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THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GENERATION Y CONSUMERS: UNDERSTANDING ROLE OF MESSENGER SERVICES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS. A STUDY FROM UAE.

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history there have always defining moments for different generations. The rapid migration to digital technologies driven by the pandemic hold the world in 2020. The global COVID-19 pandemic will impact all generations and especially Generation Y consumers which is a main focus of this study.

Considering latest challenges, role of messenger services and social networks relations becomes a life changing issue. Companies understand that building relations with customers via social media and the way these channels are managed is an essential element of the brand's success.

Thus, the study tries to explore how millennial of age 23-35 years old perceive the social networking sites, through exploring the combined use of a range of popular SNSs, including Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Instagram, Tumblr, LinkedIn and Google Plus. Sixty participants, aged 20 to 35, participated in an online survey that used open-ended questions to ask how participants define and use different SNSs.

To achieve this aim, the research employs various methodologies which include descriptive/interpretive studies of the literature and previous studies carried out by academics and industrial institutions. It also utilizes quantitative survey taken among participants.

The findings from this study suggest that researchers need to consider how people use SNSs in combination as this influences the decisions people make about which SNS accounts they use and how they present themselves on these sites.

KEYWORDS: Messenger Services, SNS, Generation Y.

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INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic is a recent occurrence, and research into it is relatively limited. The COVID-19 pandemic has made us very receptive to today's significant global concerns (Sakketa and Koebner, 2020; Sumner et al., 2020). Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media has fast grown in importance as a tool for information development, dissemination, and consumption. The majority of Generation Y-ers are heavily reliant on social networking. Facebook, Twitter, Trip Advisor, Google+, LinkedIn, and Pinterest are all important parts of many young people's lives.

Over the years, social media has become an energetic technological tool in UAE; as well as communication channel for the people of UAE. Its importance has gained more recognition due to the fact that the government implemented a lockdown policy to control the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The pandemic of COVID-19 has pushed policy makers, university leaders and institution deans in higher education to look for alternatives to the traditionally-based learning system of the physical classroom. Institutes have encouraged their faculty members to communicate with their students through formal pages and groups on these social networking sites (SNSs), such as Facebook and WhatsApp (Sobaih et al., 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Social media

There is a growing body of social media literature. The Internet refers to the electronic network or networks that link(s) people and information via computers and other digital devices, allowing for person-to-person communication and information retrieval (DiMaggio et al., 2001). Social media, in general, is a collection of websites and web-based platforms that allow for mass contact, conversation, and sharing among network users (Murphy, 2013).

Social Media refers to a wide range of online platforms and applications that enable users to communicate, cooperate, intermingle, and share information. As a result, social media refers to easily accessible web tools that people may use to talk about, engage in, create, recommend, and take benefit of information, as well as afford online comments to what's going on around them (Murphy, 2013)

1. Social Media Usage in Higher Education

Social media have occurred as dominant platforms for most likely improving students' learning, speeding up interactions between students and their instructors as well as with their peers, and engaging them in the innovative distanced learning environment (Sobaih and Moustafa, 2016; Manca, 2020).

Research has also indicated that faculty members use social media for professional and teaching purposes (Awidi et al., 2019). Many studies have noted that social media has numerous benefits for higher education (Valenzuela, et al., 2009; Durak, 2019). Studies also displayed the value of social media practice for student engagement and prompting positive student learning experiences (Awidi et al., 2019; Dyson, 2015).

2. Student Perceptions of Social Media Usage for Academic Communication

A number of studies (Awidi et al., 2019, Bowman and Akcaoglu, 2014) have been conducted to measure the efficiency of social media tools for enlightening student assimilation in higher education. Studies indicated that social media, such as Facebook, is reflected an operative tool for cultivating students' performance (Bowman and Akcaoglu, 2014, Sarapin and Morris, 2015), increasing students' engagement (Awidi et al., 2019) and refining student awareness of their learning experience (Sarapin and Morris, 2015; Sheeran and Cummings, 2018).

Moreover, there is a direct relationship between the students' educational performance and the practice rate of Facebook for learning (Sarapin and Morris, 2015). Though, other studies (Sarapin and Morris, 2015, Sheeran and Cummings, 2018) displayed that Facebook has been linked with students' negative educational performance. Extreme use of Facebook was a negatively remarkable interpreter for student engagement (Junco, 2015). Another study (Awidi et al., 2019) displayed that the use of Facebook in learning has generated positive student learning experiences. A study on the effectiveness of SNSs to improve the learning experience indicated that students found social media as stimulating their learning and encouraging active teamwork with colleagues and academic staff (Rasiah, 2014).

3. Faculty member Perceptions of Social Media Usage for Academic Communication

Studies (Awidi et al., 2019; Durak, 2019; Junco, 2015; Van Den Beemt et al., 2020) found that using SNSs absolutely influences learning consequences as they permit faculty members to engage their students, create knowledge, share and collaborate with each other. Though faculty members have recognized the potential importance of SNSs for academic communication, its practical usage was negligible due to several barriers or challenges (Sobaih and Moustafa, 2016). These barriers vary and comprise digital divide, intimacy and security, loss of control and monitoring, limited support from institutions, limited responsiveness about the role of SNS as a learning platform and expectations made by faculty members about suitability of SNSs for learning drives as well as poor IT support and infrastructure in some institutions (Sobaih and Moustafa, 2016; Manca and Ranieri, 2016).

B. Generation Y

Generation Y (Gen Y), also entitled the "Millennials," is a generation that denotes those born between the early 1980s and 2000, which is assumed from a Western perspective (Scully-Russ et al., 2015). Generational Differences in the Use of Social Media during the COVID-19 Pandemic Generation Y (so called "digital natives" and "millennials") signifies the first generation that has used up its whole life in the digital environment, its life and work is intensely affected by information technology and it has experienced long periods of economic richness and a rapid advance in prompt communication technologies, social networking, and globalization (Liburd and Christensen, 2013).

Because of their facility with technology, Generation Y holds affirmative views about its effect on their lifestyles and accepts it as a fundamental partner in all of their activities (Apresley, 2010). The

youth, presently categorized under Generation Y, comprises individuals born between 1986 and 2005 (Markert, 2004), which in 2020, encompassed individuals between the ages of 15 and 34 years. Generation Y-ers are also recognized as Millennials, echo-boomers, Generation We, Net Generation, Peter Pan Generation and children of baby boomers (Bleedorn, 2013). Generation Y differentiates itself from other generations through numerous unique characteristics. Regarding the continually development of technology, a study by Brown et al. (2009) designates that the Millennials “use social networking websites more often than non- Generation Y respondents” (p. 48). Their goal of technology use distinguishes itself from their predecessors’ in a way that they do not only use it for information search but also for entertainment and communication (Bleedorn, 2013; Bolton et al., 2013; Chord as, 2008). Social media is hence an important source or tool to Generation Y-ers as this technology is able to expedite on-time communication with fast information search.

C. Role of Social Media

Digital connectivity in the time of COVID-19 is no longer about outdated communication and the search for information; it has become a lifeline for using data, consuming content and engaging in digital applications by individuals, governments and businesses to guarantee continuousness of economic and social activities in light of social distancing and the thorough lockdown in most countries of the world.

In the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, people are using social media more than usual routine. Currently, it is difficult to imagine a world without social media. Not only do they effect the daily life of individuals, but also influence various industries, due to their perpetual global growth (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Due to this immense usage of social media platforms, such as sharing and commenting on content, the power of consumers increased more weight extraordinarily over time. Social networking is an operative medium of communication that can be used to increase public responsiveness of infectious diseases in terms of outbreak dates and the spreading of new technologies, in specific new ones (Freberg et al., 2011).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the present study, a concurrent mixed method-validating was applied to evaluate role of messenger services and social networks relations among participants. The general rationale for using a mixed-method design in this study was that quantitative and qualitative designs alone do not address the presented problem. The specific motivation for using this design comes to initiate when the researchers intend to use the qualitative results to validate the quantitative results as indicated in Figure 1 (Creswell and Clark. 2007).

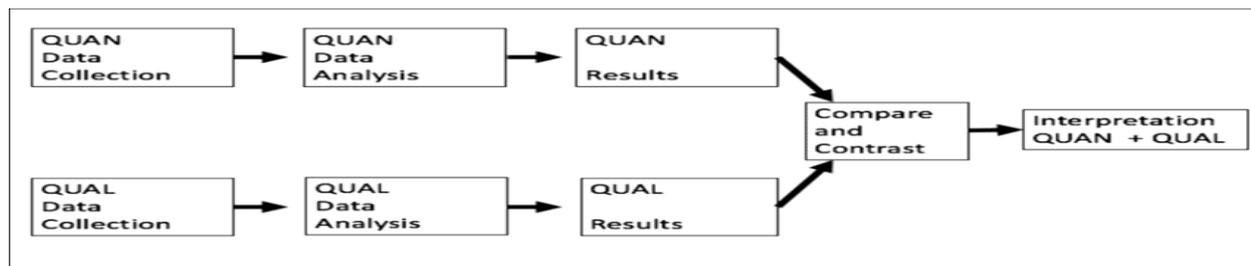


Figure 1: Mixed methods triangulation design: Convergence model

Since the purpose of the quantitative part was to evaluate role of messenger services and social networks relations among pool of participants, the applied method was a descriptive survey. In the present study, the discovered experience is understanding mainly the role of messenger services and social networks (SSN's). Statistical data processing was developed by IBM SPSS Statistics program (ver. 23) - a computer program for statistical data processing. The critical level of significance was chosen to be 0.05. Survey approach was used for this study. A 24-item survey covering four constructs was used. Six survey questions comprised each of the following constructs: socio-demographic; using Smartphone; using social networks and relations to use of social networks. Responses were based on a six-point Likert-type scale with the neutral response omitted. Respondents selected one of the following responses for each question: strongly disagree: 1; disagree: 2; slightly disagree: 3; slightly agree: 4; agree: 5; strongly agree: 6.

The data was collected from a group of researched participants. The statistical population of the quantitative part of this study included 82 male and female participants. Based on Cochran formula, a sample size of 75 individuals was obtained, and 70 questionnaires were distributed using stratified random sampling. A total of 61 filled out questionnaires were returned, accounting for 87.14% return rate. The online research method was applied. All the information gathered was at the convenience of the researcher. Participation was voluntary and no personal or identifying information was gathered to ensure confidentiality and high participation rate. The demographic statistics of the respondents are summarized in the tables below.

Gender		Frequency	Percent
	Male	46	75.41
	Female	15	24.59

Age		Frequency	Percent
	18-24	40	64.52
	25-34	18	29.03
	35-44	3	6.45

Education		Frequency	Percent
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	Attended High School	6	9.84
	Attended College	14	22.95
	Graduated High School	18	29.51
	Graduated College	18	29.51
	Post-Graduate Degree	5	8.20

A list of questions included using social networks, apps and expectations as given in the tables below.

Do you use social networking apps?		Frequency	Percent
	Yes	61	100.00
	No	0	0

Which social networking apps do you use?		Frequency	Percent
	Facebook	17	7.20
	WhatsApp	54	22.88
	LinkedIn	20	8.47
	Instagram	50	21.19
	Skype	10	4.24
	Twitter	39	16.53
	Snapchat	43	18.22
	Other	3	1.27

The results were then used to discuss the findings in a number of ways:

- Firstly and most importantly we used it to find out the possible factors, which influence generation Y consumers after COVID-19 pandemic.
- How these factors correlate with challenging role of messenger services and social networks relations.
- How these findings could be incorporated into a way users present themselves on SSN's.

RESULTS

The findings for the first section of the survey instrument are presented in the following Tables 1 - 5.

Qualitative Analysis

The key pivotal question of the study was: what are the user' experiences in using social networking apps? To answer this question, thematic analysis was handled to analyze the themes (role of SSN's) extracted from the interview questions. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns of meaning in qualitative data. This method is a process for analyzing textual data, and converts scattered and diverse data into rich and detailed data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Accordingly, the interview transcripts were thoroughly studied, and then all the themes were extracted from these texts. At the first stage, the interviews with selected participants were analyzed and the primary semantic codes were extracted. Next, the resulting semantic codes were converted to basic themes. At this stage, 10 basic themes were extracted from the participants' interviews (Table 1).

Quantitative Analysis

Chi-square test and Logistic regression were used in this study. The Chi-Square test is most useful when analyzing cross tabulations of survey response data. The relationship between two variables on a nominal or ordinal scale is tested using the Pearson Chi-square test which tests whether there is a significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies. When carrying out the Chi-square test, the mutual independence of two variables of the contingency table was checked, and due to this, the dependence of both variables is indirectly determined. The null hypothesis states that two variables are considered mutually independent if the observed frequencies in the cells coincide with the expected frequencies. If the observed and expected frequencies are statistically different, then the null hypothesis is rejected and an alternative hypothesis is accepted, which states that the two variables are interdependent.

This test was examined on all questions of the questionnaire. The main questions of the questionnaire were associated with such socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents as gender, age, education, marital status, and the number of children in the family. Thus, this test was performed 100 times. Of these, 12 tests showed a statistically significant result. The gender of the respondent showed a relationship with the question of what SNS's resource the respondents prefer to use when planning their vacation. Female participants for example prefer to use blogs for this purpose. They also tend to get special promotions.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14,356 ^a	3	.002
Likelihood Ratio	5.111	3	.164
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.985	1	.159
N of Valid Cases	61		

Do you have Smartphone? * Marital status Crosstabulation

Standardized Residual

		Marital status			
		Married	Single, Never Married	Separated or Divorced	Widowed
Do you have Smartphone?	Yes	.1	.1	-.7	.0
	No	-.5	-.5	3.6	-.3

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23,186 ^a	6	.001
Likelihood Ratio	9.473	6	.149
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.797	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	60		

What is the frequency of using the social networking apps? * Marital status Cross tabulation

Standardized Residual

		Marital status			
		Married	Single, Never Married	Separated or Divorced	Widowed
What is the frequency of using the socEveryday	Everyday	.3	.1	-.6	-.6
	Once a week	-.7	-.2	2.8	-.3
	Once a month	-.5	-.5	-.3	3.6

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,977 ^a	4	.041
Likelihood Ratio	8.483	4	.075
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.009	1	.025
N of Valid Cases	58		

How do online networking apps affect your social life? * Age Crosstabulation

Standardized Residual

		Age		
		18-24	25-34	35-44
How do online networking apps affect	Does not have an effect on face to face communication	1.0	-1.2	-6
	Has somewhat effect on face to face communication	-.9	1.4	-.5
	Replaces most face to face communication	-.4	-.3	1.9

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	33,011 ^a	12	.001
Likelihood Ratio	13.462	12	.336
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.322	1	.128
N of Valid Cases	57		

a. 17 cells (85,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum

Do you think social networking apps are important? * Marital status Cross tabulation

Standardized Residual

		Marital status			
		Married	Single, Never Married	Separated or Divorced	Widowed
Do you think social networking apps a	Strongly agree	.0	.2	-.5	-.7
	Agree	-.5	.3	-.7	.1
	Fair	.9	-.5	1.4	-.7
	Disagree	-.6	.3	-.2	-.3
	Strongly disagree	-.4	-.9	-.1	5.2

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29,865 ^a	16	.019
Likelihood Ratio	31.533	16	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	.033	1	.855
N of Valid Cases	56		

a. 21 cells (84,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum

Do you have more friends on your social networking sites than you do in your real life? *
Education Cross tabulation

Standardized Residual

	Education				
	Attended High School	Graduated High School	Attended College	Graduated College	Post-Graduate Degree
Do you have more friends on your soc Strongly agree	-0.6	0.5	-1.2	-0.2	1.7
Agree	2.6	-0.2	0.6	-1.6	0.7
Neutral	-0.9	0.8	0.3	-0.1	-1.2
Disagree	-0.9	-0.9	-0.8	2.1	-0.4
Strongly disagree	-0.4	0.0	1.7	-1.0	-0.5

Respondents aged 35-44 are more inclined to replace real communication with communication using social networks. Individuals 25-34 showed more disagreement that privacy policies are effective in social media applications.

Respondents with a higher degree of education showed more disagreement that privacy policies are effective in social media applications. High School graduates agree more with this statement.

Those who attended only high school are more likely to agree that they have more friends on social media than in real life. With this we are more inclined to agree with the person with the Post-Graduate Degree. At the same time, respondents who graduated from college showed more disagreement on this issue.

The largest numbers of statistically significant tests are for marital status. Half of the divorced respondents do not have a Smartphone. Divorced people and widowers are less likely to use Smartphone than unmarried and married people. In addition, they showed more disagreement about the importance of social media.

Divorced respondents prefer to use MySpace when planning their vacation. Respondents with more than 8 children, as well as those with 4-8 children, spend more than 6 hours a day using a Smartphone. Among this category of respondents, there is a greater disagreement with the fact that social media is important.

	Gender	Age	Education	Marital status	Children under the age of 18	The number of tests on the main questions of the questionnaire
Do you have Smartphone?						1
What is the frequency of using the social networking apps?						1
What is the time you spend on social networking apps per day?						1
How do online networking apps affect your social life?						1
Do you think social networking apps are important?						2
Do you think privacy policies are effective in social networking apps?						2
Do you have more friends on your social networking sites than you do in your real life?						1
What social media sites do you use the most when planning your holiday?						2
What are your expectations on Social Page (Facebook, Tweeter, other)						1
The number of tests for socio-demographic characteristics	2	2	2	4	2	12

Table 1: Statistically significant results of the Chi-square test.

To observe which of the response categories contribute to the relationship between variables, it is necessary to calculate the standardized residuals. These residuals are a measure of how much the observed and expected frequencies deviate from each other. Fields with higher standardized residuals contribute more heavily to the numerical value of the chi-square test and, therefore, to a significant result. It is considered that there is a significant difference between the observed and the expected frequency if the normalized residual is greater than 2 in absolute value. The sign that has such a standardized balance is also important: plus means an overabundance, and minus a deficit.

Formula for calculating standardized residuals, where f_o -is the observed frequency and f_e is the expected frequency. The expected frequencies are calculated as the product of the corresponding row and column sums divided by the total frequencies.

$$\frac{f_o - f_e}{\sqrt{f_e}}$$

Normalized residual	Significance level
$\geq 2,0$	$p < 0,05$
$\geq 2,6$	$p < 0,01$
$\geq 3,0$	$p < 0,001$

Logistic regression

We tested the assumptions about the influence of various variables on the question of whether respondents are dependent on social networks.

To identify such a relationship, a logistic regression was examined by the method of stepwise selection of variables. A binary variable with 2 response categories was selected as a dependent variable:

- 1 - Yes, 2 - No.

The following were selected as independent variables:

- X1: Gender
- X2: Age, years
- X3: Amount of time spent on social media
- X4: Frequency of time spent on social media
- X5: The importance of social media
- X4: Attitude towards advertising
- X5: Attitude towards privacy
- X6: Attitude towards friendship on social networks relative to friendship outside the network
- X7: Frustration due to inaccessibility to social media
- X8: Preference for communication on social networks over communication outside the network
- X9: Stress and irritation caused by using social media

In total, the influence of 9 variables was analyzed on a sample of 60 respondents.

The application of dichotomous logistic regression will show which questionnaire questions really affect the presence of addiction to social media. This issue is very relevant due to the great popularity of social networks among Internet users, and in particular among Smartphone users. As a result of the selection of various models and enumeration of all independent variables using the stepwise selection method, the choice was made on the model, which included 3 statistically significant variables as statistically significant independent variables.

The prevalence of friends on social media than in real life, frustration due to the inaccessibility of social media and stress due to the use of social media are three variables that positively influence respondents' dependence on social media.

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Frustrated unavailable	1.359	.387	12.315	1	.000	3.893
	Constant	-4.029	1.159	12.091	1	.001	.018
Step 2 ^b	Frustrated unavailable	1.509	.436	11.971	1	.001	4.520
	Feel stressed	1.123	.421	7.108	1	.008	3.074
	Constant	-8.043	2.209	13.259	1	.000	.000
Step 3 ^c	Friends	.820	.405	4.095	1	.043	2.270
	Frustrated unavailable	1.419	.440	10.395	1	.001	4.134
	Feel stressed	1.008	.467	4.668	1	.031	2.741
	Constant	-9.984	2.722	13.457	1	.000	.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Frustrated unavailable.

b. Variable(s) entered on step 2: Feel stressed.

c. Variable(s) entered on step 3: Friends.

Classification Table ^a					
Observed			Predicted		
			Addicted		Percentage Correct
			Yes	No	
Step 1	Addicted	Yes	19	12	61.3
		No	3	21	87.5
	Overall Percentage				
Step 2	Addicted	Yes	28	3	90.3
		No	8	16	66.7
	Overall Percentage				
Step 3	Addicted	Yes	26	5	83.9
		No	5	19	79.2
	Overall Percentage				

a. The cut value is ,500

The significance level of these variables did not exceed the critical level of 0.05. In this case, the three selected variables belong to ordinal variables with a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 is strongly agree, and 5 is strongly disagree.

		Variables in the Equation					
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 3 ^a	Friends	.820	.405	4.095	1	.043	2.270
	Frustrated unavailable	1.419	.440	10.395	1	.001	4.134
	Feel stressed	1.008	.467	4.668	1	.031	2.741
	Constant	-9.984	2.722	13.457	1	.000	.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 3: Friends.

Table 2: Table Variables in the equation

Let us evaluate the quality of the resulting model and at the end use it to predict the presence of dependence among respondents. Some of the quality indicators of the constructed model are certainty measures: R Cox Snell square and Nagelkerke R Square, which are analogs of R square of linear regression models. They also indicate the fraction of variation in the dependent variable that the model can explain. At the same time, the Nagelkerke R Square indicator is more perfect, which indicates that the resulting model can explain the behavior of the dependent variable by 62.2%. The value of this indicator indicates a good ability to correctly predict the presence of respondents' dependence on social networks by the values of the selected indicators.

Model Summary

	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
	41,072	,464	,622

Table 3: Summary of certainty measures for models.

The following classification table can also be called a measure of the quality of the constructed model. It shows the number and percentage of correctly predicted dependent variable values. For the resulting model, the percentage of correctly predicted values was 81.8%.

Classification Table^a

Observed		Predicted		
		Addicted		Percentage Correct
		Yes	No	
Addicted	Yes	26	5	83,9
	No	5	19	79,2
Overall Percentage				81,8

a. The cut value is, 500

Table 4: Percentage of cases correctly predicted by the model.

According to the table with the calculated regression coefficients, we settled on a three-factor model.

$$Y = -9,984 + 0,820 * X_6 + 1,419 * X_7 + 1,008 * X_9$$

Let's make a forecast using the resulting model. The predicted value is determined by substituting the corresponding values of the independent variables into the regression equation.

If we take the values of three independent variables for the resulting model for the third respondent from our database, we get:

$$Y = -9,984 + 0,820 * 1 + 1,419 * 1 + 1,008 * 3$$

For these values of the explanatory variables, the Y value is -4.72. This value must be substituted into the logistic function, which has the following form:

$$p = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-y}}$$

Substitute the resulting value -4.72 into the formula

$$p = \frac{1}{1 + e^{4,72}}$$

As a result, we get 0.00883. This value indicates the likelihood that the respondent is addicted to social media.

Thus, as a result, a three-factor logistic model was obtained, which showed good predictive properties and which can be used to predict the presence of addiction to social media in Smartphone owners.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study is a mixed methods research. In the quantitative part, the participant answered the questions of a researcher-made scale of mobile learning acceptance (in six dimensions: Socio-demographic; using Smartphone; using social networks and relations to use of social networks). The results imply that faculty members believe that mobile use is not efficient enough for learning, and that its usefulness is moderate, although it is above average in terms of Ease of Use and Self-efficacy (Consistent with Brown, 2018). On the other hand, they believe that mobile learning is accompanied by many challenges and obstacles, which are above average. These results are in line with Kaliisa and Picard's research (2017).

The qualitative part of the research deals with the participants lived experiences in using social network apps. Based on the findings of this part and its merging and summarization procedures, 10 basic themes were extracted from interviews with the potential research participants.

Generation Y - people born after 1981. This is the first generation deeply involved in digital technology. But they also found the era before the spread of the Internet: their childhood passed mainly without smart phones and social networks. A high degree of dependence on mobile devices and social networks characterizes this generation and helps brands to promote their products. 53% of participated millennials admitted that they would rather give up their sense of smell than modern technology. More than 80% sleep with their Smartphone's. The top millennial apps are Facebook, Gmail, and Amazon's shopping platform. The aim of this study is to examine the instant messaging and social networks by Millennials who became become the main driving force behind the development of social trading. Unlike their older brothers and sisters, they are very well versed in modern gadgets and actively use them for social networking and shopping. The purchasing power

of the "Y" Generation is enormous. They don't shop as often and are increasingly fond of online shopping. However, hypermarkets and supermarkets are still favorite places for offline shopping and entertainment. A new report from market research company GfK found that while a whopping 71 percent of millennials consider their mobile device to be their most important shopping tool, just 21 percent of boomers feel the same (Adweek, 2021).

Before purchasing a product on the Internet, representatives of a generation Y read reviews look at photos, visit company pages on social networks, compare prices and look for discounts. Millennials shop on the go, while listening to music, chatting with friends and commuting. Therefore, it is important for them that the site interface is convenient and simple.

The global pandemic COVID-19 has affected the whole world, changing the usual the way of life of people, communities and organizations. During the crisis both government officials and business leaders had to take a number of new strategically important decisions. These decisions led to difficult ethical dilemmas that will affect society in the future. What is the "new normal"? What are the new established practices and values that guide consumers? How do markets change in response to a changing world?

The shift to digital consumption creates new consumer habits: customers get information online and can make more informed choices. At the same time, the variety of this choice opens up more opportunities, and competition often forces sellers to lower prices. Despite the fact that the pandemic is not abating, and the incidence of a new corona virus infection in early autumn began to grow again in many countries of the world, it is important to understand which of these habits the answer to time constraints are, and which have a chance to remain stable even after the restrictions are lifted.

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