

MILLENNIALS VERSUS NON-MILLENNIALS: THE CONTEXT OF ENGAGEMENT LEVELS ON INSTAGRAM STORIES

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Ephemeral social media platforms, which displays rich media, primarily images and videos, are only accessible for a short-term period. It has lately got the attention of researchers in order to understand better, how ephemeral social media platforms are affecting social media users. We design quantitative survey study that sampling data collected over two weeks (N= 149) to understand engagement differences (consuming, participating, producing) between Millennials and Non-millennials, on one of the leading ephemeral mobile platforms – on Instagram Stories. Our quantitative data demonstrated that Millennials show statistically significant differences by engaging Instagram Stories than Non-millennials. However, results unexpectedly demonstrate that non-millennials show the same engagement level in watching and reading ephemeral content as Millennials.

Keywords: Instagram Stories, Customer Engagement, Ephemeral Social Media, User-generated content, Millennials

1. Introduction

Advanced technology has changed individuals living style in the 21st century, where social media has become the most significant action that additions more experience. It is because of the steady growth in the number of users around the world, which has additionally expanded the frequency from millions to billions regarding Social Media Platforms. Social media has become ubiquitous, and monthly active users are expected to reach 3.02 billion active users by 2021 (Chen and Cheung, 2019). Social media continues to grow and adds new features, replacing and improving old ones during its existence.

One of the latest trends and new user experience that getting popularity each day by adding millions of users is ephemeral social media platforms, has lately got the attention of researchers (Bayer et al., 2016; Piwek & Joinson, 2016; Billings et al., 2017; Belanche et al., 2019; Chen and Cheung, 2019). Modest definition of the ephemeral social media that allows the user to share post images and videos, that are only accessible for a short-term period (Bayer et al., 2016). In contrast of social media platforms that provide permanent archiving posts, ephemeral social media platforms like Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp allow an individual user to share content for a limited time with auto-deletion.

Ephemeral content is easy to create that unlike permanent content (Chen and Cheung, 2019), there is no need for careful planning, staging, and editing. That is great for users because it means they can maintain engagement and stay on their audience's radar while they are preparing more time-consuming and demanding permanent content. Using filters, GIFs, music or masks makes presenting of content much more attractive and less intrusive than classic old school contents that consumers used to.

Snapchat is one of the pioneer ephemeral social media platform that has launched in 2011 (Monteiro & Mazzilli, 2016; Bayer et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2016) and soon became a popular and very useful tool for sharing moments in a short period for the social media users. Thanks to its benefits after „Snapchat“, giants like „Facebook“, „Instagram“, „YouTube“ also added this feature. As the most popular ephemeral content which is used nowadays in social media is Instagram stories with 500 million daily active users (Statista, 2019b). Instagram Stories With the launch in August 2016, Instagram Stories are perhaps the most notable and innovative social network novelty of late (Belanche et al., 2019). Thanks to its styling, structure and presence and different from most of the social networks, where users need to scroll their timeline, Instagram stories appearing to the full screen for 15s. Then the user may follow a different story, and the user can move back and forth to previous and following stories in chronological order (Belanche et al., 2019).

Approximately two out of every three adults aged 18-29 use Instagram (Statista, 2019a) and this percentage has increased from 59% to 64% that demonstrates just how popular Instagram is within younger generations. The latest studies demonstrate that new social media platforms are perfect tools for boosting brand reputation as well as to reach younger audiences (Sasha et al., 2016; Barry et al., 2016). Millennials are the most active users of the Ephemeral social media that this generation grew up in a period of economic rise, the severe growth of online

social media and online streaming services (Parment, 2013). However, scholars as Cavalcanti et al. (Cavalcanti et al., 2017) and Xu et al. (Xu et al., 2016) describe that it is essential to enlarge more researches in order to understand better how ephemeral social media platforms are affecting social media users.

A variety of researchers have proposed classifications of engagement in the social media that conclude plenty of online activities in a restricted number of categories. One of the comprehensive researches made by Shao in 2009; his classification of user engagement includes consumption, participation and production (Shao, 2009). Furthermore, its dimensional kind of online behaviour that lets us distinguish between actions according to the user's engagement levels with content.

Based on the previous researches (Bayer et al., 2016; Israfilzade, 2017; Belanche et al., 2019), our aim of the study is to determine the differences between Millennials and Non-millennials in terms of their engagement classification (Shao, 2009) by consumption, participation and production in the case of Instagram Stories.

2. Related works

Ephemeral social media

Users are likely to spend more time on social networks rather than to watch TV; in mediocre 50% of the population use Facebook daily, and just about 39% watch TV (Cooper, 2018). Moreover, 40% of the users admit that they monitor the favourite brands on social networks (Global Index, 2018). One of the main revolutionary features for social media was ephemeral contents in the ephemeral social media platforms (Snapchat, Instagram stories, etc.). Being aware of that content vanishes, also decreases self-awareness in communication: no need to worry about unintended consumers and long-term content showcases, users are more confident to „let their guard down” and share hilarious, even the content that they could be hesitant to share on other social networks (Xu et al., 2016). There are plenty of causes why consumers love ephemeral content: the perfect fit for mobile devices; gives a feeling of authenticity; avoids clogging up the main feed with content (Bayer et al., 2016; Belanche et al., 2019).

Snapchat and Instagram create a sense of urgency for their subscribers to continually check the platform in hopes of not missing the content (VanDerslice, 2016). Snapchat – was the innovator for new norms in communication (several words; short, visual memes). It is also new standard in how „I define the relations with other people” (inclusion against the relations; acquaintances against friends/relatives; now against later; direct value against long-term value) (Sashittal et al., 2016). Instead of relying on the earlier large-format format of advertising which people see, holding the mobile devices vertically, Snapchat asks advertisers to develop content which can be browsed when the mobile device keeps in the vertical position (i.e. In its natural position). This step signals: "We have the correct technology. We bring the audience. You, the advertiser, should change." (Sashittal et al., 2016). As a native mobile app, Snapchat is built on sharing images "on the go" and consequently depends on mobile phone mobility (Schrock, 2015). This mobility allows people to post their pictures regardless of time and place, that is essential given Snapchat 's "modern" limitation.

Based on the research, which was done between college students, results were the followings: The sweet spot relates to the feeling of relativity, inclusivity and ease and has the potential promoting expansion of opportunities (Sashittal et al., 2016). In oral protocols of students of colleges, it is supposed that Snapchat is a perfect social network for development of brands of acquaintances: brands which aim to become a part of inclusive, nice on the touch experience or acquaintances to great extent of communication.

Ephemerality on Instagram Story

Bypassing the number of more than 800 million active users worldwide, Instagram takes the lead with the most considerable growth in Western countries (Statista, 2018), and over a million advertisers. It is not only one of the most popular virtual places, but also a social media where users likely to spend time (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016); as numbers show users stay on Instagram more than other leading social media platforms: 45% more than on Facebook, and 40 % more than on Twitter (Alter, 2018). The aim of Instagram differs from other social media platforms. Instagram is using the logic of individual self-promotion (Marcus, 2015) and pleasure (Casalo et al., 2017) in the social sphere. Instagram Stories allows users to get an ephemeral relationship in a strictly consumer-controlled environment (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016), in a place where users advertise themselves as individual brands. Instagram's story feature styled around the logic of „sharing a moment” during a short period, on just 24 hours. Story feature creates a need and desire to check their Instagram more often to be aware of the content uploaded by the users they subscribe until the content totally disappears (Belanche et al. 2019). Stories are disappearing contents that combine videos and photos and create a slideshow gallery that tells a story. The content users chose for their Story will now be a series that their followers can swipe like a mini slide show on their devices for 24 hours until it disappears. For getting notified about the stories, content consumers will see a colourful circle next to their photos. Which means, their subscribers feed Instagram with new stories. All is needed to be done is a tap on the profile photo to see persons story.

The Stories feature on Instagram works differently. Even Snapchat was launched already presenting "Stories," this specification had not been launched on Instagram until August 2016 (Instagram Blog, 2017), and it completely changed the visual elements of the software. For example, Instagram shared statistics for January 2019; it reached 500 million daily active story users of its platform per day worldwide in comparison with 100 million for 2016 (Statista, 2019a). Also, most of the users (more than a half) are likely to be 34 years old and younger.

As Belanche's (2019) recent study results show, Instagram stories not only improve consumer attitudes toward advertisements but at the same time, changes perceived obsessions positively in compare to Facebook's wall. Millennials are more concerned about advertising on Facebook rather than non-millennial users. Non-millennial is more loyal to Facebook advertisements when millennial people of both sexes and women from non-millennial are more loyal to Instagram Stories advertisements (Belanche et al., 2019). Due to that, the same research results demonstrate that it is more goal-oriented to focus on Instagram stories when organisations target millennial and non-millennial women, and on the Facebook wall when organisations target non-millennial men.

Development of hypotheses

Social media promotes interaction, collaboration and content sharing (Palmer, 2009). In young generations, such as Millennials, the use of ephemeral content promotes more communication (Saschittal et al., 2016). Millennials are the first generation to spend their life in a digital environment cause our age of information technology has a significant effect on how they live and work (Bennett et al., 2008; Wesner and Miller, 2008). Many scientists have established classifications for adding different online operations in a short number of categories.

It was found that Shao's classification (2009) by consumption, participation and production was particularly useful. In particular, its dimensional nature from passive to more active forms of online behaviour allow us to distinguish between actions according to the required user effort and to confirm the triple classification using elements from other classifications.

Instagram Story statistics have the highest attendance among Millennials (59%). Still, while Gen Z users watch more stories (72% of users from Gen Z) watch "Stories" on Snapchat, in compare to (70% of users from Gen Z) on Instagram (VidMob, 2018). Besides, according to the same report (VidMob, 2018), the percentage of Instagram users who create content on Instagram is significantly lower than those who consume the network's content -31% from Millennials and 39% among Gen Z.

The content of the Ephemeral social media platforms is user-generated content (UGC) (Bayer et al., 2016). The definition of the UGC, widely known in 2005, is usually associated with a description of different types of media content that are publicly available and produced by end-users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2007), user content (UGC) is defined as:

- a) content made publicly available over the Internet,
- b) which reflects a „certain amount of creative effort“, and
- c) which is „created outside of professional routines and practices“.

Consuming is considered to be the most passive level of Instagram usage, and engages the entirely passive consumption of online content for information search and in the aim of entertainment, what is close to watching TV or reading magazines (Jansz et al., 2015). Yoo and Gretzel (2011) also have mentioned in their study that the most dominant method of involvement is surfing and consuming UGCs but not contributing. By consuming it, they can express their care, be updated latest information, find new trends (Israfilzade, 2017). Buying goods from websites, watching photos or videos, playing an online game- all of these show the activities we consider as a consumption.

H1: There is a statistically significant difference between Millennials and Non-Millennials' consuming on the Instagram Stories.

Shao (2009) states that people who exhibit "participating behaviour" share, evaluate, or comment only on existing content, whereas those who exhibit "producing behaviour" in creating new content. Fuchs (2013) mentioned in his book that a person who takes advantage of social media when evaluating and commenting could be recognized as a semi-active user. They may participate actively; However, they do not create any new and creative content in media. Participation includes actions that require more effort and engagement than consuming; nevertheless, that does not make it more challenging to perform in the actions, such as "tagging" a photo or assigning video stars. Shao (2009) argues that participation is often aimed at establishing and maintaining social relationships.

H2: There is a statistically significant difference between Millennials and Non-Millennials' participating in the Instagram Stories.

Shao, also (2009) suggests that the user-generated content is motivated by the need of self-estimation. The production demonstrates one of the most intense stages of Shao's categories and refers to users' new content to distribute on the given social media. Another way of involvement of UGC – creation and the publication of content (video, a photo, a podcast, music, the blog and the platform of social networks) created by itself (Shao, 2009).

Also, Chu and Kim (2011) have explored eWoM (an electronic word from the mouth) on social media, and production can be classified as an opinion giving that opinion when an individual provides information to others and influences them through that information.

H3: There is a statistically significant difference between Millennials and Non-Millennials' producing on the Instagram Stories.

3. Methods

SPSS statistic program was chosen to do data analysis and test hypotheses. As a primary data collection, the survey questionnaire was accurate in order to get overall outcomes. For collecting the responses for the survey was used Google Forms for creating the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions which were formulated based on the related literature and divided into three groups of engagement level – consuming, participating and producing. Seven-point Likert scale question was chosen to collect more complete responses. Seven-point Likert scales are sensitive enough to gather a more precise assessment of the respondents and are more suitable for electronic distribution (Finstad, 2010). Each of the stated questions was responded on a seven-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly disagree (Strongly Agree, Agree, Somehow Agree, Neutral, Somehow Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree).

Respondents were registered by using social media and email list after reaching through the online link for the questionnaire, which was posted on the university website, online platforms, shared with students, colleagues during May 2019. For each respondent, a single survey was allowed that was accessible only one week. After rejecting 11 responses that did not meet criteria (Age), the final sample consists of 149 individual results (Millennials (n)=91; Non-millennials (n)=58). Distribution of the gender was consequently Millennial female (n)=52 and male (n)=39; Non-millennials female (n)=37 and male (n)=21.

Measurement

For the questionnaire, measuring scales were constructed from Shao's (2009) research on the theoretical content of respectively variable. Table 1. illustrates the measure which was used to analyse each construction and the foundation. First three questions (QC1, QC2, QC3) designed to evaluate the consuming level of the engagement by watching, reading and following in the Instagram Stories. Next part consists of the questions (QPA1, QPA2, QPA3) regarding the participating level of the engagement. The final part purpose was to collect data for the producing level of the engagement.

Table 1. Constructs, scale items and source.

Construct	Item coding	Measurement	Adapted from
Consuming*	QC1. QC2. QC3.	Watching Story Reading Story Exploring new hashtags and accounts	<i>Shao (2009)</i>
Participating*	QPA1. QPA2. QPA3.	Answering Polls/ Questions Sending message (commenting story) Sharing other stories	
Producing*	QPR1. QPR2. QPR3. QPR4.	Taking photo/ recording video Uploading photo/video Creating Polls/ Questions Stories Highlights (archiving)	

Notes: *seven-point Likert scale

For testing the validity of the collected data (Table 2), it was also decided to test reliability and discriminant validity. By measuring Cronbach's alpha, was checked construct and composite reliability, and it was higher than 0.65 indexes as it is recommended (Steenkamp and Geyskens, 2006). Also, it was noted that the average variance extracted (AVE) are higher than 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The sections of each measure were positively correlated. Furthermore, thanks to the corroborating, it was proved that the ratio among constructs was lesser than the square root of the AVE for respectively construct. (Foreland Larcker, 1981). As well,

for distribution normality and the absence of multicollinearity problems, some tests were also done as it describes in Table 3. Skewness and Kurtosis values of ± 2 , which means it matches the distribution normality (Garson, 2012). All the kurtosis values are in the acceptable range of ± 10 (Kline, 2011).

Table 2. Reliability tests.

	Cronbach's alpha	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Composite reliability (CR)
Consuming	0.81	0.73	0.89
Participating	0.69	0.82	0.60
Producing	0.72	0.83	0.72

Correlations values, which are above 0.70 or 0.90, considered as multicollinearity problems. Furthermore, according to Hair (1998) that the variance inflation factor for each item was under the recognised limit of 10.

Table 3. Normality and multicollinearity tests.

Item	Skewness	Kurtosis	VIF
QC1.	-0.54	1.37	2.40
QC2.	-0.47	0.51	1.74
QC3.	-0.37	0.05	2.26
QPA1.	-0.52	0.27	1.53
QPA2.	-0.18	0.03	1.68
QPA3.	-0.37	-0.06	1.65
QPR1.	-0.39	-0.21	1.49
QPR2.	-0.60	0.11	1.35
QPR3.	-0.19	-0.41	2.10
QPR4.	-0.16	-0.47	1.69

Note: VIF = Variance inflation factor

4. Results

For testing the effect on each dependent variable, it was decided to use ANOVA (analysis of variance) method, taking into account all the different conditions. As it is shown in Table 4. The results of the ANOVA analysis show that p-value is lower than 0.05, as it is recommended for the items. Only two dependents exceeded given boarder. One of them is „Watching story” (QC1) with the p-value greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.12$). „Reading story” (QC2) surpassed the border of 0.05 and demonstrated 0.41 at last. That means there is no significant difference for „Reading story” between Millennials and Non-Millennials in the questioner. For Millennials the standard deviation varies between on the table 0.90-1.27, for Non-Millennials these numbers vary between 0.83-1.21.

For testing the hypotheses, each of the collected data was grouped for each hypothesis and analysed with ANOVA method. P-value was lower than recommended 0.05, and two from the three hypotheses gave a final result of 0.00 in the table. Standard deviation numbers did not exceed 0.92. The minimal standard deviation number for both Millennials and Non-Millennials was 0.65. Table 5 illustrates the result of hypotheses analyses.

Table 4. ANOVA analysis of items.

Item	Age				ANOVA	
	Millennials		Non-Millennials		<i>F</i> (1, 147)	<i>p</i> -value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
QC1.	5.08	1.27	4.76	0.96	2.48	0.12
QC2.	5.03	0.90	5.19	0.83	0.71	0.41
QC3.	4.68	1.10	4.21	1.12	6.47	0.01
QPA1.	5.40	0.96	5.02	0.76	6.39	0.01
QPA2.	5.35	0.90	4.31	0.92	46.60	0.00
QPA3.	4.81	1.06	3.95	1.21	21.09	0.00
QPR1.	5.70	1.02	4.53	0.96	48.92	0.00
QPR2.	5.51	1.18	4.83	0.96	13.52	0.00
QPR3.	5.36	0.94	4.17	0.98	55.33	0.00
QPR4.	5.46	0.91	4.17	1.01	65.12	0.00

Results of the hypotheses testing (Table 5) shows that the hypothesis of supporting the significant difference between millennials and non-millennials consuming Instagram stories was not accepted.

Table 5. Results of the hypotheses testing.

Hypothesis	Age				ANOVA		Results
	Millennials		Non-Millennials		<i>F</i> (1, 147)	<i>p</i> -value	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
H1 (Consuming)	4.94	0.92	4.72	0.76	2.28	0.13	Not Supported
H2 (Participating)	5.19	0.72	4.43	0.69	41.05	0.00	Supported
H3 (Producing)	5.51	0.64	4.12	0.86	98.54	0.00	Supported

ANOVA test gave the P-value of 0.13, which is not enough for supporting the hypothesis. Then, it as well supports the stated hypothesis of participation in Instagram Stories- the noticeable distinction between Millennials and Non-Millennials exists. The third hypothesis about the substantial difference between independent's participation in Instagram stories was confirmed and supported by the collected data and analyses as well.

5. Discussion and conclusions

When it comes to Stories, users take it easy – everything is simple, casual, temporary, more natural most of the time and comfortable for digesting. Also, sending someone's Story to a friend or reply need just one tap, and taking into account that the story is going to vanish soon, users are more driven to do this without thinking twice. Moreover, when an individuals' Story is shared with someone (especially when that person is not your follower already), they are instantly getting a visibility boost. Due to the reason of holding smartphones upright, most of the people use it in this position when scrolling; it makes consuming ephemeral content in a vertical position. People who are focused on themselves desire their messages to last longer. Content in social media are mostly self-oriented and exists as „me-formers” rather than „informers” when communicating in social media, and cause content describes current surroundings or shares personal feelings and opinions. Thus, yet micro-influencers may have the plausibility that some brands actually may not have.

Our research concludes that non-millennials show the same engagement level in watching and reading ephemeral content as Millennials. However, Millennials show statistically significant differences by engaging Instagram Stories than Non-millennials. Our research suggests that consuming Instagram stories as a new engagement level seems to be fresh opportunities for the Non-millennials.

Content that appears and disappears quickly is forgotten quickly.

6. Limitations and further research

Regardless of the novelty of the research, it has some limitations that could be the reason for future research. One of the main limitations was the number of the participants, for more accurate results for the future researches it should be considered into account. Also, the number of Millennial participants recommended being more, as it was not possible to reach more people from Millennials to take part in a survey.

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