



## Analysis of The Influence of Social Media Use and Social Behavior of Millennial and Z Generations on The Growth of Tourism Industry

Ardiyanto Maksimilianus Gai<sup>1✉</sup>, Silvia Ekasari<sup>2</sup>, Ratnawita<sup>3</sup>, Aglis Andhita Hatmawan<sup>4</sup>, Ita Nurcholifah<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institut Teknologi Nasional Malang

<sup>2</sup>STIE Manajemen Bisnis Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Mitra Bangsa

<sup>4</sup>Universitas Teuku Umar

<sup>5</sup>IAIN Pontianak

[ardiyanto\\_maksimilianus@lecturer.itn.ac.id](mailto:ardiyanto_maksimilianus@lecturer.itn.ac.id)

### Abstract

This study aims to determine how tourism relates to millennials and Z generations by analyzing their motivations for travel experiences and social media use. This study employs a hybrid methodology, primarily focusing on qualitative aspects. We conducted a bibliographic review and descriptive survey analysis by collecting data from 100 respondents through an online survey using Google Forms. The results of the analysis show that millennials and Z generations are highly dependent on smartphones to connect to the internet and social media, with Instagram as the main platform. They spend six to nine hours per day online, and their phones are often considered an extension of themselves. Millennials and Z generations tend to publish their travel photos on Instagram, focusing on experiences that feature stunning natural scenery and expressions of joy, to strengthen their positive image. Millennials and Z generations primarily travel to explore new cultures and interact with people, and their inclination to capture and share photos serves as a social status indicator. Overall, millennials and Z generations use social media as a tool to build and communicate their social identity, focusing on experiences that can strengthen their positive image and gain recognition. Thus, this phenomenon reflects a shift in the way millennials and Z generations interact with the world and seek to influence and inspire others through the digital content they share.

**Keywords:** Millennials and Z Generations, Travel, Influence, Platform.

*JSISFOTEK is licensed under a Creative Commons 4.0 International License.*



### 1. Introduction

Today, we are in an era where technology dominates every aspect of our daily lives. The Internet, as one of the digital era's main pillars, has become an essential service for humanity. Its presence enables access to information and communication on a global scale and supports various economic, educational, and social sectors. The importance of the Internet has prompted several countries to consider making it a public service, reflecting how crucial the Internet is to the structure of modern society [1]. The Internet now functions like basic infrastructure such as water and electricity, providing a platform that supports communication, transactions, and access to various services. This rapid digital transformation has changed not only the way we communicate, but also the way we work and interact. In the workplace, the Internet has opened up new opportunities, such as remote work that allows for flexibility and global collaboration [2]. Companies and businesses rely on digital technology to improve operational efficiency, expand market reach, and create innovative business models. Additionally, in education, access to online resources and distance learning have revolutionized the way students learn, enabling more flexible, inclusive, and individualized learning. This transformation has not only expanded educational opportunities but also facilitated the global exchange of knowledge and skills, making education more accessible and relevant in the digital age [3].

However, the digital age also brings its own challenges. The digital divide remains a significant issue, with many people in remote and low-income areas still lacking adequate access to the internet. In addition, privacy and data security issues are of increasing concern, with incidents of cybercrime and misuse of personal data on the rise [4]. Over-reliance on technology can also impact mental health, triggering issues such as anxiety and social isolation. We need to take strategic and collaborative steps to address the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities presented by the digital age [5]. Digital literacy education is essential to equipping people with the skills needed to use technology wisely and responsibly. We also need to develop equitable infrastructure to guarantee fair internet access for everyone. We must also implement strong regulations to safeguard user privacy and data, and to foster innovation in the digital economy [6]. With the right approach, we can harness technological advances to create a more inclusive and prosperous future. Digital technologies have a lot of potential to improve quality of life and drive economic growth, but they also require careful attention and

management to address the risks involved. Through collaboration between governments, the private sector, and civil society, we can ensure that the digital age delivers maximum benefits to all [7].

The internet's development and easy access, which now allow connections to almost any corner of the world, have paved the way for greater interaction between people from different parts of the world, each with their own unique customs and ways of life. Within this vast global computer network, social networks have emerged as platforms where internet users can connect, share content, and stay in touch with each other [8]. Social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have become places where billions of users can interact, share ideas, and build virtual communities, drastically changing the way we communicate and interact. Previous researchers had organized meetings and share information among their colleagues, marking the beginning of social networking. Since then, social media has undergone rapid evolution and constant change, becoming an integral part of everyday life for many people, especially millennials and Z generations [9]. This generation, which grew up with the development of digital technology, has made social media one of the main platforms for socializing, getting news, and building professional networks, making it a booming phenomenon in today's modern culture [10].

The most affected by digital technology, this generation has integrated it into their daily lives. Compared to previous generations, millennials and Z generations grew up in an era where access to the internet and advanced technology has become easier and more widespread, which has influenced the way they learn, work, and socialize [11]. According to several studies, millennials and Z generations are characterized by a strong attention to and connectedness to social networks, as well as having non-traditional priorities in terms of career and personal life. Millennials and Z generations also stand out for their attitudes, which tend to be more liberal and proactive, especially in the digital context. They often engage in online discussions, share experiences, and express opinions openly on social media platforms, which gives them power and responsibility in decision-making [12]. These habits affect not only their social relationships, but also how they contribute to social and political change. In many ways, millennials and Z generations have used technology to drive innovation and change traditional paradigms, making them a dynamic and influential generation in today's society [13].

The millennial generation's travel activities are inseparable from the influence of social media. Social media plays an important role in promoting new tourist destinations and providing information about emerging tourist attractions [14]. With the evolution of technology and its application in various aspects of life, social media has not only become a communication tool, but also influences the way millennials and Z generations plan and experience their travel experiences. Social media allows users to share travel experiences in real-time, which then inspires others to visit the same places, creating a cycle of ever-growing travel content [15]. Millennials and Z generations, who are known for their tendency to connect and share experiences through social media, are interested in visiting tourist destinations they see on platforms. The spread of individual travel experiences and the exchange of information from various countries and cultures among millennials and Z generations drives curiosity and a desire to experience these experiences firsthand [16]. Millennials and Z generations also demonstrate a strong need to be part of a global community by sharing and showcasing their experiences. This not only provides personal satisfaction but also strengthens their social identity in the digital era. Thus, social media not only influences the choice of travel destinations, but also changes how millennials and Z generations experience and share their travels with the world.

## **2. Research Methods**

The research methodology involved two main components bibliographic review and descriptive analysis of opinion surveys. We conducted the bibliographic review by screening relevant literature to understand previous theories and findings on millennials and Z generations' travel behavior. Documentary analysis included a review of various publications and data available on social media and other media to evaluate the content shared by millennial travelers. Meanwhile, descriptive analysis of opinion surveys provided direct insight into millennial travelers' perceptions and preferences, allowing the researcher to identify significant patterns and trends. The millennial generation was the selected population for this study. We obtained the participant sample by publishing an online survey specifically targeting the traveler group. We designed the survey using the Google Forms program, and it attracted a total of 100 respondents. Google Forms automatically generated an Excel spreadsheet containing each respondent's responses, facilitating the data collection and analysis process. We then conducted a frequency analysis and evaluated common patterns in millennials and Z generations' travel preferences and habits using the data from this spreadsheet. This approach allowed the researcher to integrate the results of the bibliographic review and documentary analysis with empirical data collected through the survey, resulting in a more holistic understanding of millennial travelers' behavior and motivations.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

Millennials and Z generations show a strong preference for using smartphones as their primary means of connecting to the internet, with a particular focus on social media. Smartphones serve not only as a means of

communicating with friends and family but also as a window to access a variety of digital services and entertainment that support their highly connected lifestyles. Data shows that millennials and Z generations spend between six and nine hours per day online, reflecting their constant connection to the digital world. Previous research has confirmed that this generation often views mobile phones as an extension of themselves, acting as a vital link in their daily lives. In this context, social media, specifically Instagram, emerged as a primary focus of this study due to its rapid growth and central role in millennials and Z generations' social lives. According to this study, over 82% of respondents chose Instagram as their most frequently used social media. With over 262 million photos uploaded daily on the platform, the results of this study confirm Instagram's dominance as the primary platform of choice for individuals. Instagram's dominance in the social and digital lives of millennials and Z generations reflects how important this platform is in shaping the way they interact, share, and connect with the outside world.

According to millennials and Z generations' use of social media, "gossiping on friends/family/acquaintances' profiles" is the most frequently chosen activity, followed by "uploading photos" and "sharing their travels." Instagram, a popular platform for sharing photos and experiences, closely links these activities. This is in line with previous research, which states that millennials and Z generations often publish travel-related content and tend to upload photos that are considered important. Instagram, with its visual-focused function, is the main choice for millennials and Z generations to express themselves online. For millennials and Z generations, taking photos and publishing them is an important part of forming their identity. They directly associate photography activities, where the photos become a means to display the desired self-image. Based on the survey results in this study, 46% of respondents stated that they like to display their activity content on social media. This shows that millennials and Z generations tend to carefully consider the type of content they share, not only to preserve memories but to communicate the experience to all their contacts. Millennials and Z generations seem to be very aware of the social impact of the image they present online, and therefore they tend to curate content with the aim of creating a positive perception of themselves. Social media serves as a tool for millennials and Z generations to build and communicate their social identity in the digital world.

More than half of respondents stated that the thing they like to share most on social media is their travels. If we consider the results of previous studies, which show that traveling has become an increasingly popular activity among millennials and Z generations, we can understand why travel is one of the most shared topics by this generation on social media. Millennials and Z generations tend to think sharing travel photos on social media is something common and done every day. According to other studies, there is a direct relationship between the desire to travel and taking photos to upload to social networks, which serve as a record and evidence of their activities. This is consistent with the findings of this study, where respondents frequently emphasize the importance of sharing travel experiences, particularly with friends and, secondarily, with family. However, another 38% argued that they only share their travels if they find them interesting, and that millennials and Z generations are selective in choosing which photos to upload to their social networks. This selective process reflects an effort to project a positive and attractive self-image. Millennials and Z generations tend to avoid showing the "ugly" or "bad" side of themselves and instead prefer to share memorable and beautiful moments. They use social media as a tool to build a desired identity and create a positive perception in the eyes of others.

Millennials and Z generations value getting likes on their posts even more than having a large number of followers. According to previous research, millennials and Z generations often share content on social networks with the main goal of getting likes from their followers. They see the number of likes as an indicator of social acceptance and recognition, which results in positive responses from other users. This implies that millennials and Z generations deeply care about the reception of their content and view receiving likes as a crucial source of social validation. Millennials and Z generations are less likely to post photos if they believe they will not make a good impression on others. This reflects the importance of getting approval and recognition for their posts. The survey results in this study showed that more than 70% of respondents were very concerned about the number of likes their posts received. Social networks are an important part of social inclusion for millennials and Z generations. Motivated by the desire for acceptance, they use these platforms to build relationships and interest groups, utilizing new technologies to accomplish this goal. There is a gap between the importance of getting a lot of followers and getting a lot of likes, which could be a hypothesis for further research. This gap may indicate that having a lot of followers is not as important as getting approval through likes from those followers. While millennials and Z generations may be interested in popularity and follower count, their primary focus is on the reception and approval of their content by their audience. This goes back to the theme of showing and owning, where millennials and Z generations are more concerned with how they appear on social media and how their content impacts others' perceptions.

When it comes to choosing a travel destination, while constraints such as time, budget, or travel limitations can influence the decision, the survey found that the majority of millennials and Z generations have a clear tendency to choose places that are considered attractive, interesting, exotic, or trendy. Their choice of destination not only reflects their personal preferences, but also aligns with frequently discussed trends in the news and media.

Popular and trending destinations are often the top choices due to their high appeal and the positive image associated with the experience. Interestingly, while only a small percentage of respondents considered themselves influencers, their primary area of influence was tourism. This suggests that they often focus their influence on sharing and promoting destinations and travel experiences. In this context, millennials and Z generations are not only seeking personally fulfilling experiences but also seeking to influence and inspire others through the content they share. This reflects a shift in the way millennials and Z generations interact with the world, using digital platforms to explore, share, and validate their travel experiences in the public eye.

The analysis of millennial publications on the social network Instagram provides empirical evidence regarding tourists' tendency to record and communicate their experiences. Millennials and Z generations tend to want to leave evidence of what they experience, especially during weekends and carnival days. According to the analysis, they frequently upload photos on the same day and share their location, showing their followers their travel destination. This reflects how they use social media to share experiences in real time and gain recognition from their audience. The search for publications, both through profiles and hashtags, reveals that photos taken abroad receive more approval and likes than those taken domestically. This suggests that the further away the travel location, the more attractive and positive the impact. Thus, showing oneself in an international tourist environment can be an additional motivation for millennials and Z generations to share their experiences on social media in the hopes of gaining more likes and recognition. Although the use of hashtags on photos can increase the impact and spread on social networks, in this case, there is a similar impact on both publications that use hashtags and those that do not. Although some publications do not include hashtags, they still appear with hashtags related to the location where they were. This shows that while hashtags can aid in the spread of content, the placement of the publication location also plays an important role in attracting attention and generating interaction on social media.

Millennials and Z generations often upload photos in various environments, both alone and in groups, often accompanied by stunning natural landscapes. Expressions of joy and happiness are often dominant in these photos, reflecting their desire to share positive and captivating experiences. This is in line with previous research findings that show that millennials and Z generations tend to publish photos in which they are the center of attention. These photos not only serve as a visual record of their experiences but also as a strategic tool to strengthen their positive image in the eyes of their followers. In this context, social media serves as a platform to show the best side of themselves, both in the form of fun activities and impressive settings. Millennials and Z generations use social media to share joyful moments and demonstrate their popularity and familiarity in a social context. Thus, the photos they upload are often the result of careful selection, aimed at projecting an ideal and attractive image as well as enhancing their reputation among friends and followers. This phenomenon not only reflects social media usage patterns but also shows how the millennial generation builds and maintains their social identities through digital platforms.

Cultural motivation is the primary motivation for millennials and Z generations to travel, with "meeting new people and cultures" being the most common response. This motivation reflects a desire to expand their knowledge of the destination's culture and history. Meanwhile, "taking photos," which is the second motivation, can be associated with the need for connectivity and the desire to share their experiences online. Published photos serve as a means to showcase one's destination and enjoyment of a trip, while also serving as a symbol of status and arrogance. In this context, millennials and Z generations use arrogance as a driving force for travel, showcasing their photos to garner a high number of likes. This action can reflect an attempt to insert themselves into a social group that is considered more prestigious. According to the push and pull motivation theory, the push motivation in this case is millennials and Z generations' desire to show themselves through photos in their virtual environment far from where they live. The attractiveness of the tourist destination, which they can showcase, also plays a significant role in motivating them. This theory posits that millennials and Z generations' desire for recognition in a particular tourist environment can boost their social self-esteem. The symbol of approval, represented by the number of likes and followers on social networks, can increase their self-esteem and social ego, providing additional incentives to post and share travel experiences online.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The analysis results show that millennials and Z generations rely heavily on smartphones as their primary means of connecting to the internet and social media, with Instagram being the most dominant platform for their activities. Smartphone usage is not only for communication but also for accessing digital services and entertainment that support a constantly connected lifestyle. The average millennial spends six to nine hours per day online, and their phones are often considered an extension of themselves. Millennials and Z generations are highly likely to publish photos of their travels on social media, with Instagram serving as the primary platform for sharing these experiences. The majority of respondents stated that they prefer sharing travel moments over other types of content, indicating that travel is one of the most shared topics. Millennials and Z generations primarily travel to experience culture and meet new people, driven by their desire to broaden their knowledge. In

addition, the need to take photos and share them online also reflects social and prestige motivations, where travel photos serve as indicators of social status and prestige on social networks. In this context, the concept of push and pull motivations holds significance, with push motivations stemming from the desire to present oneself in a virtual environment, and pull motivations stemming from the allure of showcased tourist destinations. Overall, millennials and Z generations use social media as a tool to build and communicate their social identity, focusing on experiences that can strengthen their positive image and gain recognition. Thus, this phenomenon reflects a shift in the way millennials and Z generations interact with the world and seek to influence and inspire others through the digital content they share.

## References

- [1] Hendy, T., Resdiansyah, R., Johanes, F. A., & Rustono, F. M. (2020). Exploring the role of ICT readiness and information sharing on supply chain performance in coronavirus disruptions. *Technol. Rep. Kansai Univ.*, 62, 2581-2588.
- [2] Hakim, A. (2020). Effect of compensation, career development, work environment on job satisfaction and its impact on organizational commitments in PT Jakarta Tourisindo. *Journal of critical reviews*, 7(12), 538-548.
- [3] Gai, A. M., Dwijayani, H., Pattiruhu, F. J., Joesidawati, M. I., & Safari, A. (2024). Analysis of The Influence of Comprehensive Environmental Study and Regional Heritage Preservation on The Growth In The Valuation of Tourism Site Towards World Class Tourism. *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research*, 4(3), 7287-7295.
- [4] Koto, E. A., Samudra, A. A., Zainal, V. R., Sumrahadi, A., Hakim, A., Hariyadi, A. R., & Subagja, I. K. (2019). Relationship of work motivation and participative Leadership with functional employment behavior of education and culture of Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. *International Journal of Business and Applied Social Science*, September, 1-19.
- [5] Sangadji, R., Zainal, V. R., & Hakim, A. (2023). The Relationship between Welfare and Work Motivation with the Work Productivity of Family Planning Extension Workers in the Administrative City of East Jakarta. *International Journal of Social Science And Education Research Studies*, 3(10).
- [6] Sukmana, P., & Hakim, A. (2023). The Influence of Work Quality and Employee Competence on Human Resources Professionalism at the Ministry of Defense Planning and Finance Bureau. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 7(1), 233-242.
- [7] Herdiyopie, N. C., Suharto, S., Subagja, I. K., & Hakim, A. (2020). The Effect of Good Corporate Governance and Internal Audit Implementation of Quality of Financial Statement through Intellectual Capital in Pt Jakarta Tourisindo. *International Journal of Management Excellence (ISSN: 2292-1648)*, 14(2), 2066-2077.
- [8] Diposentono, L., Zainal, V. R., & Hakim, A. (2023). Organizational justice, work discipline, and employee performance: A literature review. *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary*, 1(4), 327-334.
- [9] Gai, A. M., Poerwati, T., Maghfirah, F., & Sir, M. M. (2020). Analysis of sustainable livelihood level and its influence on community vulnerability of Surumana village, central Sulawesi. *Journal of Regional and Rural Development Planning (Jurnal Perencanaan Pembangunan Wilayah dan Perdesaan)*, 4(3), 209-220.
- [10] Sasongko, I., Gai, A. M., & Immaduddina, A. (2022, February). The concept of rural tourism recovery pasca Covid-19, Kertosari Village, Purwosari Sub-district, Pasuruan Regency, Indonesia. In *International Conference on Government Education Management and Tourism* (Vol. 1, No. 1).
- [11] Sasongko, I., Gai, A. M., & Azzizi, V. T. (2024). Sustainable Development Concept of Heritage Kampung Tourism Using Novel Prioritization Approach. *Sustainability*, 16(7), 2934.
- [12] Gai, A. M., Chatra, A., Ibrahim, M. M., Anantadjaya, S. P., & Nawangwulan, I. M. (2024). Analysis of The Influence of Information Availability, Economic Factors and Changing Trends on Travel Agent Business Sustainability in Digital Era. *Jurnal Sistim Informasi dan Teknologi*, 6-11.
- [13] Hakim, A. (2023). The Influence of Duties and Education Experience on New Personnel Duties in the Indonesian National Army's Operating Staff Environment. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 7(1), 199-207.
- [14] Sharma, M. K., Bhagwat, R., & Sharan, G. (2005). Practice of Performance Measuremet: Experience from Indian SMEs. *Internation Journal of Globalization and Small Business*, (2), 183-213.
- [15] Gai, A. M., Mahmudin, T., Violin, V., Utama, A. N. B., & Apramilda, R. (2024). Analysis of The Effect of Cultural Tourism Development, Accessibility and Economic Policy on Tourism Competitiveness in Indonesia. *International Journal of Engineering, Science and Information Technology*, 4(2), 16-20.
- [16] Tannady, H. (2019). Process improvement to reduce waste in the biggest instant noodle manufacturing company in South East Asia. *Journal of applied engineering science*, 17(2).