A Study on Marketing to Gen Z: Understanding the Preference and Behaviors

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ABSTRACT

This study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically explore the consumer behaviors and preferences of Generation Z. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 103 respondents. The questionnaire included Likert-scale, multiple-choice, and ranking questions to capture insights on factors such as price, quality, sustainability, and social media influence. Secondary data was sourced from scholarly articles, journals, and online resources.Quantitative analysis was performed using statistical tools like Chi-square tests, ANOVA, and Spearman correlation to examine relationships between variables and test hypotheses.The findings provide actionable insights into the influence of digital marketing, user-generated content, and sustainability on Gen Z's purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Social Media, Sustainability,Content Marketing

1. INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, are characterized by digital fluency and unique cultural preferences. They represent a significant consumer group with distinct values and behaviors. This study explores their consumer psychology, focusing on preferences, values, and decision-making processes to offer actionable insights for marketers. Generation Z has grown up in an era dominated by rapid technological advancements and social media, shaping their worldview and consumption habits. They value authenticity, social responsibility, and personalized experiences, often prioritizing brands that align with their ethical and environmental beliefs. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z consumers are adept at filtering vast amounts of information and are less likely to be swayed by traditional advertising. Instead, they rely heavily on peer recommendations, influencer endorsements, and user-generated content. Understanding their preferences requires a nuanced approach that takes into account their diverse cultural identities and their emphasis on inclusivity and innovation.

1.1 OBJECTIVES
- To determine social media's influence on gen z
- To explore genz's attitudes towards sustainable marketing

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hermawan et al. (2023): This study highlights YouTube influencers' impact on Gen Z, showing that authenticity, relatability, and transparent storytelling are crucial. Engaging with micro-influencers helps brands connect with Gen Z consumers, fostering trust and higher purchase intent.

Liu et al. (2022): Examines social media's role in influencing Gen Z's travel decisions, noting how Instagram and TikTok campaigns enhance destination desirability. Personalized and visually appealing content significantly drives their engagement.

Nguyen (2021): Focused on Vietnamese Gen Z, this study shows the power of inbound marketing combined with social media platforms to deliver personalized messages. Gamified and interactive campaigns were most effective.

Nadanyiova&Sujanska (2023): Found that influencer marketing, especially through micro and nano influencers, resonates well with Gen Z. Authenticity and relatability in content outperform traditional celebrity endorsements.

Matsch&Priyanka (2024): Discussed the effectiveness of short-form, visually rich content on platforms like TikTok for engaging Gen Z. Viral trends and meme culture significantly enhance ad reach among this demographic.

Nielsen (2021):This study identifies that Gen Z is willing to spend more on products with ethical sourcing and sustainable practices. Transparency in branding and authentic storytelling are key to gaining their loyalty. The research highlights a growing demand for eco-conscious advertising campaigns.

Munsch (2021): Ethical advertising resonates strongly with Gen Z, particularly when it addresses global issues such as climate change. Brands that adopt sustainable practices and support social causes gain more brand loyalty from this demographic. This research emphasizes the role of emotional connections in campaigns.

Kavalcı&Ünal (2022): Gen Z demonstrates a strong preference for inclusive and diverse branding. The study found that this group values companies that align with their values of sustainability and social justice. Brands catering to these preferences experience higher customer satisfaction and retention.

Hameed&Mathur (2023): Gen Z is deeply concerned about data privacy and transparency in digital interactions. This study highlights that brands prioritizing ethical data collection and usage see enhanced consumer trust. Interactive yet privacy-conscious marketing strategies perform better with this group.

Gomez et al. (2022): Green certifications and environmental labels significantly influence Gen Z purchasing decisions. Brands communicating their eco-friendly practices through digital campaigns achieve higher engagement. The study confirms that highlighting measurable impacts is crucial for appealing to this cohort.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology refers to the systematic approach used to collect, analyze, and interpret data in order to answer research questions or achieve research objectives. It outlines the methods, tools, and techniques used in the study, ensuring the research is valid, reliable, and scientifically sound. The total population of Puducherry in 2024 is estimated at approximately 16.8 lakhs (1,680,000). Your study focuses specifically on the Gen Z population, which forms a significant portion of this demographic. From this population, a sample size of 103 individuals has been selected for your research. This sample aims to represent the perspectives and characteristics of Pondicherry's Gen Z population

accurately. Using this approach ensures manageable data collection while maintaining relevance to the broader population.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

ANOVA

Hypothesis

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in consumer purchasing decisions based on different social influences.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant difference in consumer purchasing decisions based on different social influences.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.723	3	.574	1.459	.230
Within Groups	38.957	99	.394		
Total	40.680	102			

INTERPRETATION

The F-statistic is 1.459.Significance (p-value): The p-value is 0.230.Since the p-value (0.230) is greater than the significance level (usually 0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is no significant difference in consumer purchasing decisions based on the different social influences analysed in this study.

CHI-SQUARE

Hypothesis

- Null Hypothesis (H_0): User-generated content is more influential than brand-created content in shaping consumer engagement and purchasing decisions.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): User-generated content is not more influential than brand-created content in shaping consumer engagement and purchasing decisions.

	Agree user generated content influential brand created content	Agree user generated content changed way interact with brands
Chi-Square	84.223[a]	130.544[b]
Df	3	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

INTERPRETATION

The chi-square statistic is 84. 223.Significance (p-value): The p-value is 0. 000.Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (usually 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is a significant association between social media usage and agreement with the statement "User-generated content is more influential than brand-created content."

5. FINDINGS

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CONCLUSION

This study provides valuable insights into the preferences and behaviors of Generation Z consumers, with a particular focus on their engagement with social media, sustainability, and user-generated content. The findings highlight the significant role of digital platforms, particularly Instagram and YouTube, in shaping Gen Z's purchasing decisions. Influencer partnerships and authentic content emerged as effective tools in driving engagement and building brand trust. Furthermore, sustainability is increasingly prioritized by Gen Z, reflecting their values-driven consumption patterns. While price and quality remain essential factors, the influence of social media reviews, influencer recommendations, and user-generated content underscores the shift towards digital and peer-influenced marketing strategies. These insights enable marketers to tailor strategies that resonate with Gen Z, emphasizing authenticity, innovation, and social responsibility. Despite its contributions, the study acknowledges limitations in sample size and geographic focus, suggesting avenues for further research to generalize findings across diverse demographics.

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