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**Are They Really Different?**

**Instagram Usage Motivations of Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye**

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*“People are usually afraid of change because they fear the unknown. But the single greatest constant of history is that everything changes.”*

- Yuval Noah Harari, Homo Deus: A History of Tomorrow

**Abstract**

Each generation has a few differences from the previous generation. It might be the language they speak, and that is not necessarily about their native languages, but about how they speak to each other. It might be a popular musical interest. Or it might be their motivations in life. The crucial thing here is to understand the differences and find the middle way to communicate with each generation. Brands and their communication strategies are significantly important because if a brand cannot be relevant to the new generation, it might cause a decrease in their loyalty rates and customer lifecycles. Therefore, it is important to know what the main differences of their target audiences from the generational aspect are for marketers. Does Generation Z still enjoy using Instagram? Do Millennials find branding activities on Instagram relevant? Why are they using Instagram? This study will be covering the main motivational differences between Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye and their Instagram usage motives, and discuss it based on the results of a conducted survey. Brands might change in time, and there is nothing to be afraid of. Planning the change and finding the expected behaviour is important, but once related data is available, companies might plan the change in the most accurate way possible.

**Keywords:** Generation Z, Millennials, Instagram Usage Motives, Differences Between Generations, Social Media Marketing in Turkiye

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### **Understanding the Impact**

As of January 2021, Turkiye had a population of 84.69 million, and 65.80 million of them are using the internet. Moreover, 60 million internet users in Turkiye also have social media account (Hootsuite, 2021). It is a big market in terms of social media usage, however, there is not too much research about the generational differences when it comes to social media usage motivations in Turkiye. This opens a door for us to focus on and create a content strategy that might be interesting for both Millennials and Generation Z in Turkiye.

It is crucial to understand the motivations of Millennials and Generation Z and create a to-the-point content strategy for them. As Forbes explained in their article, it is important for a business not only to identify its target market but to craft a message that makes a connection to its intended audience (Forbes, 2020). This is the main problem that this study will be covering. Generations might be the same, but one cannot ignore the cultural differences and the impacts of these cultural differences on each individual while creating a social media strategy.

As Yadav and Rai stated, only a few literatures are present with regards to Generation Z and their social networking activities, moreover, the few released research on this realm focuses mainly on the United States and the United Kingdom, leaving behind other countries -such as Turkiye- with huge and vast-expanding Generation Z community, where elements and activities of social media usage can differ considerably (Yadav & Rai, 2017). Therefore, it is important to cover these behaviors and differences between generations by focusing on Turkiye only, and finally, offer a possible strategy.

The research question of the study is: **“What are the motivational differences between Millennials and Generation Z in regard to Instagram usage in Turkiye?”**

### **All Around Social Media: A Global Overview**

Social media refers to internet-based services that allow users to join online discussions, contribute user-generated content, or participate in online communities. Blogs, wikis, social bookmarking, social network sites, status-update services, virtual world content and media-sharing sites are the internet services associated with social media (Library of Parliament, 2010). Social media platforms are generally based on personal profiles; they are structured as

personal, or egocentric, networks with the individual at the center of their community (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). People often share content based on their own lives, likings, and thoughts.

The active social media users have increased by 9.9% compared to last year's data, while the total world population only increased by 1% (Hootsuite. 2021). Based on this data, the world is becoming more and more digital, and consumers are quickly adapting to digital products, such as social media platforms.

Global internet users stated that the main reason why they use social media is “staying in touch with friends and family”, according to a Hootsuite report. “Filling up spare time”, “reading news stories”, “finding inspirations for things to do and buy” are some of the other reasons. The above reasons might be the explanation of why social networks have the biggest share with a share of 95.8% when it comes to top types of websites visited and apps used among internet users aged 16 to 64 (Hootsuite, 2021). Many of those motives can be satisfied on Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and other social media platforms. Moreover, global internet users stated that the main reason why they use social media is “staying in touch with friends and family” according to a Hootsuite report. “Filling up spare time”, “reading news stories”, “finding inspirations for things to do and buy” are some of the other reasons (Figure 1). All these reasons look in line with the reasons for using the internet. So, one can assume that social media platforms resonate with internet users, hence, had a successful growth in time.

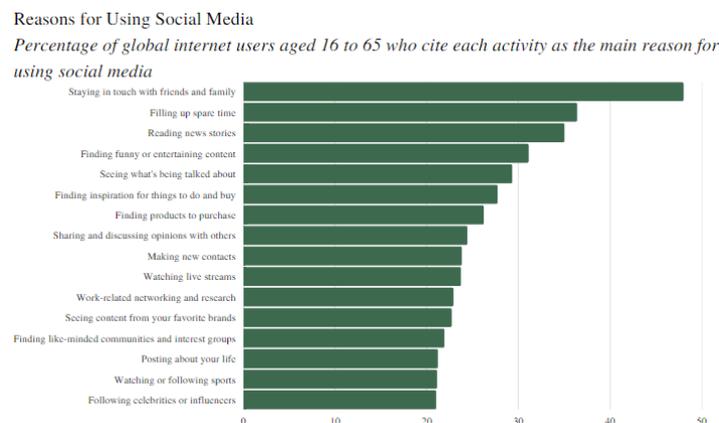


Figure 1. Reasons for Using Social Media. Adapted from Hootsuite - We Are Social 2021, October Report.

When one focus on Instagram, users can see the shift on the app. In definition, Instagram is “a free photo and video sharing app available on iPhone and Android phones. People can upload photos or videos to Instagram and share them with their followers or with a select group of friends. They can also view, comment and like posts shared by their friends on Instagram.

Anyone 13 and older can create an account by registering an email address and selecting a username.” (Facebook, n.a.). According to a Hootsuite report, after Facebook, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger, Instagram was the 4th mobile app by monthly active users (Hootsuite, 2021). Although Instagram is one of the most used mobile social media apps around the world, one must have an overview how the engagement rate looks like on Instagram.

Engagement rate is a formula that measures the amount of interaction a social content earns relative to reach or other audience figures such as reactions, likes, comments, saves, shares, mentions, and click-through (Hootsuite, 2021).

As Hootsuite’s quarter report stated, the average Instagram engagement rate was 4.59% in 2020. Moreover, as of 2021, business accounts on Instagram had an engagement rate of 0.82% for all their posts, 0.81% for only photo posts, 0.61% for their video posts, and 1.01% for their carousel posts (Hootsuite, 2021) (Figure 2).

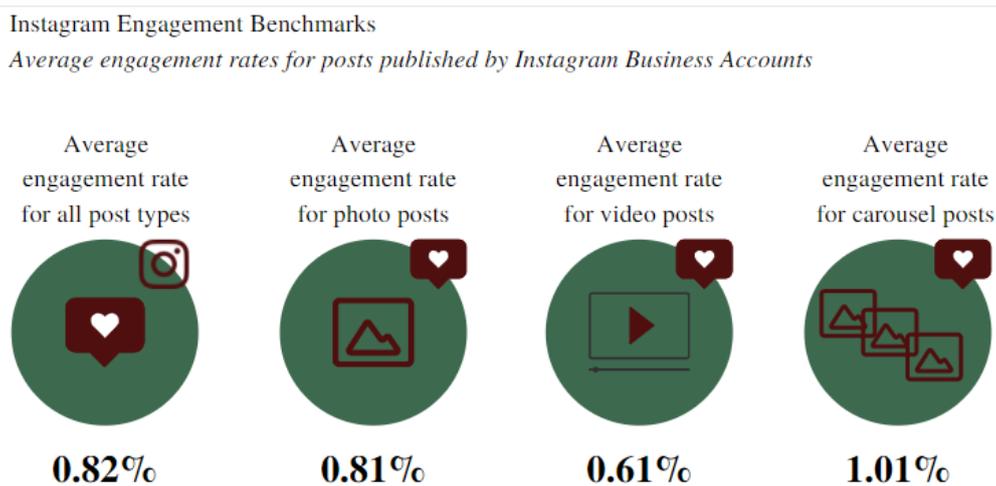


Figure 2. Instagram Engagement Benchmarks. Adapted from Hootsuite - We Are Social 2021, July Report.

Even though there is a slight increase in engagement rates on Instagram, there are recent criticisms towards it, especially about Instagram struggling with fears of losing its young audience. Piper Sandler conducted a survey in the United States among 10.000 teenagers. According to the data they gathered, Snapchat is now the favorite social media platform in the United States (35% share) followed by TikTok (30%) and Instagram being the third (22%) (Piper Sandler, 2021). Facebook bought Instagram in 2012, and one of the main reasons for this investment might be the fact that Facebook audience is getting older, and they are struggling with reaching out to younger audiences according to the survey made by Business

Insider (Business Insider, 2019). Hence, the survey made by Piper Sandler shows that Instagram might not be as relevant for teenagers as Facebook hoped for, and the younger audience is more likely to resonate with Snapchat and TikTok. This is a concern that has been acknowledged by Instagram employees as well, according to a recent The New York Times article. The article said that three former employees stated Instagram is now begun concentrating on the “teen time spent” data point. Moreover, they said, “the goal was to drive up the amount of time that teenagers were on the app with features including Instagram Live, a broadcasting tool, and Instagram TV, where people upload videos that run as long as an hour.” (The New York Times, 2021).

Adam Mosseri, Head of Instagram, also accepted the fact that TikTok is ahead of Instagram in terms of the video format and content consumption. He also said that “We are looking about how we can - not just with IGTV, but across all of Instagram - simplify and consolidate ideas, because last year we placed a lot of new bets. I think this year we must go back to our focus on simplicity and craft.” (The Verge, 2021). This was a signal coming directly from the Head of Instagram that they would like to change the app and compete with TikTok in a better way.

It is important for marketers to shift their social media strategies while keeping these statistics and recent criticism in mind.

### **Generational Differences and Their Key Insights**

All this information and criticism leads to the following question, who are these new generations that the biggest social media platforms are targeting? One definition for the generation is “the generational cohorts or groups, who belong to the same age group, experience or will experience accordingly the similar life experience in the years they may shape their lives” (Hung et al, 2008). Five different generations have been explained so far: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z (Berkup, 2014).

#### *Chronological Generation Classification*

<b>Generation Name</b>	<b>Chronological Generation Classification</b>
Traditionalists	1900-1945
Baby Boomers	1946-1964
Generation X	1965-1979
Generation Y (Millennials)	1980-1994
Generation Z	1995-...

*Note.* Adapted from “Working With Generations X And Y In Generation Z Period: Management Of Different Generations In Business Life” by Sezin Baysal Berkup. Berkup, 2014. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. p. 219-226

Once the data is narrowed down to differences between Millennials and Generation Z, it is possible to see the differences. An article published by Global Journal of Enterprise Information System compares these two generations and conclude that Millennials are tech savvies, they communicate with texts, they are curators, and they share, focused on the current moment, optimistic, entitled, self-centered and wants to be discovered. Generation Z on the other hand are tech innates, communicate with images, creators, and collaborators, future-focused, realistic, want to work for success, self-reliant, aware, and persistent (Yadav & Rai, 2017).

It is also important to cover the differences between generations when it comes to online behaviors. According to Hootsuite’s Digital 2021 report published for Q3 of 2021, 31.2% of female and 25.5% of male internet users amongst Millennials are watching vlogs (Hootsuite, 2021). Generation Z on the other hand has a different percentage with 39.6% female and 29.7% male internet users that are watching vlogs. It indicates that Generation Z is more interested in watching video content based on other peoples’ lives and daily routines. There is also a significant difference when it comes to influencer following behaviour in the same report. 34.8% of female and 26.2% of male internet users amongst Generation Z are following influencers with their social media accounts, while only 25.9% of female and 21.7% of male internet users amongst Millennials follow influencers. However, the data regarding the use of social media for work activities is the opposite. While 22.2% of female and male internet users amongst Generation Z use social media for work-related networking or research, 25.4% of female and 25.9% of male internet users amongst Millennials has that behaviour, and it goes even higher for male Generation X users. It is possible to say that different generations have different motivations and reasons to use social media since they have different interests. The report also includes data regarding the favorite social media platforms by age and gender, which gives a helpful insight regarding the likings of different generations. Facebook is the favorite social media platform of Generation X and Baby Boomers, while Instagram is preferred by Generation Z and Millennials. Meanwhile, TikTok has interesting data as well; 7.6% of female internet users amongst Generation Z stated that TikTok is their favorite social media platform, while the rest of the generations and males are generally around 3% (Figure 3).

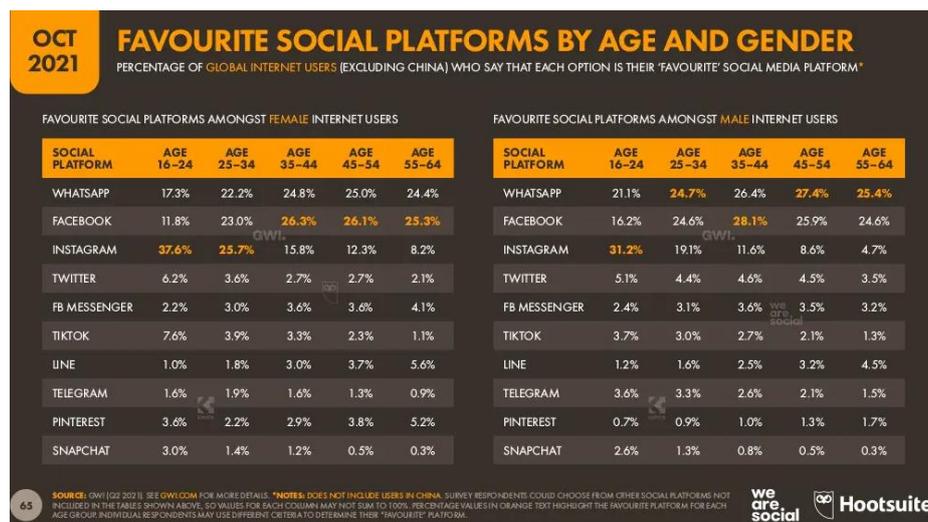


Figure 3. Favourite Social Platforms by Age and Gender. From Hootsuite, We Are Social 2021, October Report.

In the light of the insights above, one can conclude that Generation Z is more open to trying different social media platforms instead of staying on Instagram only, while other generations are more likely to protect their usual behaviors when it comes to trying different platforms. Moreover, since Millennials are more likely to use their social media accounts for work purposes while Generation Z is more likely to watch video content based on other peoples' lives, it is possible to say that Millennials might be using social media for their benefit while Generation Z is just looking for engaging content and entertainment. Nevertheless, for assuming such a strong statement, marketers would need the support of data. According to 2020 and 2021 Global Web Index Audience reports, the first reason Millennials use social media is to stay up to date with news and current events (%38) (GWI, 2021), while the first reason for Generation Z is to stay in touch with their friends (%38) (GWI, 2020). Moreover, Generation Z is more open to networking with other people (31%), while Millennials are not that interested in such an action (27%).

With the insight coming from these data, it is obvious that generations are changing, their interests and motives are changing, and marketers indeed need to adapt their social media strategies. Since the base knowledge about different generations and some of their differences are now covered, it would also be necessary to compare these insights with our focus country, Turkiye.

### **Online Behaviour of Turkiye**

According to the TurkStat data of 2020, Turkiye has a population of 83.614.362 people, and 41.915.985 of them is male while 41.698.377 is female. (Turkstat, 2020). TurkStat's 2020 Population by Sex and Age Group report shows that, as of 2020, there are 25.840.280 Generation Z members in Turkiye while there are 15.960.360 Millennials (TurkStat, 2020). Compared to European Union, Turkiye has a relatively young population (Think with Google, 2021).

TurkStat also reported that as of 2021, 82.6% of the total population is using the internet (TurkStat, 2021). Internet usage has a higher percentage within the male population with 87.7%, while the female population has 77.5%. Even though the data shows that the female population has a lower internet usage behaviour than the male population, a recent study explains that this percentage is higher when the focus group is the teenagers (Sancar, 2017). According to this study, internet access is higher in women aged 15-19, representing the young age group, for reasons such as education, social media, and work.

Turkiye is also an important country as a digital market and from a social media usage perspective. According to the Hootsuite report, there are 60 million people in Turkiye who use social media platforms, which is equal to 70.8% of the total population (Hootsuite, 2021). Moreover, 97.7% of the total population owns a mobile phone, and 97.2% of them are using a smartphone. 94.5% of the mobile phone users are connecting to the internet through their mobile phones, and they spend on average 7 hours and 57 minutes on the internet in a day. This indicates that Turkish people are using their mobile phones very often, and they are likely to spend a long time on the internet than on average. According to the Worldwide Hootsuite Digital 2021 report, the average daily time spent using the internet by each internet user is 6 hours and 58 minutes (Hootsuite, 2021). According to the same report, online content activities of internet users aged 16 to 64 in Turkiye is mostly shaping around online videos. 98.8% of them are watching online videos via the internet, 79.9% is listening to music streaming services, 44.8% is watching vlogs and 40.7% is listening to online radio stations. They are not completely concerned about their digital privacy, since only 29.3% of the internet users expressed their concerns about how companies use their data, while the world average is 33.1%.

Regardless of the total populations of other countries, Türkiye is the 5th country where Instagram reach is one of the highest percentages of the population (66%) (Hootsuite, 2021). Turkish people are not using only Google while searching for a brand, they also tend to use social media when they are researching for brands (54.4% of total internet users aged 16 to 64) (Global Web Index, 2021). Most-used social media platforms are also different from the worldwide figures (Hootsuite, 2021). The top three social media platforms in Türkiye are YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp; while the top three worldwide social media platforms are Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp. This insight is also evidence of how high Instagram usage in Türkiye is.

Recently, Ercan Aktan made research which has been done to reveal the motivations of the participants who are university students and who use Instagram in Türkiye, and the reasons why they follow certain people on Instagram (Aktan, 2018). According to the research, the most important motivations for the participants' Instagram usage are "I can share pictures", "I can get information about the topics on the agenda", "I can see my friends' messages", "I can spend time", "I can keep in touch with my old friends" and "I can comment on a topic on the agenda" has been revealed. However, it is important to note that this research has not been conducted with the objective of differences between generations. These findings are in line with worldwide social media usage motives. 48% of global internet users said that they are using social media for staying in touch with their friends and family, 36.4% of them is using it for filling up their spare time, 35% is for reading news and 31.1% is for finding funny and entertaining content (Hootsuite, 2021).

It has already been explained that Türkiye is an important country regarding social media usage and social media engagement. Moreover, Türkiye has some different motives in comparison to the rest of the world, hence, it might not be correct for brands to adopt the global social media strategies to Türkiye, without creating a local strategy. Nevertheless, this localization process would need a budget and resources for time and human work. So, why should brands need to invest in Türkiye for a local social media strategy? One reason for this question is that the number of eCommerce users is expected to grow by 42% to 58 million users in Türkiye by 2025 (Statista, 2021). Moreover, 48% of the population in Türkiye shops online. 79% of online shoppers in Türkiye research online when planning a major purchase, while 58% of online shoppers in the United Kingdom do the same (eCommerce DB, 2021). This research includes social media since 54.5% of internet users aged 16 to 64 in Türkiye use social media when

researching brands (Hootsuite, 2021). Therefore, there is a high chance that the target audience of a brand could check the social media accounts of that brand at some point, which might lead to sales afterwards with a correct strategy.

### **Theoretical Framework: Uses and Gratification to Understand Social Media Motives**

This study aims to see the different Instagram usage motivations between Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye. To understand the overall social media usage motives, the theoretical frame will be focusing on the Uses and Gratifications that were theorized by Katz (Katz et al, 1973).

As Katz explained with his Uses and Gratifications Theory, people are active participants in seeking the media that will satisfy their needs (Katz et al, 1973). Huang and Su acknowledge that different media consumption motives will result in different media usage behaviors, consumption behaviour, and attentional behaviour, moreover, all these topics are covered in Uses and Gratifications Theory itself (Huang & Yu, 2018). Five different categories can be applied to all forms of media as Katz theorizes, and they are “Cognitive Needs”, “Affective Needs”, “Personal Integrative Needs”, “Social Integrative Needs”, and lastly, “Tension Release Needs” (Katz et al, 1973).

All these categories might be applicable for motives of social media usage. One can argue on how affective needs are related to the desire to follow aesthetic accounts and engage with those kinds of contents. Or one can discuss how social integrative needs are in line with the vision of Instagram. Pavica Sheldon has offered a further approach based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory of Katz (Sheldon & Newman, 2019). He proposed a five-factor solution to explain gratifications for Instagram use with, social interaction, documenting, diversion, self-promotion, and creativity. Social interaction has been defined as “watching what others are doing” by Whiting and Williams (Whiting & Williams, 2013). Sheldon highlights that, in the last decades, seeking for social interaction has changed its medium because of wide social media usage since Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube have highly expanded, as users organize events, share photos, and chat with family and friends (Sheldon & Newman, 2019). Other researchers also came up with various perspectives around the Uses and Gratification Theory connected to social networks. Urista et al. discovered two different motives of gratifications that are named “social gratifications” and “communication gratifications” (Urista, 2009). Urista explained social gratifications as “the ability to keep in touch with family

and friends, meeting like-minded individuals, social networking, maintaining relationships with old friends and being popular as indicated by the number of followers”. These are more about our social needs and social behaviors as humans. On the other hand, Urista also explained “communication gratification” as the capacity of an individual to control their communication while finding new opportunities to have more contacts on a social network site. According to Urista’s research, social network sites are offering individuals an opportunity to get instant support within their contacts, and these contacts are often “selective, efficient, and immediate”. As can be seen, there are multiple approaches based on the original theory nowadays, especially with the growing effect of social media.

In addition to the theoretical framework above, one can conclude that social media marketers should need to know their audiences’ motives and needs to create a to-the-point content strategy for them by creating content that eventually will satisfy their social media usage motivations. Further chapters will be explaining this approach by focusing on Millennials and Generation Z that live in Turkiye with the statistical analysis of the conducted survey and aim to explain the findings based on the theory of Uses and Gratifications by Katz.

#### **Methodology: Generating the Data from the Millenials and Generation Z in Turkiye**

This study aims to find if there is a difference between Generation Z and Millennials’ behaviour when we focus on the Instagram usage motivations, and if yes, how companies should react to those differences.

Based on the findings of the research process on existing scientific data, a survey has been conducted to have the quantitative data to connect the scientific approach and theoretical framework with the target group of this study.

The research question of the study is “**What are the motivational differences between Millennials and Generation Z in regard to Instagram usage in Turkiye?**”.

Under the quantitative research title, an online survey has been conducted in Turkiye to measure if there is a difference in Instagram usage motives between Millennials and Generation Z. Survey was also aimed to measure if Generation Z still finds Instagram engaging or not and is it necessary for companies to create different content strategies based on their target audience’s generation. The gathered data has been measured with the questions in the format of close-ended questions in both nominal and ordinal variables and Likert-type questions.

To answer the research question of this study, which is “what are the motivational differences between Millennials and Generation Z in regard to Instagram usage in Turkiye?”, measured hypothesis was:

H1: Generation Z and Millennials have different motives for Instagram usage.

To find the participants, survey link has been shared on online platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, and it was open to everyone. The survey has been created on 01.11.2021 and ended on 20.11.2021. 668 people participated in the survey. The original language of the survey was in Turkish since the target audience lives in Turkiye and speaks Turkish.

Participants’ answers have been collected in the online platform of Google and the final answers downloaded as an Excel document. Dataset has been classified based on the suitable approach for chosen statistical analysis. Afterwards, it has been tested, analyzed, and visualized on R Studio.

### **Results**

The survey of this study has been conducted as an online survey through Google Forms. 668 people have participated in the survey and 550 of them belonged to the group of “Generation Z”, while 113 of them were Millennials. Moreover, 553 of the participants were female, while 96 of them were male and 5 of them were non-binary. 14 of the participants did not want to share their gender.

28.1% of the overall participants have stated that they are currently studying in a high school, while 27.1% are studying in a bachelor’s degree program. Furthermore, 21.9% of the participants have already graduated from a university’s bachelor’s degree program, and 10.6% of them have graduated from a high school.

There were only 4 Generation X participants and since this study focuses specifically on Generation Z and Millennials already, they have been excluded from the dataset. Moreover, as explained in the previous chapters, the main “medium” of this study is Instagram. Hence, if a participant does not use Instagram, the survey automatically ended for them. Out of 668 total participants, 92 of them stated that they do not have an Instagram account, therefore the rest of the data focuses on the remaining 572 participants.

To measure the hypothesis, the score of the related question has been tested first. While analyzing the different reasons why Millennials and Generation Z use Instagram, all the questions were measured from a single scale. While creating this scale, the score was obtained

by taking the average of the answers to the Likert-type questions. The test method was Cronbach’s Alpha.

*H1: Generation Z and Millennials have different motives for Instagram usage.*

*H0 : Millennials and Generation Z use Instagram for the same reasons.*

After the statistical test, as Figure 4 and Figure 5 also shows, both generations have similar motivations when it comes to Instagram usage. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study is rejected.

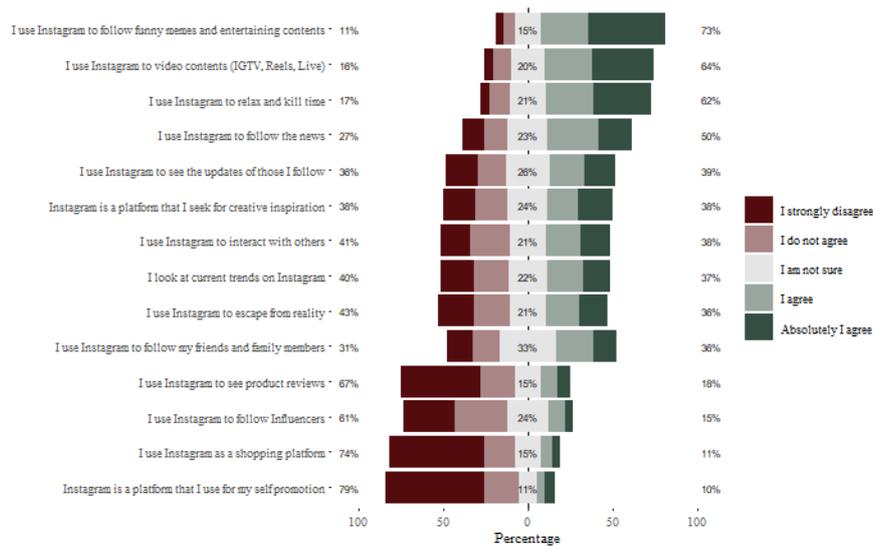


Figure 4. Instagram usage motivations of Generation Z (Likert scale).

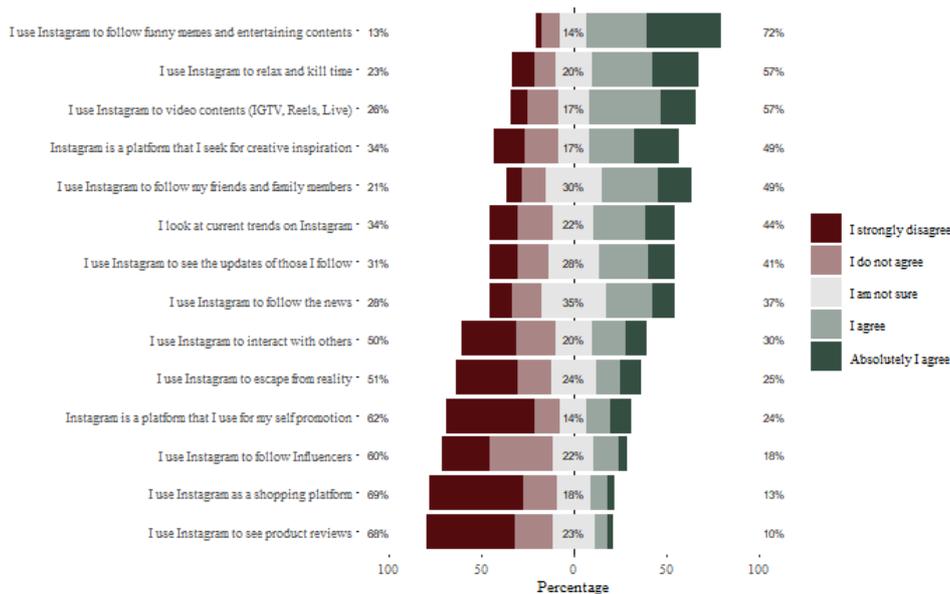


Figure 5. Instagram usage motivations of Millennials (Likert scale).

### **A Data-based Discussion for Marketers**

As the explained statistical results show, Generation Z and Millennials have the similar motives to use Instagram. They use it to:

1. Follow funny memes and entertaining content,
2. Consume video contents with live broadcasts, IGTV and Reels,
3. To relax and fill their free time,
4. Follow the news,
5. Find creative inspirations,
6. See the updates from the people they follow.

Furthermore, results are indicating that the Instagram usage of Millennials has increased since last year, and not only that, also they more tend to engage with other people on Instagram. The same cannot be said for Generation Z. Their daily Instagram usage did not increase, and they are less likely to engage with others on Instagram. The analysis does not support the theory that companies need to create different content strategies based on their target generations, nevertheless, they could find a way to resonate with their overall audiences since both generations stated they do not engage with company contents on Instagram even though they follow them, and they do not think that those contents reflect their daily/real lives. Both generations strongly believe that a company profile needs to be realistic and relatable.

The data is an indicator that the motivation for Instagram usage in Turkiye is similar to the worldwide motivations. As discussed within the literature review, global internet users aged 16 to 64 are using social media mostly to stay in touch with their friends and family, fill up their spare time, read news, and find funny content (Hootsuite, 2021). A similar alignment can be said for Generation Z and Millennial participants in Turkiye.

Furthermore, the criticism about Instagram being “not relatable anymore” for the younger generations can be supported within this study. As results show, even though Millennials are still engaging with other people, Generation Z has a lower percentage of a tendency to engage with others on Instagram. This might be connected to the new point of view for “Instagram aesthetics” (The Atlantic, 2019) and the expectation of being realistic and relatable on Instagram, which is explained in the literature review. It is important to remember that both focus generations of this study stated that they are less likely to engage with company contents on Instagram, and they expect them to be more realistic.

As McKinsey concluded after their survey mentioned earlier, Generation Z is mainly a realistic generation. They live life pragmatically and they would like to “unveil the truth behind all things” (McKinsey, 2018). It is possible to assume that Millennials are affected by this approach, and they now seek the truth and realness within the branded contents as well. This can be a connection to the study of Trust Insights about the decline in engagement on Instagram (Trust Insights, 2021), and be the data-based inspiration for future content strategies both for individuals and companies. This approach would be in line with the third hypothesis of this study; “companies need to create a different content strategy based on their target audience”. Even though it is not supported with the above data that each generation has different motivations and expectations, both generations have a similar expectation from companies and that is not satisfied.

Like the Uses and Gratifications Theory by Katz; cognitive, affective, social integrative and tension release needs (Katz et al, 1973) are highly applicable for Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye. As the data show, they use Instagram to acquire information about the daily agenda and news, which is explained under the cognitive needs. Or they satisfy their “affective needs” on Instagram by following funny memes and entertaining content. Their social integrative needs are satisfied with their motivation of seeing the updates from the people they know. Finally, they use Instagram to relax and fill their spare time, and that is connected to their tension release needs.

One of the problem statements was about the limited amount of literature about a comparison between Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye. The previous chapters already explained that it is important to offer a personalized communication strategy for companies. The aim of this study is to offer a possible future guideline for companies, so they can improve their strategies based on the relevant data. As for the Instagram usage motives, there were no significant differences between Generation Z and Millennials. However, both had some similarities in terms of expectations that were not able to be satisfied by companies. These can be considered as “consumer pain points” from the marketing perspective. It is important to understand that they are expecting companies to be realistic and relevant, while both are using Instagram to see entertaining content and feel relaxed after a long day. Both generations are also stated that they are highly consuming video contents on Instagram. The positive response for motives such as “I use Instagram as a shopping platform”, or “I use it to see product reviews” are relatively low. Therefore, as for organic content on the owned channels and not

for the paid content on advertising efforts since it requires a lot of different metrics, it is crucial to find a “native” way to advertise the products or company itself. Too much filter, too much photoshop or the feeling of “professional content” might be off-putting for the younger audiences. Being more natural and real is the thing that they want to see.

Knowing the target audience and curating a content strategy based on their expectations while being realistic helps a sustainable growth on Instagram. As the results of this study showed, Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye are struggling to find relatable branded content on Instagram. Therefore, it would be beneficial if companies on Instagram could:

- Know their audience and their resonance with the company,
- Find the real-life examples based on these resonating points,
- Create a content strategy, preferably in a video format, about these points,
- Find a way to create content without making it too overwhelming and more natural,
- Catching the “trending content” on Instagram and even setting a trend to resonate with those who find being “trendy” important while leveraging with increasing engagement.

These five suggestions for companies could be the suggested guide of this study. However, as in many other things, it is crucial to always measure the effect and success of each change and monitor the reflection within the target audiences.

### **Conclusion**

This study aimed to identify the differences in Instagram usage motivations between Generation Z and Millennials in Turkiye. The research question was “what are the motivational differences between the Millennials and Generation Z in regards of Instagram usage in Turkiye?”. Based on quantitative analysis and statistical results of it, it can be concluded that there are no significant differences as for Instagram usage motivations between Generation Z and the Millennials. The results indicate that there are points that companies and marketers need to cover within their content strategies, but they do not need to create different strategies based on different generations since the main motivation is highly similar. Furthermore, their likeliness of engaging with other people on Instagram is slightly different since the Millennials more tend to engage with others on Instagram compared to Generation Z. As the results of the third hypothesis shown, both generations are struggling to find relevant branded content based

on their lives and preferences, therefore a decrease in engaging with others can be a result of this struggle.

By analyzing the differences and preferences of both generations, this thesis has shown how companies in Turkiye can adapt their Instagram strategies to catch the interest of younger audiences. Nevertheless, while statistical results are rejecting the first hypothesis of motivational differences, this approach provides new insights for companies and marketers to leverage chosen motivations as a new communication point for their future content strategies. Furthermore, this thesis clearly illustrates similarities and differences between Generation Z and the Millennials in Turkiye, but it also raises questions of how marketers can increase the engagement rate of Generation Z.

Based on these conclusions, future studies could address what type of video content Generation Z and the Millennials in Turkiye are preferring to consume on Instagram and what are the selling points on social media they are feeling attracted to. These questions might increase the chance to find a successful way to communicate with both generations and create a tailor-made content strategy. A more complete study about motivational similarities and differences, and content preferences, will facilitate easier comparison between existing content marketing strategies and a future strategy. Once there is a clear understanding of the relationship between expectations and loyalty within Generation Z and the Millennials in Turkiye, and the effect of such a data-based social media marketing strategy, marketers and experts can take steps to improve their marketing efforts both in theory and in the practical field.

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