

Chapter 12

A Generational Comparison of the Influence of Social Media on Sustainable Consumer Behavior

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the impact of social media, especially Instagram, on the sustainable consumption behaviors of different Generations, focusing on the formation of sustainable identities and choices. The research investigates how exposure to sustainability content on this platform influences sustainable consumption behaviors in Generations X, Y and Z. Using a quantitative approach, the study involves Instagram users from these Generations and applies factor analysis, multiple linear regres-

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sions and mediation analysis to assess generational impacts. The results indicate a positive influence of exposure to sustainable content on pro-environmental and pro-social habits, affecting sustainable consumption behaviors. It is concluded that exposure to sustainability content on social media positively influences sustainable consumption behaviors in Generations X, Y and Z, with Generation X playing an important mediating role in this process.

1 INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter play an important role in contemporary communication since they enable various types of content to be shared and offer valuable opportunities for marketing, especially by digital influencers. Instagram, in particular, stands out in the construction of identities and visual narratives, facilitating the self-promotion of individuals and brands. This scenario reinforces the importance of social media as a strategic tool for promoting brands and building cohesive digital communities (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Hysa et al., 2021).

Habits, seen in the literature as the recurring patterns of behavior, play a significant role in the behavioral context by shaping people's daily routines. When directed towards sustainable practices, these habits not only have a positive impact on the environment, but also become essential elements within the scope of sustainable consumption behaviors. This latter term refers to the conscious practice of purchasing and consumption choices that seek to minimize environmental impacts and promote sustainability, considering ethical principles and social responsibility (Chung, 2020; Saari et al., 2021).

The integration of sustainable habits into the narrative of sustainable consumption behaviors gains relevance in a scenario where social media plays an important role in contemporary communication. As well as being an important device for promoting brands, these platforms contribute to the formation of digital communities by providing a space for disseminating and defending these sustainable behaviors. In this way, the interconnection of these concepts not only strengthens individual practice, but also amplifies its impact by building engaged communities committed to environmental preservation (Casaló et al., 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020).

In this stage, age continues to be a relevant factor in sustainable consumption behaviors. Older generations generally demonstrate higher levels of green and sustainable consumption behaviors, while younger generations, being more socially-oriented and showing greater interest in environmental issues, present innovative perspectives. In addition, the influence of social media amplifies this dynamic, as environmental concern and the perception of consumer effectiveness emerge as

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