,

3.2 Methods

This was an empirical study. The participants included were from 'Pune'; one of the prominent metro cities in India. Respondents from Gen 'Y' and Gen 'Z' were selected purposively. The questionnaire was circulated to around 1000 respondent thorough online mode. After the scrutiny of received responses, total 293 forms were found to be entirely filled in all aspects and thus used for analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS software. The grouping variable generation was dichotomous categorical variable. Further, as per suggestion from one of the expert reviewers the researchers added gender as control variable which is also a dichotomous categorical variable. Since two independent categorical variables were required to be analyzed two-way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Scale Reliability and Validity

It is recommended that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients values should be equal to or greater than 0.7 for a scale to be reliable (Hundleby & Nunnally, 1968). The alpha values (Table 1) for Education, Entertainment, Shopping, Socialization, and Information, are greater than 0.7, indicating all scales have reliability.

In Table 1, diagonal values are AVE values. For convergent validity AVE value should be greater than 0.5. However, if AVE value is less than 0.5 but composite reliability (CR) value is more than 0.6 then convergent validity exist (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). AVE values for all scales are 0.5 and above except the scale SOC, however, CR values are greater than AVE values of all scales, which provide sufficient evidence that convergent validity exists.

A scale has discriminant validity if its discriminant value (DV) (Square root of AVE) is greater than correlation coefficients between that latent variable and other latent variables (Flury et al., 1988). In Table 1, DV values for all scales are greater than their respective correlation coefficients between them and other latent variables. e.g., DV of EDU is .78 which is greater than correlation coefficients between EDU and ENT, SHOP, SOC, INFO. This provides evidence for discriminant validity. Thus, construct validity of all the scales was established.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

Skewness and kurtosis values from Table 3 indicates that among twenty groups EDU, ENT, SOC, and INF scores in both female groups (Gen Z and Gen Y) have deviated from normality. Further, scores of SHOP in female Gen Y group and scores of INF in male Gen Y group shows deviation from normality. Remaining ten groups were normally distributed. Since ANOVA is robust against deviation from normality (Field, 2009), two-way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. Another

important assumption of using ANOVA is equality of variance which was satisfied as Levene’s test for all five variables was insignificant (Table No. 4).

Table 2, indicates that Gen Z spent more time on social media and overall use more social media including all popular platforms as compared to Gen Y.

4.2.1 Social Media Usage for Socialization (H_1)

There was a significant main effect of the generation on the use of social media for the socialization, $F(1, 289)=4.792, p<.05$ (Table No. 3). This indicates that Gen Z (Mean =3.986) use social media significantly more than Gen Y (Mean =3.76) for socialization (Table No. 5). Gen Z enriches their social connections via social media to keep in touch with friends, family members and meet new people. In contrast to Gen Y, Gen Z consists of pragmatic, self-sufficient cyber natives who also wish to maintain their personal lives private. Gen Z extensively favors direct social sharing, such as Instagram stories and Snapchat. The findings are consistent with Goodyear et al. (2019) and explained that social media benefits young people in areas such as learning, socialization, greater levels of social and emotional support.

4.2.2 Social Media Usage for Seeking Information (H_2)

There was a main effect of the generation on the use of social media for seeking the information $F(1, 289)=2.491, p>.05$ (Table No. 3). However, the result was statistically insignificant. This indicates that both, Gen Z (Mean =4.3) and Gen Y (Mean =4.37) use social media equally for seeking the information (Table No. 5). These results are partially consistent with the findings of Dan-Cristian et al. (2016) and Dabija et al. (2017). For health information, the majority of Gen Y and Gen Z rely on social media platforms (Lewinski, 2020). The results are consistent with several studies about use of social media for accessing information by these generations (C. S. Lee & Ma, 2012; Verduyn et al., 2015; Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Table 2. Demographics and important descriptive statistics

Variables	Gen Z (n=188)	Gen Y (n=105)
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	41%	61.9%
Female	59%	38.1%
<i>Time spent on social media</i>		
>4 hours/day	72.7%	27.3%
<i>Social Media use</i>		
WhatsApp	68%	32%
Facebook	72.6%	27.4%
Twitter	81%	19%
Instagram	68%	32%
LinkedIn	67%	33%
Snapchat	72%	28%
Telegram	81%	19%
Pintrest	66%	34%

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of variables

Variable	Gender	Male			Female			Total		
	Gen	‘Z’	‘Y’	Total	‘Z’	‘Y’	Total	‘Z’	‘Y’	Total
EDU	Mean	3.821	3.465	3.658	4.198	3.390	3.984	4.044	3.436	3.826
	SD	0.824	0.806	0.832	0.729	0.707	0.805	0.790	0.768	0.833
	Sk	-0.249	-0.087		-1.391	-0.718				
	Kr	-0.557	-0.936		1.82	1.805				
ENT	Mean	3.746	3.622	3.689	4.326	4.120	4.272	4.088	3.811	3.989
	SD	0.625	0.605	0.617	0.666	0.645	0.665	0.708	0.664	0.704
	Sk	-0.191	-0.214		-0.744	-1.633				
	Kr	0.368	0.353		-0.279	4.016				
SHOP	Mean	3.533	3.132	3.349	3.539	3.430	3.510	3.536	3.246	3.432
	SD	0.763	0.742	0.777	0.716	0.638	0.696	0.734	0.716	0.739
	Sk	-0.185	0.144		-0.198	-1.145				
	Kr	-0.18	-0.14		0.699	5.501				
SOC	Mean	3.810	3.772	3.793	4.108	3.740	4.011	3.986	3.760	3.905
	SD	0.722	0.760	0.737	0.755	0.721	0.761	0.754	0.742	0.756
	Sk	-0.748	-0.671		-0.825	-0.647				
	Kr	0.504	-0.103		-0.316	1.307				
INF	Mean	4.208	4.289	4.245	4.364	4.500	4.400	4.300	4.370	4.325
	SD	0.630	0.595	0.614	0.486	0.486	0.488	0.553	0.563	0.557
	Sk	-0.806	-1.09		-1.059	-1.764				
	Kr	-0.089	2.104		0.463	3.215				
n =		77	65	142	111	40	151	188	105	293

Gen = Generation, SD = Standard Deviation, Sk= Skewness, Kr= Kurtosis

Table 4. Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable			F	df1	df2	Sig.
E	D	U	2.489	3	289	0.061
E	N	T	2.162	3	289	0.093
S	H	O P	2.355	3	289	0.072
S	O	C	1.788	3	289	0.149
I	N	F	2.363	3	289	0.071

4.2.3 Social Media Usage for Entertainment (H_3)

There was a significant main effect of the generation on the use of social media for the entertainment, $F(1, 289)=4.269$, $p<.05$ (Table No. 3). The result indicates that Gen Z (Mean =4.088) use social media significantly more than Gen Y (Mean =3.811) for entertainment (Table No. 5). Rather than connecting with friends, Generation Z consumes social media to relax and be entertained. This form

of social media usage is defined as the use of social media for the purpose of providing entertainment and joy (Whiting & Williams, 2013). The results showed that Gen Z used social media like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Blogs, and Forums significantly as a means for entertainment, while Gen Y favored fewer efficacies. Generation Z use social media more than Gen Y for watching movies, sharing pictures/videos and play games. These findings are consistent with the findings of (Curtis et al., 2019).

4.2.4 Social Media Usage for Education (H_4)

The study observed that, use of social media across both the generations varies meaningfully. There was a significant main effect of the generation on the use of social media for the educational purpose, $F(1, 289)=36.685$, $p<.001$ (Table No. 3). This indicates that Gen Z (Mean=4.044) use social media significantly more than Gen Y (Mean =3.436) for education (Table No. 5). These findings are consistent with Oducado (2019) who observed that Gen Z use social media to communicate, collaborate and share academic sources or materials. In addition, Turner (2015) emphasized that Gen Z preferred to have multiple streams of information, regular and rapid interactions with data, technical and interactive experiences that demonstrate specific goals, increase motivation, and involve authentic activities. Cao and Tian (2020) also reported social media use on student learning by university students, enabling students to learn and share information among each other.

4.2.5 Social Media Usage for Shopping (H_5)

Recently, the internet and mobile advertising have emerged as inevitable promotional routes for marketers. This study illustrated that adoption and incorporation of social media for purchases and product information vary between the generations. There was a significant main effect of the generation on the use of social media for the shopping, $F(1, 289)=7.905$, $p<.05$ (Table No. 3). The study results revealed that Gen Z (Mean =3.536) used social media platforms for gathering product information, brand interaction, and online shopping more extensively than Gen Y (Mean =3.246) for shopping (Table No. 5).

In general, the influence of social media on consumer attitudes can be witnessed on brand awareness, purchase intent, brand impression, satisfaction, and recommendation (Kübler et al., 2020). Popular social media like Facebook has a major impact on consumer electronics brand attitudes and buying intent (Kudeshia & Kumar, 2017). For social media marketing (de Vries et al., 2012), found that the popularity of a brand post increases when it is placed at the top of the brand fan page. In the same vein, Generation Z is regarded as a digital native who is actively involved in the creation and dissemination of product/service content within their social circles (Williams et al., 2012). In addition, Anaya-Sánchez et al. (2020) confirmed that online brand community trust plays a significant role in intention to produce positive 'electronic Word of Mouth' (eWOM) and repurchase intention of products. Dabija and Lung (2019) also revealed Gen Z typically prefers shopping online with their smartphones. By incorporating a social aspect, social shopping networks make e-commerce engaging and help to consolidate the social experience with the experience of shopping. Call-to-action tools offered by social media are more utilized by these generations.

Generation Y has been known as a new global customer community. This generation shows an increasing and very significant role in exploring information and shopping merchandises on social media. At the same time, Generation Z is a very new user community and wishes to have tailor-made experience for their wants and needs.

Findings of this study indicates that, social media usage is higher for Generation Z than for Generation Y cohort. These results are consistent with findings from previous studies (Soh et al., 2017).

5. CONCLUSION

With the ever increasing, growth and adoption of social media among various generations, this study managed to draw an outline for use of social media by two prominent generations and influence on

Table 5. Analysis of variance between generations

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<i>EDU</i>	$r^2 = .962$ (Adjusted $r^2 = .961$)				
Model	4320.349 ^a	4	1080.087	1823.161	.000
Gender (CV)	1.470	1	1.470	2.481	.116
Gen	21.733	1	21.733	36.685	.000
Gender * Gen	3.276	1	3.276	5.529	.019
Error	171.211	289	.592		
Total	4491.560	293			
<i>ENT</i>	$r^2 = .975$ (Adjusted $r^2 = .975$)				
Model	4689.081 ^a	4	1172.270	2866.235	.000
Gender (CV)	18.668	1	18.668	45.644	.000
Gen	1.746	1	1.746	4.269	.040
Gender * Gen	.108	1	.108	.265	.607
Error	118.199	289	.409		
Total	4807.280	293			
<i>SHOP</i>	$r^2 = .958$ (Adjusted $r^2 = .957$)				
Model	3459.182 ^a	4	864.795	1646.650	.000
Gender (CV)	1.481	1	1.481	2.820	.094
Gen	4.152	1	4.152	7.905	.005
Gender * Gen	1.361	1	1.361	2.592	.108
Error	151.778	289	.525		
Total	3610.960	293			
<i>SOC</i>	$r^2 = .966$ (Adjusted $r^2 = .965$)				
Model	4475.739 ^a	4	1118.935	2027.405	.000
Gender (CV)	1.129	1	1.129	2.046	.154
Gen	2.645	1	2.645	4.792	.029
Gender * Gen	1.746	1	1.746	3.164	.076
Error	159.501	289	.552		
Total	4635.240	293			
<i>INF</i>	$r^2 = .984$ (Adjusted $r^2 = .984$)				
Model	5483.066 ^a	4	1370.767	4503.071	.000
Gender (CV)	2.158	1	2.158	7.091	.008
Gen	.758	1	.758	2.491	.116
Gender * Gen	.048	1	.048	.157	.692
Error	87.974	289	.304		
Total	5571.040	293			

their lives. Generation Z has special relationship with technology and social media. This generation is socially very conscious (Turner, 2015) and love to use social media as part of life. Whereas early technology exposure to Gen Y affected their behavior and had important psychological, social, and cognitive implications (Bolton et al., 2013). Younger people consider social media to be an essential component of their daily lives. Embracing new technologies, experimenting with new forms of communication are hallmarks of both the generations.

5.1 Research Implications

The results of this study indicate that Gen Z use more social media as compared to Gen Y. The findings are consistent with the outcomes of Seemiller and Grace (2017). Owing to the abundance of connectivity and entertainment devices, both the generations are more connected today than at any point in the past.

Previous research was conducted in United States, Europe and other East Asian countries, there is dearth of research in other nations like India where large and fast-growing Gen Y and Gen Z population reside. India has 300,000 subscribers in 2020, making it the country with the most people utilizing Facebook as a social media platform worldwide (Tanushree, 2022). For more than a decade, the quantity and usage of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) has grown worldwide. Both the cohorts are distinguished from each other in terms of internet exposure and social media use. Study conducted by Seemiller and Grace (2017) reported the difference between Generation Z students and previous generations is that they have different requirements, expectations, viewpoints, and aspirations. Gen Z are the ones who can steer the online community more sophisticatedly than Gen Y. The result of this study shows Gen Z is using social media more than Gen Y for education, entertainment, shopping, and socialization. Whereas social media usage of both generations for information seeking are equal.

5.2 Practical Implications

This study was conducted in India. Most of those significant studies on the social media usage available are conducted in western developed countries (Hysa et al., 2021; Lau, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2017; Shao, 2009; Williams et al., 2012). This study is significant to understand social media usage of Asian consumers specifically Indians. The research findings contribute to engaging Generation Y and Generation Z for use of social media to adapt to the ever-changing digital world. Because of their psychographic traits, young people use and engage with social media more. With improved understandings about Indian consumers from this study, retailers and marketers identify, target, and place products efficiently for consumers especially to different generational cohorts. However, more information is needed about specific age groups, purchasing patterns and motives to use social media. India is the second-most attractive emerging market after China where the largest youth population resides. The findings of this study can be used by businesses to improve focused client engagement. In emerging market economies such as India, organizations that want to use social media marketing and technologies would encourage and develop strategies for newer generations. This study offers recommendations for companies to consider incorporating social media marketing activities to promote their brand and product. Moreover, this research shows marketers that the medium of social media marketing has become an imperative marketing tool to influence evolving customers of the younger generations from Asian countries like India.

5.3 Limitations and Further Research

The results of this study found significant difference in the usage of social media between Gen Y and Gen Z. Nevertheless, the study is not free from limitations. The participants were from one of the metro cities in India and could not provide representativeness of country's entire population. Therefore, conscientiousness must be taken while generalizing the findings to the other population. Future research should also include larger population to confirm the results.

The reliability and validity of the scales developed for this study were tested. However, it was limited to content and construct validity. Concurrent validity was not tested limiting the standardization of the scales. A separate study is required to standardize the scale.

Future studies with a larger sample may capture alterations in results among Baby Boomers, Generation X, Gen Y and Gen Z. In addition, to establish better causal linkages, future research should use longitudinal research.

6. ORIGINALITY/VALUE

A limited number of studies have used inter-generational differences in social media usage. Thus, this paper offers an incremental contribution to comprehend the history and implications of the use of social media by Gen Y and Gen Z in India. Witnessing the world's digital transformation, it is no wonder that social media has become the preferred platform for companies and businesses. This study confirms deeper understanding of social media usage while engaging with a customer, social media and its related platforms and provide a choice of communications and promote company offerings to customers. This gives marketer meaningful insights for determining business strategy in digital world.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors of this article declare there are no competing interest.

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APPENDIX

Table 6. Details of the scales used in the study

Scale	Adapted from
<i>Socialization</i>	
I use social networking sites to keep in touch with family members	(Gupta & Bashir, 2018)
I use social networking sites to keep in touch with friends	
I use social networking sites for strengthening the interpersonal relationship	
I use social networking sites to find and meet new people	
I use social networking sites to connect with anyone at any point in time	
<i>Information</i>	
I use social networking sites to find the latest broadcast	(Gupta & Bashir, 2018)
I use social networking sites to find the latest news feeds	
I use social networking sites to spread awareness	
I use social networking sites to find information about the topics that I like and am interested in	
I use social networking sites for information sharing and the distribution of content	
<i>Entertainment</i>	
I use social networking sites for enjoyment	(Gupta & Bashir, 2018)
I use social networking sites for watching movies	
I use social networking sites for sharing pictures and videos	
I use social networking sites to play games	
I use social networking sites to kill boredom	
<i>Education</i>	
I use social networking sites for online academic group discussion and collaborative learning	(Gupta & Bashir, 2018)
I use social networking sites to explore distance learning opportunities	
I use social networking sites to communicate with my friends for the preparation of assignments, projects, and exams	
I use social networking sites to seek help from my teachers	
I use social networking sites for profession guidance	
<i>Shopping</i>	
I use social networking sites to make purchases	Developed by authors
I use social networking sites to purchase beauty or skincare products	
I use social networking sites to engage and purchase luxury goods	
I use social networking sites for good sources of product information	
I use social networking sites to spot trends and follow brands	

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