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The Relationship Between Social Media Engagement and Brand Performance: Among Millennials and Gen Z Consumers

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Abstract

This research explains the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Gen Z consumers that is conducted in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The research's goal is to show how both generations interact within social media platforms, how they act and respond differently, how marketers can effectively target both generations without neglecting their needs. A method of quota sampling was used to collect survey that was distributed among Millennials and Gen Z individuals in both countries. The research examines platform preferences, types of content that drive engagement, and perceived gaps in creative campaigns targeting these segments. Findings are expected to show marketing strategies that can increase engagement and brand performance among generations. The study helps marketing literature by showing generational differences in digital behavior, and offers practical recommendations for creative campaigns that keeps brand loyalty among age groups.

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين التفاعل في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وأداء العلامة التجارية بين المستهلكين من جيل الألفية وجيل زد في كل من المملكة العربية السعودية ومصر. وتهدف الدراسة إلى تحليل كيفية تفاعل كلا الجيلين مع منصات التواصل الاجتماعي، واختلاف سلوكهم، وكيف يمكن للمسوقين استهدافهم بفعالية دون إغفال احتياجات كل فئة. وقد تم استخدام أسلوب العينة الحصصية لجمع البيانات من خلال استبيانات وُزعت على أفراد من جيل الألفية وجيل زد في كلا البلدين. تبحث الدراسة في تفضيلات المنصات، وأنواع المحتوى التي تحفز التفاعل، والفجوات المُدركة في الحملات الإبداعية التي تستهدف هذه الفئات. ومن المتوقع أن تسفر النتائج عن استراتيجيات تسويقية فعّالة تُسهم في رفع مستوى التفاعل وتحسين أداء العلامات التجارية عبر الأجيال. وتُعد هذه الدراسة مساهمة في الأدبيات التسويقية من خلال تسليط الضوء على الفروقات السلوكية الرقمية بين الأجيال، كما تقدم توصيات عملية بشأن الحملات الإبداعية التي تعزز ولاء العلامة التجارية بين الفئات العمرية المختلفة.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	[Page 8]
1.1 Introduction	[Page 8]
1.2 Problem of the Study	[Page 9]
1.3 Objectives of the Study	[Page 10]
1.4 Research Questions	[Page 11]
1.5 Research Hypotheses	[Page 11]
1.6 Theoretical Model	[Page 12]
Chapter Two: Literature Review	[Page 13]
2.1 Introduction	[Page 14]
2.2 Brand Performance (Dependent Variable)	[Page 14]
2.3 Social Media Engagement (Independent Variable)	[Page 15–16]
2.4 Summary of Past Studies	[Page 16–18]
2.5 Discussion and Research Contribution	[Page 19–20]
2.6 Theoretical Framework	[Page 20–22]
2.6.1 Social Exchange Theory	
2.6.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory	
2.6.3 Relationship Marketing Theory	
2.6.4 Generation as a Moderating Variable	

2.6.5 Conceptual Model

Chapter Three: Research Methodology [Page 23]

3.1 Introduction [Page 24]

3.2 Research Design [Page 24]

3.3 Population of the Study [Page 24]

3.4 Sample Characteristics [Page 24]

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Method [Page 25]

3.6 Data Collection and Procedure [Page 25]

3.7 Study Variables [Page 25]

3.8 Method of Analysis [Page 26]

Chapter Four: Practical Study [Page 27]

4.1 Data Analysis [Page 28]

4.2 Research Findings and Discussion [Page 28]

4.3 Research Recommendations [Page 29–30]

References [Page 31–32]

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

In today's digital era, social media has become one of the most influential tools for building brand identity, communicating with consumers, and driving business growth. Marketing has changed over decades. Today most, if not all agencies focus on digital marketing to sell any type of product. With the increase of social media platform use, most marketing campaigns are conducted through these platforms since they target specific audiences. Most of successful campaigns are due to good engagement whether through social media or through trying to live the lives of the consumer. As digital marketing emerged. This research highlights how Gen Z and Millennials act in market and use digital platforms and how their usage affects marketers in their brand performance. Millennials, also known as Generation Y, represent individuals born between 1981 and 1996. According to Dimock (2019), "Millennials... are characterized by their familiarity with digital technology and social media, shaping their behaviors and expectations." Generation Z, on the other hand, includes those born from the mid-1990s to early 2010s and are considered true digital natives who have grown up surrounded by the internet and mobile technology (Williams & Page, 2011). Although both generations are strongly engaged in social media and are fully aware of technology, their perception of customer needs are different, and it is very crucial for marketers to be aware of how both generations act differently in order to be able to improve their brand performance. This study explores the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Gen Z consumers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The research aims to uncover behavioral differences, platform preferences, and engagement drivers to inform more inclusive and effective marketing strategies. Most of the existing researches focus on one generation, or lacks comparative insight between both. By using findings from previous research and applying them to a cross cultural context particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt this research aims to offer a more balanced understanding of generational engagement. It also addresses gaps in the literature related marketing strategies and the effectiveness of creative campaigns among different generational needs.

1.2 Problem of the Study:

Recently, social media became the most important tool in modern marketing. It helped brands communicate and engage with their customers, build emotional connections, and improve brand performance. Once digital platforms innovate and grow widely, consumer behavior and expectation grow too, especially among younger generations who spend most of their daily lives online. According to Statista (2023), global social media users exceeded 4.9 billion in 2023, with Millennials and Generation Z representing a significant share of this user base. Their presence on platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter) has shaped how brands develop content, deliver messaging, and evaluate performance.

Marketers today encountered a serious issue today despite this major digital shift. Their main challenge is to develop social media techniques that can effectively engage both Millennials and Generation Z simultaneously. Research has shown that while both generations are digitally active, their behaviors, expectations, and platform preferences are different. Millennials, generally born between 1981 and 1996, tend to value authenticity, purpose-driven content, and customer service responsiveness (Fromm & Read, 2018). In contrast, Generation Z, born approximately between 1997 and 2012, is more focused on entertainment, visual communication, and brand values related to social justice and inclusivity (Williams & Page, 2011; Seemiller & Grace, 2016). These differences create a branding and engagement problem for example; campaigns that are created for one group may fail to affect the other group.

In addition to what have been mentioned, there is a major problem where most campaigns are heavily focused on Gen Z, using their preferred styles, trends, platforms, and values, especially on fast-paced platforms like TikTok, which may unintentionally neglect the preferences and loyalty of millennials whom are higher purchasers and more established brand relationships. This imbalance may lead to wasted marketing investment. Additionally, the current research explores generational behaviors in isolation, with minimal focus on cross generational analysis. As a result, brands face challenges in increasing social media engagement, maintaining brand loyalty, and achieving best brand performance.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Introduction:

The reason of this research is to understand the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Generation Z in two different cultures: Saudi Arabia and Egypt. As younger generations use digital platforms more brands encounter challenges in attracting their attention and they find it really difficult in inserting their strategies. This study aims to understand how both generations interact in content, how their preferences affect brand loyalty, and what marketers can do to appeal both generations.

Research has shown that “the more consumers engage with a brand on social media, the more likely they are to show higher levels of brand trust and loyalty” (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan–Thomas, 2015, p. 33). However, differences among generations create barrier to all approaches. According to Fromm and Read (2018), “Millennials are drawn to brands with a strong sense of purpose and authenticity, while Generation Z seeks entertainment, relevance, and a sense of belonging through digital experiences.”

Specific objectives:

1. To study the differences between both generations’ usage of social media platform and engagement in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.
2. To evaluate how different content techniques and engagement strategies affect brand loyalty among both generations.
3. To explore the effectiveness of current marketing campaigns in showing generational needs and expectations.
4. To focus on main challenges that marketers face in creating cross generational campaigns.
5. To suggest and recommend marketing strategies that enhance brand engagement without neglecting any generation.

1.4 Research Questions

Introduction:

The aim of this section is to present the central questions this study attempts to answer. These research questions are obtained from the study's objectives and aim to look into the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Generation Z in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Main research question:

What is the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Generation Z consumers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt?

Sub-Questions:

1. How is Millennials and Gen Z different in the usage of social media platforms and engagement behavior?
2. What types of content that has the highest engagement for each generation?
3. How does social media engagement affect brand loyalty and point of view for both generations?
4. What challenges do marketers face when designing campaigns that target both generations at the same time?
5. How can brands enhance engagement without neglecting any other generation?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Main hypothesis:

There is a worthy of attention relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Generation Z consumers.

Sub-Hypotheses:

1. Millennials and Generation Z use social media platform differently.
2. Social media engagement positively influences brand performance among Millennials.
3. Social media engagement positively influences brand performance among Generation Z.
4. Marketing campaigns that are created to meet generational expectations and preferences lead to the increase of brand loyalty and engagement.

1.6 Theoretical Model

This study is built upon Consumer Engagement Theory, which shows how the role of active communications between brands and consumers in digital environments. According to Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan–Thomas (2015), consumer engagement involves cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions, all of which contribute to stronger relationships and brand loyalty. According to social media, engaging context mean likes, shares, comments, and engaging in brand actions and all of these actions are essential for brand performance.

The suggested model assumes that social media engagement affects brand performance in a positive way, and this can be detected from the increase of loyalty, trust, and purchase intention. However, both generations connect to engagements differently as both act differently only and value different things.

Millennials, typically born between 1981 and 1996, value authenticity, informative content, and responsiveness from brands (Fromm & Read, 2018). In contrast, Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, prefers fast, entertaining, and visually–driven content, and they often resonate with socially conscious messaging (Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Turner, 2015).

Therefore, the model suggests that while engagement is generally crucial, the strategies of engagements may differ upon which generation is targeted. By including generation as a moderating variable, this model allows for more distinct analysis that can lead to effective campaign strategies.

The conceptual framework is visually represented below includes:

- Independent variable: Social Media Engagement
- Dependent variable: Brand Performance
- Moderating variable: Generation (Millennials vs Gen Z)

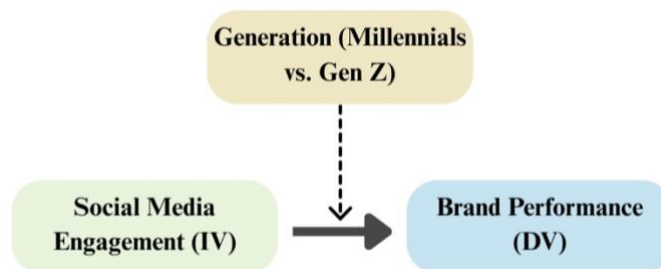


Figure 1: Theoretical Model Showing the Moderating Effect of Generation on the Relationship Between Social Media Engagement and Brand Performance.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction:

The literature review aims to provide a full understanding of the knowledge about the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance. It focuses on generational differences between Millennials and Generation Z. Today digital platforms became one of the most marketing strategies to most marketers, therefore understanding how generations interact will help them enhance their brand performance that is why it became an essential area of academic interest.

This chapter begins by reviewing the concept of brand performance as the dependent variable, followed by an examination of social media engagement as the independent variable. It then shows similar past studies, and will focus on how researchers analyzed the relationship between engagement and brand performance. A discussion of generational behavior in digital contexts is also included, highlighting how preferences, values, and technological habits differ across age groups (Turner, 2015; Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

Finally, the chapter illustrates the theoretical framework guiding the research that is upon consumer engagement theory. The aim of this framework is to position this academic study while finding the gaps and trying to fill them.

2.2 Dependent Variable: Brand Performance

Brand performance refers to how well a brand reaches its goals in terms of consumer point of view, loyalty, and financial outcomes. Long term business success is mainly based on a strong and efficient brand performance. According to O’Cass and Ngo (2009), “Brand performance is a measure of a brand’s results against the goals initially set... It can be said that brand performance is a concept expressing the effect of the brand, which is used to reach concrete targets such as sales volume and profitability”

According to digital marketing, specifically through social media, brand performance is influenced by how brands engage with their audience. Engaging content, timely responses, user-generated campaigns, and emotional connections all contribute to shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors toward a brand (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Schäfer, 2012). The most important tool for performance improvement is how social media is able to show off brand messages and encourage real time communication.

Being engaged emotionally and cognitively with a brand online, increases brand loyalty and the recommendation to others. Therefore, social media communication is the crucial strategic tool for enhancing brand performance throughout different consumer generations.

2.3 Independent Variable: Social Media Engagement

When it comes to modern marketing strategies, social media engagement is a crucial element especially in digital branding. It encompasses a wide range of user interactions on social media platforms that show consumer interest, emotional connection, and active participation with the content. Engagements include likes, comments, share, mentions, saves, direct messages, and reviews.

Social media engagement is not a singular behavior but a multidimensional construct. Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan-Thomas (2015) define social media engagement as “a three-dimensional construct composed of affective, cognitive and behavioral dimensions.”

This framework expands the concept of interactions by highlighting that any engagement involves deeper emotional response and thought processing and participation. For example, a user is inspired by a campaign and then deeply thinking about the brand, then finally engaging through any type such as purchasing, liking, commenting or any type of interaction. How deep the engagement can affect the consumers point of view and can also affect their loyalty.

According to Brodie et al. (2013), consumer engagement in online communities’ fosters trust and emotional bonds with brands, thereby enhancing brand equity. This means that engagement is not just a measure of popularity but an indicator of relationship quality between the consumer and the brand. When consumers are deeply engaged, they are more likely to become brand advocates, engage in repeat purchases, and even defend the brand in online spaces — all of which contribute to better brand performance.

Engagement has grown with the increasing use of mobile based platforms that create short form contents. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are designed to maximize visual interaction especially among younger users. Gen Z shows interest and prefers content that is authentic, fast paced, and visually stimulating. According to Smith (2020), Gen Z engagement is driven by short video formats, influencers, meme culture, and interactivity — features that allow them to participate and create, rather than just consume. On the contrary, Millennials, respond and prefers more informative content, storytelling, and posts that show the brand’s purpose or customer experience and most prefer Facebook and Instagram.

This difference in interaction styles affect marketing strategies. A campaign that attracts performs well with Gen Z on TikTok might fail to attract Millennial on Facebook. As Pentina, Zhang, and Basmanova (2013) note, marketers must align platform choice and content style with user expectations and behaviors in order to generate meaningful engagement across

generational lines. Understanding these differences is really crucial for brands in order to build loyalty and create meaningful interaction across generations as both groups differ not just in age but also in values, communication, and digital fluency.

Moreover, Hollebeek, Glynn, and Brodie (2014) emphasized the role of engagement as a vehicle for co-creating brand value. In their study, engaged consumers were not only more likely to participate in brand discussions, but also more open to offering feedback and ideas that shaped future product offerings. According to this study, social media interaction functions as an output of accomplished brand communication and an input into brand growth.

Engagement is measured using both quantitative and qualitative metrics. Quantitative metric includes reach, like, rates, and view in other words how a user engaged directly with the post. On the contrary, qualitative metric like comment, and meaningful interactions of the brand.

Social media interaction is the independent variable in this research since it is the main role shaping the customer brand relationship. The current study conducts an investigation on how engagement affects brand performance among Millennial and Gen Z customers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, two culturally different yet digitally active markets. Although previous studies have showed engagement in Western contexts or focused on single generations, this study aims to show variable engagement patterns among different generations and different cultures.

Besides, it will show how marketers can create campaigns that can align with both groups without neglecting effectiveness.

This research will explore what platforms people use, what content they like and what emotional factors affected. This will help brands know how to use social media interaction not just for visibility but as a strategy tool to enhance brand performance.

2.4 Summary of Past Studies

Being able to understand the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance became a main topic in today's marketing research. Plenty studies have examined how different generations engage with brands online, what platforms they prefer, and what content they directly interact with which affect their purchasing decision. Below is a detailed summary of similar past studies that support this research.

- **“TikTok Versus Other Platforms: Engagement at Scale” — Shen (2023)**

In one of the most comprehensive content-based studies, Zheng Shen (2023) analyzed over 9,000 brand posts across TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter. The study found that TikTok

significantly outperformed other platforms in user engagement, with average metrics of 1.1 million likes and over 12,000 comments per post. In comparison, Instagram posts had 744,939 likes and 6,981 comments, while Twitter (X) trailed behind. These differences were statistically significant ($p < .001$), confirming TikTok's unique ability to drive active participation, especially among Gen Z users. This highlights the importance of platform selection in designing brand engagement strategies.

(Source: SAGE Journals, 2023)

- **“How Gen Z and Millennials Shop Through Social Media” — Emplifi (2025)**

A recent industry report by Emplifi (2025) provided insight into consumer behavior trends across generations. Based on survey data from approximately 1,000 U.S. consumers, the report found that more than 50% of both Millennials and Gen Z had made a purchase through social media within the last three months. The findings also indicated that visual content, such as short videos and interactive features, had the strongest influence on purchase intent. The report emphasized that these generations prefer immersive and relatable content over traditional advertising approaches.

(Source: Emplifi, 2025)

- **“The Moderating Role of Generation on Social Media Marketing Activities” — Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (2022)**

This academic study examined the effectiveness of social media marketing activities (SMMA) on brand experience and loyalty, while considering the moderating role of generation. The researchers found that Millennials showed stronger brand-related engagement compared to older cohorts, and that generation significantly moderated the link between SMMA and brand experience. The study supported the idea that marketers should customize engagement strategies according to generational expectations and online behavior.

(Source: ScienceDirect, 2022)

- **“Gymshark and the Power of UGC” — Kadence International (2023)**

Kadence International published a case study on Gymshark, a fitness apparel brand known for its youth-driven social media presence. The study revealed that Gymshark achieved a 214% increase in sales through strategic use of TikTok influencers and user-generated content (UGC). Rather than investing in traditional ads, the brand leaned heavily on its online community, encouraging followers to share their workout videos and reviews. This form of

engagement was found to be more persuasive and authentic, particularly among Gen Z and younger Millennials.

(Source: Kadence, 2023)

- **“Gen Z and Brand Loyalty in the Digital Age” — Meta (Facebook IQ, 2020)**

According to Meta’s insight report, 60% of Gen Z users follow brands to feel more connected, and 41% report increased loyalty when brands build community and engagement. The study emphasizes the emotional expectations Gen Z has from digital interactions: they value brands that reflect their identity, offer shared experiences, and engage with causes they care about. These findings align with the growing need for brands to foster connection-driven, not just product-driven, engagement on social platforms.

(Source: Meta IQ, 2020)

Conclusion of past studies:

These studies show:

1. The effectiveness of engagement varies based on the platform.
2. Purchase behavior is strongly affected and related to digital content experience.
3. Generational differences, Millennials and Gen Z influence how users respond to brand messaging.
4. Creative tools such as UGC (user generated content) and influencer marketing affect most among younger consumers.
5. Emotional content along with community driven content builds long term loyalty.

While these studies explored engagement trends within each generation or platform, few have compared both generations across multiple regions like Saudi Arabia and Egypt. This highlights a research gap, which the current study aims to address by showing cross generational and cultural insights.

2.5 Discussion of Previous Studies and Research Contribution

The previous studies reviewed have provided a solid foundation for understanding how social media engagement affects brand performance, especially among younger generations. It's clear that platforms like TikTok and Instagram play a major role in shaping digital marketing strategies, and that factors like emotional appeal, influencer marketing, and user-generated content have a powerful influence on consumer behavior.

That said, these studies also have important limitations that leave space for further exploration:

1. Lack of Comparative Focus Between Generations:

Many researchers concentrate on either Millennials or Gen Z, but rarely analyze them side by side. This makes it harder to understand how the two groups differ — or align — in the way they engage with brand content online.

2. Geographic Concentration in Western Contexts:

A significant portion of previous research has focused on Western countries like the U.S. or U.K., with little attention to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Cultural and economic factors in countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt could influence online behavior in ways that global studies don't capture.

3. Overfocus on One or Two Platforms:

While TikTok and Instagram dominate current research, other platforms — like Facebook (still used widely by Millennials), Snapchat, and Twitter — receive less attention. This creates an incomplete picture of where and how engagement happens across different age groups.

4. Surface-Level Treatment of Engagement:

Much of the existing research treats engagement as a set of numerical indicators (likes, shares, views), rather than exploring it as a strategic tool for building long-term brand value and customer loyalty.

Contribution of this Study:

This research aims to fill those gaps by offering a more balanced and context-specific understanding of how social media engagement influences brand performance. It will:

1. Directly compare Millennials and Gen Z, helping marketers understand how to address both groups without favoring one at the expense of the other.
2. Focus on non-Western, Arabic-speaking contexts — specifically Saudi Arabia and Egypt — where generational behavior and media consumption might differ due to local norms and culture.

3. Look at a variety of platforms, not just the trendiest ones, to provide more realistic recommendations.
4. Emphasize strategic engagement — not just as a performance metric, but as a tool that strengthens emotional connection and brand loyalty over time.

Conclusion:

In short, this study will offer new insights that go beyond the scope of previous research. It will help brands create more inclusive, cross-generational strategies that are culturally relevant and grounded in real user behavior from the MENA region — something that has not been explored in depth in earlier academic work.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

A well-defined theoretical framework is essential in any research as it offers a structured lens through which the study is conducted and analyzed. This research explores the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Gen Z consumers, making it important to ground the work in established theories that explain why people engage online, what motivates their interactions, and how these engagements impact brand success.

2.6.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides a useful foundation for understanding social interactions, including those on social media platforms. Proposed by Homans (1958), SET views social behavior as a series of exchanges where individuals seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs. According to Blau (1964), “social exchange involves voluntary actions that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others.” Applied to the context of social media, this theory explains that users engage with brands because they expect some form of benefit, such as gaining valuable information, social approval, or entertainment. This reciprocal exchange fosters ongoing interaction, which is critical for brand engagement, especially among digitally savvy Millennials and Gen Z users who value meaningful online experiences.

2.6.2 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Building on motivations for media consumption, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) offers insight into why individuals actively select certain media to satisfy specific needs. Katz, Blumler,

and Gurevitch (1974) argued that “audiences are not passive consumers but active participants who seek out media that fulfill their desires and goals.” In the context of social media, users are driven by desires for information, social connection, personal identity reinforcement, and entertainment. For Millennials and Gen Z, whose media use is often interactive and social, understanding these gratifications helps explain patterns of content preference and emotional engagement. Brands that tailor their content to these motivations are more likely to capture and sustain attention.

2.6.3 Relationship Marketing Theory

Relationship Marketing Theory emphasizes the shift from transactional exchanges to building long-term relationships with customers. As Grönroos (1994) noted, “the purpose of marketing is to establish, maintain, and enhance relationships with customers and other partners at a profit.” Social media platforms have transformed how brands can engage with consumers by allowing two-way, real-time communication. This creates opportunities for brands to nurture loyalty and trust through consistent interaction and responsiveness. For Millennials and Gen Z, who often expect authenticity and dialogue from brands, relationship marketing is essential for enhancing brand performance through social media engagement.

2.6.4 Generation as a Moderating Variable

Generational theory highlights that different age cohorts have distinct values, behaviors, and experiences, which affect how they interact with media and brands. Strauss and Howe (1991) describe Millennials as “digital pioneers,” comfortable with technology but valuing collaboration and experiences, while Gen Z are “true digital natives,” having grown up fully immersed in social media and mobile technology. These differences suggest that generation can moderate the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance, as each group may respond differently to brand communications and engagement strategies. Understanding these nuances is critical for brands aiming to tailor their social media efforts effectively.

2.6.5 Conceptual Model

Integrating these theories, this study proposes a conceptual model where social media engagement positively influences brand performance, and generation moderates this relationship. Social Exchange Theory and Uses and Gratifications Theory explain why consumers engage and what drives their interaction, while Relationship Marketing Theory links engagement to brand outcomes. Generational differences provide a moderating lens that recognizes varying responses between Millennials and Gen Z. This model provides a comprehensive framework to investigate how and why social media engagement affects brand success across these key demographic groups.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains how the research will be conducted. It describes the overall approach, how participants will be selected, how data will be collected, and how the results will be analyzed. The purpose is to ensure that the research process is organized, reliable, and appropriate for answering the study's main questions about the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance among Millennials and Gen Z in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

3.2 Research Design

This study follows a quantitative research design, using a survey as the main tool for data collection. A survey was chosen because it allows for collecting responses from a large number of people in a short amount of time. The questions are designed to gather measurable data about how people interact with brand content on social media and how they perceive brand performance. This method is useful for comparing patterns across different age groups and regions.

3.3 Population Study

The population of the study includes Millennial and Gen Z social media users living in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Millennials are typically born between 1981 and 1996, while Generation Z includes those born between 1997 and 2012. The research focuses on people who are active on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter (X), and YouTube, and who follow or engage with brand accounts on these platforms.

3.4 Sample Characteristics

The sample will be made up of both generations — Millennials and Gen Z — and will aim to include a variety of individuals in terms of gender, education, and platform preferences. The goal is to gather a well-rounded sample that represents the real diversity of users in both countries.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Method

The target sample size for this study is at least 200 participants, with an equal number from both Saudi Arabia and Egypt. A quota sampling method will be used, which means a set number of respondents will be chosen from each generation to ensure balance. This type of sampling is non-random but allows for direct comparison between the two groups, which is important for this study.

3.6 Data Collection and Procedure

Data will be collected using an online survey, which will be shared through social media platforms and messaging apps. The questionnaire includes several sections: basic demographic questions, social media usage habits, types of content participants prefer, and how they feel about brand messaging and loyalty. Most questions are multiple-choice or use a Likert scale to measure opinions and attitudes clearly.

The survey was built based on tools used in earlier studies and adjusted to fit the culture and language of Saudi Arabia and Egypt. It is available in both Arabic and English to make sure it's accessible.

(At the time of submitting this draft, the survey is still in progress. The data is being collected and will be analyzed in the final version of the research.)

3.7 Study Variables

This study includes three main variables:

- Independent Variable: Social Media Engagement — how users interact with brand content (likes, comments, shares, etc.)
- Dependent Variable: Brand Performance — how users view the brand in terms of trust, loyalty, and likelihood to purchase
- Moderating Variable: Generation — the comparison between Millennial and Gen Z behavior

These variables were chosen based on the research questions and the gaps found in past studies.

3.8 Method of Analysis

After collecting the data, it will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as percentages and averages) to summarize the responses. Then the data will be processed using software like Microsoft Excel, and illustrated in graphs for more clarification.

Summary

This chapter outlines how the research will be carried out. Even though the data collection is still in progress, the structure of the methodology is clearly defined and ready to support the study's goals. Once the data is collected, it will be used to explore the generational differences in social media behavior and how they influence the success of brand engagement strategies.

Chapter Four

Practical Study

4.1 Data Analysis

This chapter presents the plan for analyzing the data that will be collected through an online survey distributed to Millennials and Gen Z consumers. The goal of the analysis is to explore how social media engagement influences brand performance and to examine whether generational differences moderate this relationship.

Once responses are collected, the data will be entered into SPSS for processing. Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize participants' demographics, the platforms they use, and the nature of their engagement with brands online. These statistics will include frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to provide a clear overview of the sample. Following the descriptive analysis, inferential statistical methods will be applied. A Pearson correlation analysis will be conducted to examine the relationship between social media engagement and brand performance. In addition, a multiple regression analysis will be used to test the influence of engagement on brand performance while considering generation (Millennials vs. Gen Z) as a moderating variable. The results will be presented using charts and tables for clarity and will form the basis for the discussion in the following section.

4.2 Research Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study will help clarify how consumers from two different generations interact with brands on social media and how these interactions translate into brand outcomes such as loyalty, awareness, and purchase intention.

Although the data is still being collected, it is expected that there will be notable differences between the two generational groups in terms of the types of content they engage with and the frequency of their interactions. For example, based on prior literature, Gen Z may be more drawn to fast, visual, and trend-based content, while Millennials may place more value on informational and experience-driven engagement.

These results will be discussed in light of the theoretical framework presented earlier. If the findings show that greater engagement leads to stronger brand performance, this would support concepts from Relationship Marketing Theory, which emphasizes the value of consistent interaction in building long-term consumer trust. Similarly, patterns that reflect emotional motivations for engagement would align with the principles of Uses and Gratifications Theory. Any unexpected or contradictory findings will be analyzed carefully and compared with earlier studies to identify possible explanations.

4.3 Research Recommendations

Based on the expected findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be made for brands and marketers looking to strengthen their performance through social media engagement, especially when targeting Millennial and Gen Z consumers.

First, brands should consider developing content strategies that are specifically tailored to the behavioral patterns and expectations of each generation. While Millennials may respond better to detailed content, storytelling, and experience-driven campaigns, Gen Z tends to favor quick, visual, and interactive content such as videos, reels, and stories. Recognizing these preferences can help marketers design content that feels more personal and relevant, ultimately leading to stronger engagement.

However, instead of running separate campaigns for each group, brands are encouraged to explore integrated strategies that can effectively engage both generations at once. This can be achieved by using a single campaign theme or message across platforms, while adjusting the format and style of content based on platform behavior and generational preference. For example, a campaign could include short, dynamic video content on TikTok to attract Gen Z attention, alongside longer-form storytelling or value-driven posts on Instagram or YouTube to engage Millennials. This approach allows the brand to stay consistent in its messaging while still meeting each group's unique media habits.

It is also recommended that brands invest more in two-way engagement, rather than focusing solely on broadcasting content. Interactive tools such as polls, Q&A features, live sessions, and comments can deepen the relationship between the brand and its audience, encouraging users to participate rather than passively consume. This type of engagement is especially valued by younger consumers, who tend to trust brands that feel human and accessible.

In addition, brands should closely monitor performance metrics such as engagement rate, content shares, and sentiment analysis to better understand what resonates with each group. Social listening tools and analytics can offer valuable insights to adjust strategies in real-time.

Finally, future research is encouraged to expand on this topic by exploring additional demographic or cultural factors that might influence social media engagement, such as gender, nationality, or the influence of influencers. It would also be valuable to compare platform-specific behaviors, as different apps may produce different engagement outcomes depending on content type and audience.

By focusing on both generational needs and shared behaviors, and by being flexible with content delivery while consistent with brand identity, companies can strengthen their presence online and translate engagement into real brand growth.

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