

ACTIVITY OF GENERATION Z ON SOCIAL MEDIA AS THE BASIS OF MARKETING ORIENTATION OF ENTERPRISES – COMPARISON OF POLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN

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Purpose: The aim of this article is to identify and compare the social media activity of Generation Z representatives in Poland and Great Britain in the context of customer orientation.

Design/methodology/approach: The study was conducted among students in Poland and Great Britain in 2023. The study used a survey method, in particular using the CATI survey technique. Descriptive statistics measures were used to analyze the research data.

Findings: The conducted research allowed us to identify the social media portals most frequently visited by Generation Z representatives, as well as the most frequently performed activities towards enterprises. Moreover, the relationship between respondents' answers and their gender and place of residence was examined. In several cases, gender and place of residence significantly differentiated the analyzed variables. The results also allowed us to identify differences in the social media activity of Generation Z representatives in Poland and in Great Britain.

Research limitations/implications: The use of survey research is associated with limitations, including: the possibility of superficial knowledge of the studied phenomena, or respondents giving false answers. However, the relatively small number of respondents does not allow the obtained research results to be treated as representative. Future research should be conducted on a larger sample, and quantitative research should be supplemented with qualitative research. Undertaking research in other countries would make it possible to compare the social media activity undertaken by representatives of Generation Z different nationalities and determine whether and which of them occur regardless of geographical location.

Practical implications: Understanding the activity of Generation Z representatives in social media will allow organizational employees to adjust their marketing activities to the expectations of this cohort. These activities, the aim of which is to reach the customer, provide him with information about the product, and encourage him to purchase, will ultimately translate into increased sales and profit of the organization. The obtained knowledge indicates that the nationality of respondents is an important factor differentiating activity in social media, which confirms the importance of diversifying marketing activities undertaken by organizations.

Originality/value: The article is addressed to employees of organizations responsible for contact with representatives of Generation Z on social media. The presented results complement and deepen knowledge about the activity of Generation Z in social media, including differences

in gender and place of residence of the respondent. They also indicate the influence of the nationality of Generation Z respondents on their activity in social media.

Keywords: generation Z, social media, enterprise, customer-centric marketing.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Researchers agree (including Dwyer, Azevedo, 2016; Dreyer, Stojanová, 2023) that although each person has individual characteristics, it is possible to identify specific values and limitations characteristic of all representatives of a given cohort, also in relation to issues related to customer orientation. Twenge and Campbell (2008) note that people belonging to the same generation have similar values and that these differ significantly from the values of previous generations. Each generation is shaped by specific events that greatly influence that generation's perceptions, preferences and expectations. Generational cohorts give researchers a tool to analyze changes in characteristics and views over time. They allow us to understand how various formative experiences (such as world events and technological, economic and social changes) interact with the life cycle and the aging process to shape people's views of the world (Dimock, 2019). In the case of Generation Z, these events included: social justice movements, the 2008 financial crisis, the smart phone and social media revolution, and growing up in a safety culture that encouraged overprotective parents (Schroth, 2019).

At the same time, it is worth agreeing with the views of Scholtz (2019), who questions the so-called the global convergence hypothesis stating that because Generation Z is a digitally connected generation, they should behave similarly and move in the same direction. While this is partly true on a global scale, differences are seen from country to country. Therefore, it is important to analyze Generation Z of separate nationalities in order to identify differences and similarities, which the authors presented in this study.

There is no doubt that entrepreneurs should strive to get to know Generation Z and build long-term relationships with them. Since every company relies on customers and interacts directly with them, customer orientation is a core and integral competency of every modern organization. It is the customer and his needs that determine the basic directions of development, and it is the customer who ultimately decides about the purchase and acceptance of the offer (Sheth, Sisodia, Sharma, 2000). Understanding the behavior of Generation Z customers, especially in their "natural environment" such as social media, is important from the point of view of the profitability and competitiveness of modern enterprises. Generation Z is a very important market partner of modern enterprises – approximately 30% of Generation Z representatives aged 18 to 25 live with their families, which allows them to limit their expenses on rent, utilities, food and at the same time increase the value of the amount at their disposal

(Credit Karma, 2022). This generation had approximately \$360 billion in disposable income in 2021 (Pollard, 2021).

Currently, there are many studies on Generation Z, e.g. in the field of distinguishing generational characteristics (Dimock, 2019), appropriate management styles (Rudolph, Rauvola, Zacher, 2018), generational differences and their impact on leadership styles (Singh, 2016), entrepreneurship issues (Dreyer, Stojanová, 2023) and the characteristics of Generation Z as customers (Wood, 2013). Taking into account the gap in existing research and the need to analyze the same generation in different countries, the aim of this article is to identify and compare the social media activity of Generation Z representatives in Poland and in Great Britain in the context of customer orientation.

2. Literature review

No generation has as many terms as Generation Z, which is often called: iGeneration, Gen Tech, Online Generation, Post Millennials, Facebook Generation, Switchers, "always clicking" (Dolot, 2018). The name "Generation Z" has taken over popular culture and journalism since around 2020. Sources from *Merriam-Webster* and *Oxford to Urban Dictionary* now include this name for the generation that follows Millennials, and *Google Trends* data shows that "generation Z" significantly outperforms other names in searches for information about this cohort (Dimock, 2019). Generation Z includes people born between 1995 and 2009. However, generational cut-off points should not be considered strict. They are perceived primarily as tools enabling analysis, but their limits are not arbitrary. It should also be emphasized that the next generation – known as Generation Alpha, i.e. people born since 2010 – follows Generation Z (Dolot, 2018; Csobanka, 2016; Stunża, 2017). Gaidhani, Arora, and Sharma (2019) note that Generation Z is more digitally oriented and technology is a large part of their identity. Some studies (e.g. Keller and Meaney, 2017) go as far as classifying Generation Z as digital natives. That's why Generation Z is also known as "Generation C". This expression comes from: "connected" (because its representatives are "connected to the Internet"), "computerized"; "communicative"; "content centric"; "social" (Hysa, 2016; Dolot, 2018). Generation Z therefore has an innate comfort in the virtual world. For these consumers, the Internet has always existed. Since their childhood, great advances have been made in technological devices (e.g., cell phone capabilities, video streaming, social networking sites). Consumers of this generation likely feel that constant innovation is obvious. Moreover, as consumers, Generation Z has always had more choices in the market (both in large stationary stores and e-commerce) than their predecessors (Wood, 2013).

Customer orientation is a very important independent competitive concept to maintain and establish long-term company-customer relationships (Harris, Mowen, Brown, 2005). This is due to the fact that companies stay on the market thanks to their customers, whose needs determine the choice and purchase of a given product, and ultimately the profitability of the company (Sheth, Sisodia, Sharma, 2000). Customer orientation, referring to the degree to which organizations meet and understand the needs of building long-term relationships (Rodriguez, Peterson, Ajjan, 2015), includes all activities related to obtaining information about buyers in the target market, understanding target buyers in order to create higher value for them in the form of the expected product/service on a continuous basis and dissemination of information throughout the enterprise (Narver, Slater, 1990). Building and strengthening relationships with customers leads to a profitable and sustainable increase in sales revenues (Soltani, Zareie, Milani, Navimipour, 2018).

In the 21st century, the basic function of marketing is still effective customer service. Sheth, Sisodia, and Sharma (2000) emphasize the growing role of customer-centric marketing. The basis of customer-centric marketing is the growing pressure on companies to improve marketing efficiency, increase market diversity and use modern technologies, including social media. Social media has gained enormous fame as a highly influential communication channel facilitating participatory interaction between businesses, organizations, groups, communities, consumers, etc. Researchers (e.g., Go, You, 2016; Cook, Hopkins, 2008; Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010; Dwivedi, Kapoor, Chen, 2015) have defined social media as comprising online communication tools that stimulate opinion-sharing and information exchange, as well as Internet-based applications that allow for the production and circulation of user-generated content and real-time peer-to-peer interaction. This topic has become widespread in literature and practice, and social media marketing is undertaken and analyzed in many studies (Dwivedi, Kapoor, Chen, 2015). Scientists agree that by using social media platforms, an enterprise can gain a competitive advantage, adapt to internal and external changes, and learn and meet customer requirements. In 2022, over 4.5 billion people used social media worldwide, and this number is expected to increase to almost 6 billion by 2027 (Statista, 2022). Modern managers should take advantage of the popularity of the use of social media platforms by providing useful and credible information about their products or services for greater customer engagement (Cardoso da Silva et al., 2023).

Due to the development of social media and the increase in digital interactions of enterprises with customers, the above-mentioned concept of "customer engagement" has gained importance in the marketing literature (Kulikovskaja et al., 2023). The goal of effective customer engagement is to deliver relevant content through social media marketing campaigns that encourage repeatable interactions (Korombel, Ławińska, 2022).

The impact of social media on customer purchasing behavior has been confirmed by many studies (e.g. Makudza, Mugarisanwa, Siziba, 2020; McClure, Seock, 2020; Tsai, Bui, 2021). Research also confirms that consumers using social media are 29% more likely to make

a purchase on the same day and are four times more likely to spend more on their purchases (Deloitte, 2015).

Social media is the main source of information on virtually every topic for Generation Z. Research confirms (including Ravula et al., 2023; García-Carrión et al., 2023) that the most effective way to provide information and motivate representatives of Generation Z to be active are visualizations, videos on YouTube and short videos posted online. This generation, overloaded with news, addicted to mobile phones and digital gadgets, feeling stress, fatigue, 'fear of missing out' and 'phubbing', is radically changing its behavior on social media (Sharma, Kaushal, Joshi, 2023). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the influx of negative information has increased the desire among users of this generation to disconnect from social media and stop using social networking sites (Liu, Liu, Yoganathan, Osburg, 2021). Since social media users are unable to filter credible information due to its huge amount, entrepreneurs, providers of social media services and platforms should develop ways of transmitting information that cause the least user fatigue (Sharma, Kaushal, Joshi, 2023). Managers responsible for contact with customers on social media, who want to communicate effectively with Generation Z, should have knowledge of, among others: about which social media sites Generation Z is most active on and what activities they are most likely to perform.

Based on the analysis of the literature on the subject, the authors built a catalog of portals and the types of activities undertaken by representatives of Generation Z in social media, which were used in the research. Also based on the literature analysis, the authors formulated the following research questions:

1. Which social networking sites are most frequently used by Generation Z representatives?
2. Is there a relationship between the choice of a social networking site and the gender of a Generation Z representative?
3. Is there a relationship between the choice of a social networking site and the place of residence of a representative of Generation Z?
4. What activities are most often performed by Generation Z representatives in social media towards companies?
5. Does the respondent's gender influence the frequency of activities he or she undertakes towards enterprises in social media?
6. Does the respondent's place of residence influence the frequency of activities he or she undertakes in social media towards enterprises?
7. Are there differences between the social media activity of Generation Z representatives in Poland and in Great Britain? If so, what are the differences?

3. Methods

The research on Gen Zers' attitudes towards brands on social media is a part of a broader study conducted by the authors among students in Poland and Great Britain in 2023. The research employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, utilizing survey research as an indirect measurement method. It employed survey as the research technique and survey questionnaire as the research tool. The selection of variables used in the study was based on a critical analysis of relevant literature (Gummerus et al., 2012; Gregor, Kubiak, 2014).

Regarding the birth year of Generation Z representatives, there is no consensus in the literature. The most frequently cited date is the year 1995, which the authors of the paper adopted as the cutoff year for their study.

The authors also assumed that the independent variable in their study is the specific group of respondents being tested, rather than the entire population of Generation Z. Due to the challenge of definitively determining the age range of Generation Z, it becomes problematic to treat this variable as independent. However, the authors found that utilizing Generation Z as a heuristic is valuable, as generational profiling is now prevalent in popular media and popular culture, providing a descriptive framework.

Prior to commencing the main research, the authors conducted a pilot study in 2018, enabling them to identify and rectify any errors in the survey questionnaire before proceeding with the main study. In Poland, a total of 322 students participated (166 females and 156 males), while in Great Britain, a total of 318 students participated (199 females and 119 males). The research employed the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing) technique. In Poland, an online survey questionnaire was administered through the Webankieta.pl platform, while data collection in Great Britain was outsourced to an external institution specializing in survey administration. It is important to note that the sampling method used in both studies was non-probabilistic. While utilizing non-probabilistic sampling, the authors employed statistical inference as an opportunity to identify relationships within the studied groups, as descriptive statistics alone would not allow for such analysis.

Based on the research results, the authors calculated the number and frequency of respondents' responses to each question in the survey. The authors are aware that the sampling technique employed does not allow for the estimation of errors that may arise when generalizing the observed patterns in the sample to the entire population. To identify potential relationships within the studied groups, the authors utilized statistical inference, for which they adopted a certain level of significance, as descriptive statistics alone cannot provide such analysis. Statistical inference was conducted with a predetermined significance level set at $\alpha = 0.05$, and a p-value was calculated for each test. The authors compared the p-value with the level of statistical significance to determine whether there was sufficient evidence to reject the null

hypothesis (H_0) in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_1) ($p < \alpha$), or not ($p \geq \alpha$). All analyses were performed using Statistica software, version 13.3.

The authors acknowledge that survey research has certain limitations, such as providing only a surface-level understanding of the phenomena under study and the possibility of respondents providing inaccurate answers. One potential criticism of the presented research results is that the study was conducted on a small group of participants. While small sample sizes can raise methodological concerns, such as limitations in generalization, they can still provide valuable insights when proper statistical tests are applied for inference (Yates, 1934; Nachar, 2008).

4. Results

The presented results are a fragment of research conducted by the authors in Poland and Great Britain at the beginning of 2023. All surveyed representatives of Generation Z in Poland and Great Britain indicated that they used social networking sites. Figure 1 presents the number of answers (in %) to the multiple-choice question about which social networking sites the respondents used in 2023.

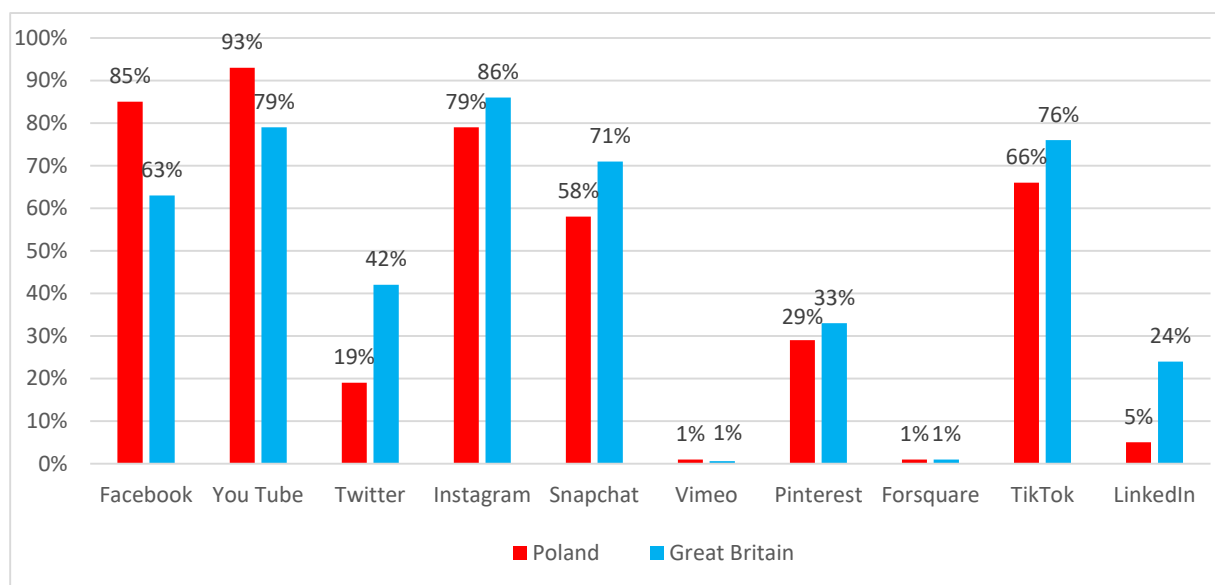


Figure 1. Use of social networking sites by Generation Z respondents in Poland and Great Britain in 2023.

Source: own study.

Based on the collected data, it is possible to indicate the most popular social networking sites in the surveyed groups of respondents in 2023. In Poland, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram were indicated, while in Great Britain, Generation Z respondents most often used Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. Moreover, there are very large differences in the use of

Twitter (42% in GB and 19% in PL), Facebook (85% in PL and 63% in GB) and LinkedIn (24% in GB and 5% in % in PL) by respondents in Poland and Great Britain.

In the category of other portals (apart from those mentioned in the question), respondents indicated:

- in Poland: Telegram (5 persons), Reddit (2 persons), Twitch (4 persons), BeReal (5 persons), Discord (3 persons), WhatsApp (1 person), Viber (1 person), Messenger (2 persons),
- in Great Britain: Tumblr (1 person), BeReal (1 person).

The next stage of data analysis was to verify whether there is a relationship between the variables: the choice of a social networking site (variable X) and the respondent's gender (variable Y). For this purpose, a significance test for structure indicators was used (comparison of two structure indicators). It was assumed that in the group of women the fraction index of this feature was p_1 , and in the group of men – p_2 . The null hypothesis was verified:

$$H_0: p_1 = p_2$$

towards the alternative hypothesis:

$$H_1: p_1 > p_2$$

Due to the adopted form of the alternative hypothesis, a one-sided critical area was considered. The analysis concerned answers to multiple-response questions, indicators were calculated for the general population and for women and men, and then it was verified using the structure index test whether gender significantly differentiates these indicators. Detailed data on the use of social networking sites by respondents in Poland and Great Britain in 2023 and the result of the significance test for structure indicators by respondent's gender are included in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1.

The use of social networking sites by respondents in Poland in 2023 and the result of the significance test for structure indicators by gender

Responses	In Total		Females		Males		P
	Number	Percentage of Cases	Number	Percentage of Cases	Number	Percentage of Cases	
Facebook	274	85.09%	145	87.35%	129	82.69%	0.1203
YouTube	298	92.55%	147	88.55%	151	96.79%	0.0025
Twitter	61	18.94%	17	10.24%	44	28.21%	0.0001
Instagram	254	78.88%	142	85.54%	112	71.79%	0.0013
Snapchat	186	57.76%	110	66.27%	76	48.72%	0.0007
Vimeo	1	0.31%	0	0	1	0.64%	0.1510
Pinterest	94	29.19%	71	42.77%	23	14.74%	0.0001
Forsquare	1	0.31%	0	0	1	0.64%	0.1510
TikTok	212	65.84%	125	75.30%	87	55.77%	0.0001
LinkedIn	16	4.97%	7	4.22%	9	5.77%	0.2612

Source: own study.

Data collected in Poland in 2023 indicate large differences (% of cases) in women and men using a given social networking site. The difference between structure indicators according to the respondent's gender turned out to be statistically significant in six cases. Men used YouTube and Twitter more often than women. An inverse relationship can be observed in the case of the following websites: Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest and TikTok – women used these social media more often.

Table 2.

The use of social networking sites by respondents in Great Britain in 2023 and the result of the significance test for structure indicators by gender

Responses	In Total		Females		Males		P
	Number	Percentage of Cases	Number	Percentage of Cases	Number	Percentage of Cases	
Facebook	201	63.21%	138	69.35%	63	52.94%	0.0017
YouTube	251	78.93%	154	77.39%	97	81.51%	0.1916
Twitter	134	42.14%	78	39.20%	56	47.06%	0.0848
Instagram	274	86.16%	179	89.95%	95	79.83%	0.0057
Snapchat	226	71.07%	145	72.86%	81	68.07%	0.1810
Vimeo	2	0.63%	1	0.50%	1	0.84%	0.3551
Pinterest	106	33.33%	89	44.72%	17	14.29%	0.0001
Forsquare	2	0.63%	1	0.50%	1	0.84%	0.3551
TikTok	242	76.10%	157	78.89%	85	71.43%	0.0656
LinkedIn	77	24.21%	58	29.15%	19	15.97%	0.0040

Source: own study.

The analysis of data collected in Great Britain indicates that the share (% of cases) of men and women using a given social networking site was similar in six cases. The difference between the structure indicators according to the respondent's gender turned out to be statistically significant in the case of using: Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn - surveyed women used this portal more often than men.

The next step was an attempt to verify the hypothesis about the independence of two qualitative features: the choice of a social networking site and the respondent's place of residence. For this purpose, the Pearson's chi-square test was used, which enabled the analysis of the collected data (included in Tables 3 and 4) and providing evidence of the relationship between these two variables. The Pearson's chi-square test involved comparing the observed frequencies with the expected frequencies assuming the null hypothesis (of no relationship between these two variables). The null hypothesis was verified:

H_0 : features X and Y are independent

towards the alternative hypothesis:

H_1 : features X and Y are dependent

The collected data on the use of a social networking site by the respondent's place of residence in 2023 and the results of the Pearson's chi-square test and its significance level are presented in Tables 3 (data for Poland) and 4 (data for Great Britain).

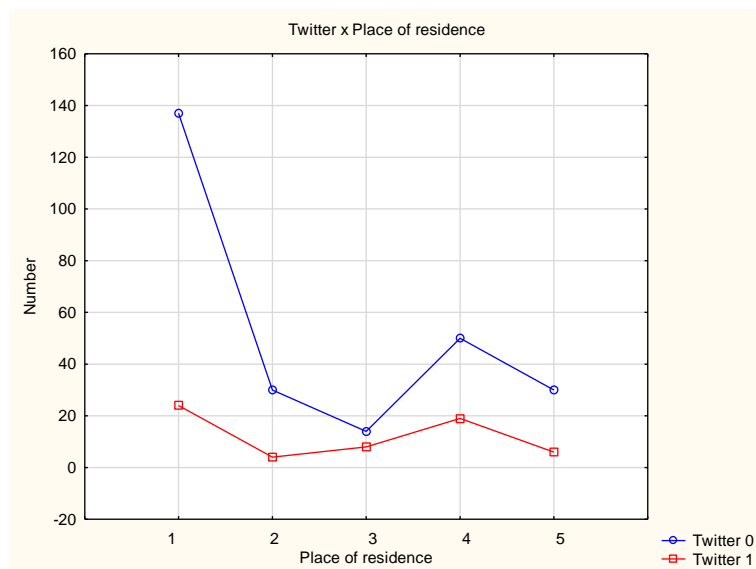
Table 3.

Use of a social networking site by the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023 and the results of the Pearson's chi-square test and its significance level

Responses	Place of residence (% against number of responses = 322)						Pearson's Chi ²	p
	Village	City up to 50 000 residents	City up to 100 000 residents	City up to 250 000 residents	City over 250 000 residents	Row in total		
Facebook	44.72%	8.70%	5.59%	17.70%	8.39%	85.09%	6.0136	0.1981
YouTube	46.89%	9.01%	6.83%	19.88%	9.94%	92.55%	5.4271	0.2462
Twitter	7.45%	1.24%	2.48%	5.90%	1.86%	18.94%	10.6367	0.0310
Instagram	39.75%	8.07%	4.66%	17.39%	9.01%	78.88%	1.9434	0.7462
Snapchat	30.43%	5.28%	3.73%	12.42%	5.90%	57.76%	1.9380	0.7472
Vimeo	0.31%	0	0	0	0	0.31%	1.0031	0.9093
Pinterest	13.04%	2.48%	2.17%	6.52%	4.97%	29.19%	5.4550	0.2437
Forsquare	0.00%	0	0	0.31%	0	0.31%	3.6781	0.4513
TikTok	32.92%	6.83%	4.97%	13.04%	8.07%	65.84%	1.8933	0.7554
LinkedIn	2.80%	0	0.93%	0.93%	0.31%	4.97%	5.8318	0.2121

Source: own study.

In the case of Twitter, the results of the Pearson's chi-square test ($p = 0.0310$), with the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), provide grounds for rejecting the verified null hypothesis. This means that there is a statistically significant relationship between the choice of Twitter and the respondent's place of residence - this website was chosen mainly by representatives of Generation Z in the countryside and residents of cities with a population of up to 250,000 in Poland, as illustrated in Figure 2. However, this result should be treated with great caution due to the small number of responses.



where: 1. village, 2. city up to 50 000 residents, 3. city up to 100 000 residents, 4. city up to 250 000 residents, 5. city over 250 000 residents.

Figure 2. Interaction chart – use of the Twitter social networking site by Generation Z respondents by place of residence in Poland in 2023.

Source: own study.

The results of the Pearson's chi-square test at the adopted level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the case of the remaining social networking sites listed in Table 3 indicate that there are no grounds to reject the verified null hypothesis and, therefore, that there is no relationship between the choice of the site and the respondent's place of residence in Poland. in 2023.

Table 4.

Use of a social networking site by the respondent's place of residence in Great Britain in 2023 and the results of the Pearson's chi square test and its significance level

Responses	Place of residence (% against number of responses = 318)						Pearson's Chi ²	p
	Village	City up to 50 000 residents	City up to 100 000 residents	City up to 250 000 residents	City over 250 000 residents	Row in total		
Facebook	15.41%	12.58%	10.06%	7.23%	17.92%	63.21%	4.7909	0.3094
You Tube	15.09%	15.09%	14.47%	7.55%	26.73%	78.93%	9.0365	0.0602
Twitter	7.55%	8.18%	7.86%	3.46%	15.09%	42.14%	4.8525	0.3028
Instagram	17.92%	15.41%	14.78%	10.06%	27.99%	86.16%	2.3831	0.6657
Snapchat	15.41%	13.52%	11.95%	7.55%	22.64%	71.07%	0.2157	0.9946
Vimeo	0.31%	0	0	0	0.31%	0.63%	1.8905	0.7559
Pinterest	5.66%	5.66%	6.29%	4.40%	11.32%	33.33%	3.1182	0.5382
Forsquare	0.31%	0	0	0	0.31%	0.63%	1.8905	0.7559
TikTok	14.78%	13.21%	14.15%	7.55%	26.42%	76.10%	8.6202	0.0713
LinkedIn	4.40%	4.40%	3.14%	3.46%	8.81%	24.21%	3.2115	0.5231

Source: own study.

The results of the Pearson's chi-square test – in the case of all social networking sites listed in Table 4 – at the adopted level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicate that there are no grounds to reject the verified null hypothesis and demonstrate the lack of relationship between the choice of the site and the respondent's place of residence in Great Britain in 2023. We can therefore conclude about similar research results in both communities (countries). The only difference occurred in the case of Twitter, where the place of residence turned out to be statistically significant when choosing this social networking site by Polish Generation Z respondents.

The use of the Pearson's chi-square test allowed for measuring the significance of the relationship between the studied variables, but did not allow for measuring its strength and causal nature of connections between variables (choice of a social networking site and the respondent's place of residence).

The next part of the survey questionnaire also included the question: *How often do you perform the following activities on social media?* The results obtained in Poland and Great Britain in 2023 are presented in Figures 3 and 4.

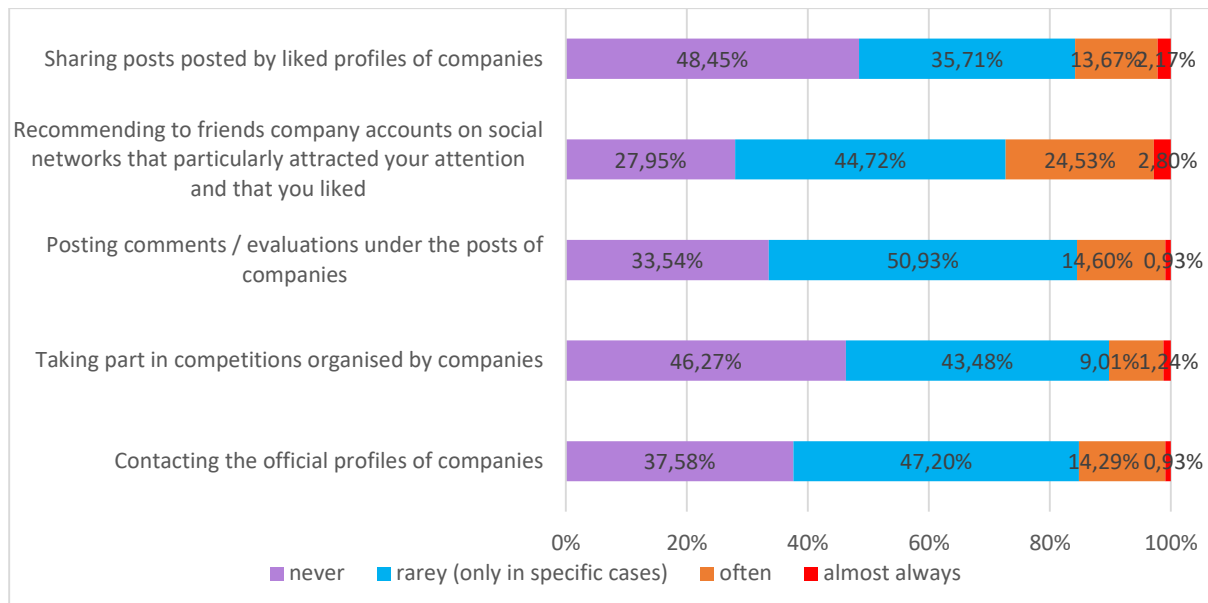


Figure 3. Activities performed in social media by respondents in Poland in 2023.

Source: own study.

The results of a study carried out in Poland in 2023 indicate that the surveyed representatives of Generation Z generally never performed or rarely performed the above-mentioned activities on social media. This may indicate the low interest of respondents in the content published by entrepreneurs on social media in Poland. The most common activity among those mentioned (Figure 3) was recommending to friends those business accounts on social networking sites that caught the attention and appeal of the respondents.

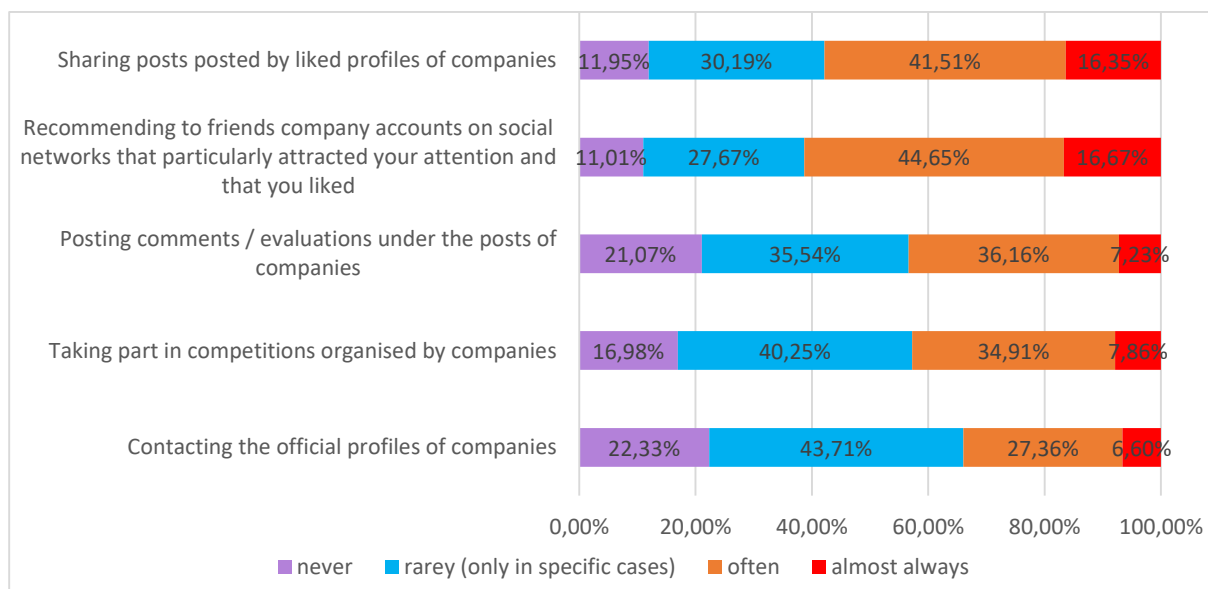


Figure 4. Activities performed in social media by respondents in Great Britain in 2023.

Source: own study.

In the case of the study carried out in Great Britain, in relation to all the mentioned activities, apart from contacting official company profiles, approximately 50%-60% of respondents answered that they do them often or always. The numbers of responses obtained among

Generation Z representatives in Great Britain were very different from those obtained from respondents in Poland. In both research groups, in 2023, the most frequently performed activity by Generation Z respondents was recommending to their friends those company accounts on social networking sites that particularly caught their attention and liked them.

In order to determine whether the respondent's gender affects the frequency of performing specific activities on social media, the authors used the Mann-Whitney U test (with continuity correction). This test was used to analyze answers to questions about differences between the study groups, because it has the great advantage that it can be used on small samples of respondents. It can also be used when the measured variables are ordinal, e.g. on a Likert scale (Nachar, 2008). In both studies (in Poland and in Great Britain), respondents were divided into two groups (women and men). The authors could not conclude that the two studied groups came from a normal distribution because they included a relatively small number of participants. In this case, the authors could not resort to the parametric mean test using the Student's t-distribution because it was not possible to check whether both samples were normally distributed (Fay, Proschan, 2010; Walters, 2021). The results obtained in 2023 regarding the impact of gender on activities performed in social media, which the authors subjected to statistical analysis, are presented in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5.

Results of the Mann-Whitney U test (with continuity correction) regarding the relationship between the frequency of activities on social media and the respondent's gender in Poland in 2023

Variables	Sum of ranks Female	Sum of ranks Male	U	Z	p
contacting the official profiles of companies & gender	27750.5	24252,5	12006.5	-1.23	0.2185
taking part in competitions organised by companies & gender	27050.0	24953,0	12707.0	-0.32	0.7501
posting comments/evaluations under the posts of companies & gender	26936.0	25067,0	12821.0	-0.17	0.8677
recommending to friends company accounts on social networks that particularly attracted your attention and that you liked & gender	10272.5	29484,5	-3.2	-3.43	0.0006
sharing posts posted by liked profiles of companies & gender	28280.5	23722,5	11476.5	-1.92	0.0543

Source: own study.

Based on the adopted level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the Z statistics of the Mann Whitney U test with continuity correction, as well as on the basis of the exact U statistics, it can be assumed that there are statistically significant differences between female and male Generation Z respondents in Poland in 2023 in terms of the frequency of recommendations to friends of those company accounts on social networking sites that particularly caught attention and liked them. The differences lie in the fact that women were more likely to recommend business accounts on social networking sites to their friends. They can be described based on the median, quartiles and the largest and smallest values, which are also visible on the box-and-whisker chart (Figure 5).

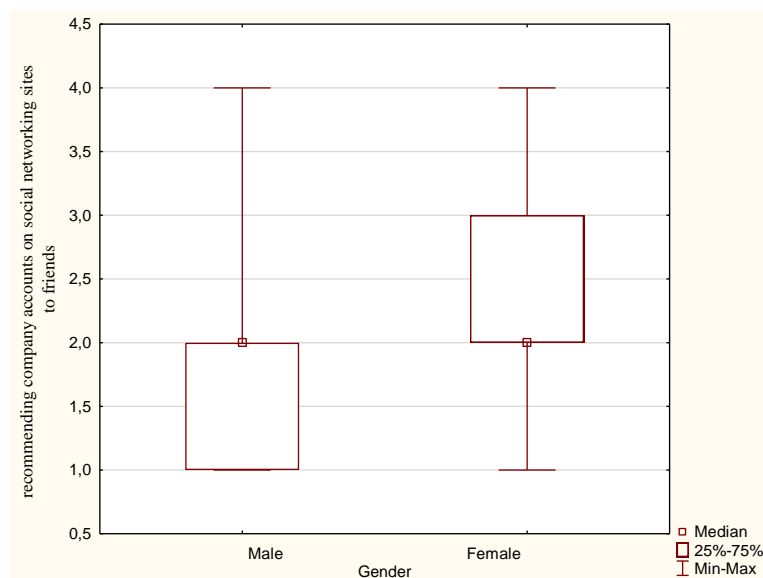


Figure 5. Frequency of recommending company accounts on social networking sites to friends by respondent's gender in Poland in 2023.

Source: own study.

In the scope of the study carried out in Poland, in the case of the remaining activities listed in Table 5, the analysis of the collected data did not allow the conclusion that gender significantly differentiated the analyzed variables ($p < 0.05$ was not obtained for any of the variables). This means that in the study group, both women and men performed the above-mentioned activities with a similar frequency.

Table 6.

Results of the Mann-Whitney U test on the relationship between the frequency of social media activities and the respondent's gender in Great Britain in 2023

Variables	Sum of ranks Female	Sum of ranks Male	U	Z	p
contacting the official profiles of companies & gender	30196.0	20525.0	10296.0	-2.07	0.0385
taking part in competitions organised by companies & gender	32080.5	18640.5	11500.5	0.45	0.6496
posting comments/evaluations under the posts of companies & gender	30274.0	20447.0	10374.0	-1.95	0.0512
recommending to friends company accounts on social networks that particularly attracted your attention and that you liked & gender	32706.5	18014.5	10874.5	1.29	0.1955
sharing posts posted by liked profiles of companies & gender	32349.5	18371.5	11231.5	0.81	0.4175

Source: own study.

Based on the adopted level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the Z statistics of the Mann Whitney U test with continuity correction, as well as on the basis of the exact U statistics, it can be assumed that there are statistically significant differences between female and male Generation Z respondents in Great Britain in 2023 in terms of frequency contacting official company profiles. These differences lie in the fact that women contacted companies on social media more often

than men. They can be described based on the median, quartiles and the largest and smallest values, which are also visible on the box-and-whisker chart (Figure 6).

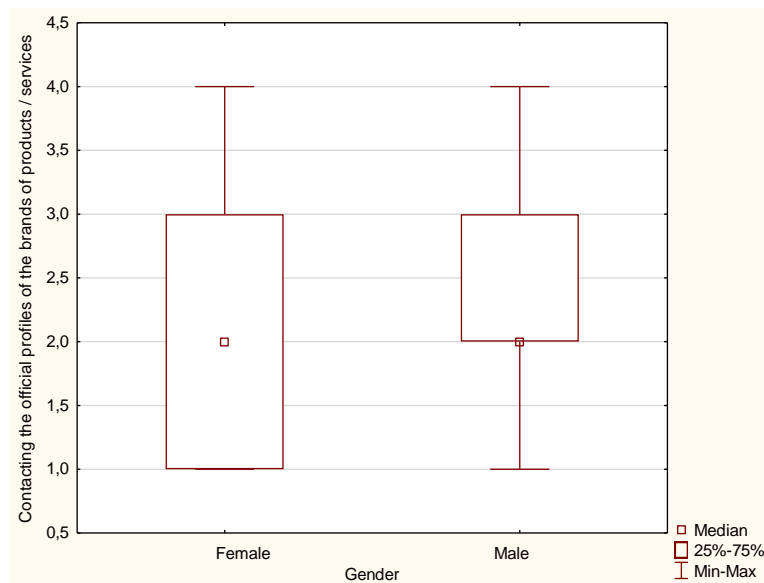


Figure 6. Frequency of contacts with official company profiles on social media by respondent's gender in Great Britain in 2023.

Source: own study.

In the case of the remaining social media activities listed in Table 6, the statistical analysis showed that the gender of the respondent in Great Britain did not differentiate the frequency of performing these activities. To sum up, the results of the research conducted in both countries (Tables 5 and 6) indicate differences in only two cases in terms of the examined correlations between the variables ($p > 0.05$).

The next stage of the analysis was to verify whether there is a relationship between the variables: frequency of activities on social media (variable X) and the respondent's place of residence (variable Y). To assess the correlation between two qualitative features (Akoglu, 2018), the authors used a non-parametric test – Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Tables 7 and 8). Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is used to analyze the interdependence of objects in terms of a two-dimensional feature (X, Y). The R_{xy} coefficient calculated from the sample is an estimate of the correlation coefficient ρ in the general population, and its numerical value is a point assessment of the strength of the connection in the entire population (Akoglu, 2018; Wiśniewski, 2014). Hence the need to test the significance of the correlation coefficient calculated based on a random sample. The following set of hypotheses was verified:

$$H_0: \rho = 0$$

towards the alternative hypothesis:

$$H_1: \rho \neq 0$$

Verification of the null hypothesis helped to assess whether the existing relationship between the studied variables (X and Y) in the sample is only accidental or may be a regularity in the studied communities (countries). The calculated Spearman's correlation coefficients and

their significance levels regarding the relationship between the frequency of individual activities on social media and the place of residence of respondents in 2023 are presented in Tables 7 (data for Poland) and 8 (data for Great Britain).

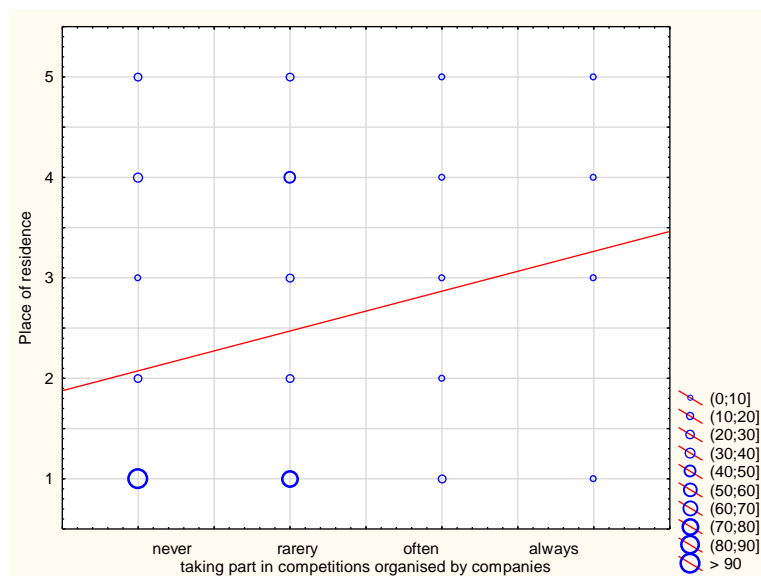
Table 7.

Spearman's rank order correlation between the frequency of activities on social media and the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023

Variables	N of valid ones	Spearman's rank R	t(N-2)	p
contacting the official profiles of companies & place of residence	322	0,0597	1,0701	0,2854
taking part in competitions organised by companies & place of residence	322	0,1729	3,1402	0,0018
posting comments/evaluations under the posts of companies & place of residence	322	0,2080	3,8048	0,0002
recommending to friends company accounts on social networks that particularly attracted your attention and that you liked & place of residence	322	0,1133	2,0392	0,0422
sharing posts posted by liked profiles of companies & place of residence	322	0,1675	3,0388	0,0026

Source: own study.

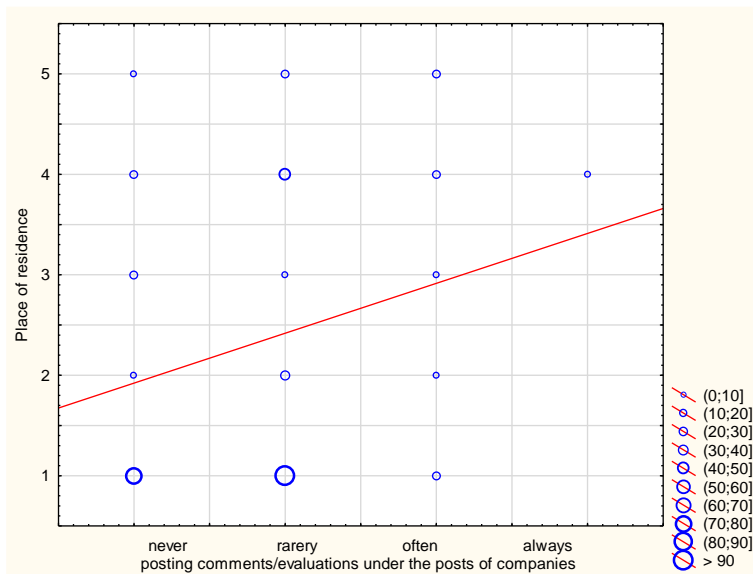
Data analysis (Table 7) indicates that in the case of the study conducted in Poland, there were statistically significant correlations between the analyzed variables, i.e. the frequency of performing as many as four of the mentioned activities on social media and the respondent's place of residence in 2023 ($p < 0.05$). A detailed interpretation of the correlations found is provided by scatterplots (Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10).



where: 1. village, 2. city up to 50 000 residents, 3. city up to 100 000 residents, 4. city up to 250 000 residents, 5. city over 250 000 residents.

Figure 7. Scatterplot of the correlation between the frequency of participating in competitions organized by enterprises and the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023.

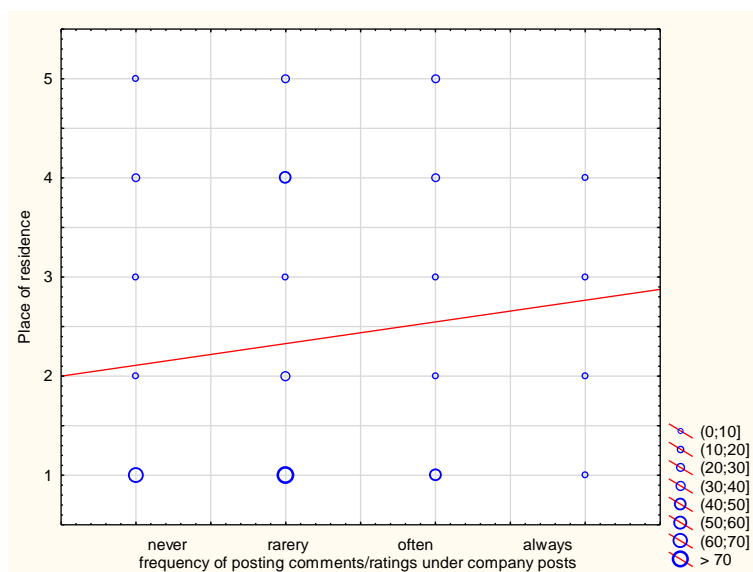
Source: own study.



where: 1. village, 2. city up to 50 000 residents, 3. city up to 100 000 residents, 4. city up to 250 000 residents, 5. city over 250 000 residents.

Figure 8. Scatterplot of the correlation between the frequency of posting comments/ratings under company posts and the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023.

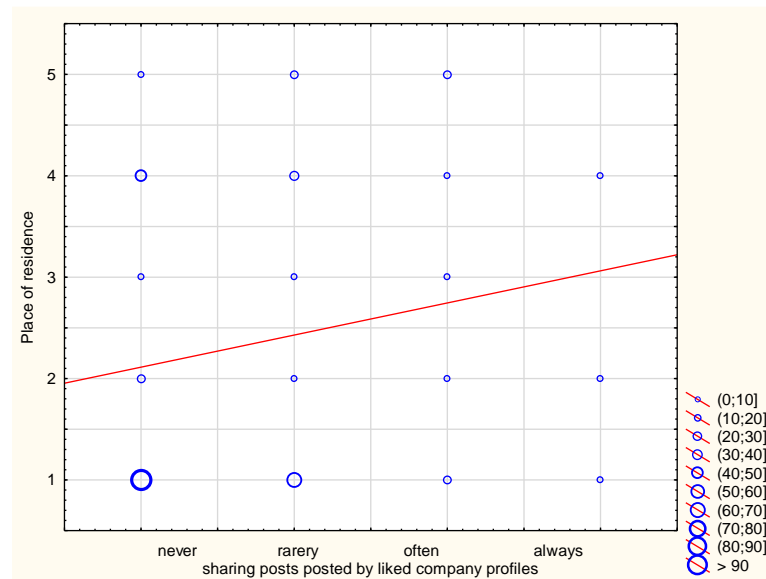
Source: own study.



where: 1. village, 2. city up to 50 000 residents, 3. city up to 100 000 residents, 4. city up to 250 000 residents, 5. city over 250 000 residents.

Figure 9. Scatterplot of the correlation between the frequency of recommending to friends those company profiles on social networking sites that particularly attracted attention and were liked, and the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023.

Source: own study.



where: 1. village, 2. city up to 50 000 residents, 3. city up to 100 000 residents, 4. city up to 250 000 residents, 5. city over 250 000 residents.

Figure 10. Scatterplot of the correlation between the frequency of sharing posts posted by liked company profiles and the respondent's place of residence in Poland in 2023.

Source: own study.

Data analysis (Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10) indicates that all the above-mentioned activities, apart from contacting official company profiles, were rarely or not performed at all by respondents living in rural areas in Poland.

Table 8.

Spearman's rank order correlation of the relationship between the frequency of activities on social media and the respondent's place of residence in Great Britain in 2023

Variables	N of valid ones	Spearman's rank R	t(N-2)	p
contacting the official profiles of companies & place of residence	318	0.0509	0.9059	0.3657
taking part in competitions organised by companies & place of residence	318	-0.0023	-0.0410	0.9673
posting comments/evaluations under the posts of companies & place of residence	318	0.0804	1.4336	0.1527
recommending to friends company accounts on social networks that particularly attracted your attention and that you liked & place of residence	318	0.0448	0.7971	0.4260
sharing posts posted by liked profiles of companies & place of residence	318	0.0884	1.5783	0.1155

Source: own study.

Statistical analysis of data collected in Great Britain in 2023 (Table 8) indicates the lack of statistically significant correlations between the analyzed variables ($p > 0.05$). In summary, respondents' place of residence in Great Britain was not related to the frequency of their activities on social media. Summarizing the results of the research conducted in both countries (Tables 7 and 8), it is necessary to confirm the fundamental differences in the scope of the examined correlations between the variables.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The current principles of digital-first marketing, which worked well for the Millennial generation, are less and less applicable to Generation Z. Both generations have many things in common and at the same time many differences. Generation Z has clearly defined values and does not buy products from companies that do not reflect these values (Alves, 2023). The impact of social media on the lives, including shopping, of Generation Z is enormous – over half of Generation Z representatives spend at least 4 hours a day on social media, and nearly 40% of this cohort even longer (Briggs, 2022; Morning Consult, 2022). Over 80% of Generation Z representatives search for information and solutions on the Internet every day, and almost 70% do it even several times a day (Rio SEO, 2022). Almost 80% of this generation bought a product they saw on social media (Statistics, 2022). The role that social media plays in the lives of Generation Z cannot be overestimated. It should encourage managers to learn about the relationship between the activities undertaken by enterprises and the activity and involvement of this generation in communication with the enterprise. Since Generation Z spends most of their time on the Internet following social networking sites, this is where companies should interact with their customers, develop their company websites and place product advertisements (Sadowa, 2019).

The results of the research conducted by the authors expand the existing knowledge about the activity of Generation Z in social media towards enterprises. The results indicate significant relationships between the activity undertaken and the respondent's gender and place of residence. The main conclusions resulting from the analysis of the collected empirical data in relation to the research questions are presented in Table 9.

Table 9.

Summary of the obtained research results divided into the research questions asked

Research question	Answer - Poland	Answer - Great Britain
Q1. What social networking sites are most frequently used by Generation Z members?	YouTube Facebook Instagram	Instagram YouTube TikTok
Q2. Is there a relationship between the choice of a social networking site and the gender of a Generation Z representative?	Yes, the difference between structure indicators according to the respondent's gender turned out to be statistically significant in the following cases: – men used YouTube and Twitter more often than women, – women, more often than men, used Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest and TikTok.	Yes, the difference between structure indicators according to the respondent's gender turned out to be statistically significant in the following cases: women used Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn more often than men.

Cont. table 9.

Q3. Is there a relationship between the choice of a social networking site and the place of residence of a representative of Generation Z?	Yes, but only when using Twitter. This portal was chosen mainly by rural residents and urban residents up to 250,000.	No (no statistically significant correlations between the analyzed variables)
Q4. What activities are most often performed by Generation Z representatives in social media towards companies?	Recommending to your friends those business profiles on social networking sites that particularly caught your attention and appealed to you.	1. Recommending to your friends those business profiles on social networking sites that particularly caught your attention and appealed to you. 2. Sharing posts posted by company profiles you like
Q5. Does the respondent's gender influence the frequency of actions he or she undertakes towards enterprises in social media?	Yes, women more often than men recommended to their friends those business profiles on social networking sites that particularly caught their attention and they liked	Yes, women contacted companies on social media more often than men
Q6. Does the respondent's place of residence influence the frequency of activities he or she undertakes in social media towards enterprises?	Yes, four activities were performed rarely or not at all by rural residents: – taking part in competitions organized by companies, – posting comments/ratings under company posts, – recommending to friends those company profiles on social networking sites that have particularly attracted attention and liked them, – sharing posts posted by liked company profiles.	No, there are no statistically significant correlations between the analyzed variables.

Source: own study.

The results of the conducted research are partially consistent with the results presented in the literature. The most frequently used platforms by Generation Z include YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat (Briggs, 2022; Morning Consult, 2022; Dumford et al., 2023). The research conducted by the authors showed that representatives of Generation Z in Poland still frequently visit Facebook, contrary to the surveyed respondents from Great Britain and the research results of other authors. Generation Z uses social media for various reasons, the most important of which are entertainment and convenience (Alhabash et al., 2017). The research results allowed us to identify the most frequently performed activities by representatives of Generation Z in social media in relation to enterprises. The fact that Generation Z is faithful to its values and will only engage in what is consistent with them has been confirmed (Alves, 2023). Respondents in both surveyed countries are most likely to recommend to their friends those company profiles on social networking sites that particularly caught their attention and which they liked, i.e. which are consistent with the values they represent.

The results obtained by the authors identifying the relationships between the choice of a social networking site and the gender and place of residence of Generation Z representatives complement the research conducted so far. Both in Poland and in Great Britain, the respondent's

gender determines his choice of social networking site. In Poland, women used Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest and TikTok more often than men. However, in Great Britain, women used Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn more often than men. The respondent's place of residence influenced the choice of websites only for respondents living in Poland – the Twitter website was chosen mainly by rural residents and city residents with a population of up to 250,000. The respondent's gender also influences the type of activity he or she performs in social media towards enterprises. In Poland, women were more likely than men to recommend business profiles on social networking sites that they particularly liked to their friends, while in Great Britain, women were more likely than men to contact companies on social media. The influence of the respondent's place of residence on his/her activities was identified only among respondents living in Poland – rural residents did not take part in competitions organized by enterprises, did not post comments/ratings under enterprise posts, did not recommend company profiles on social networking sites to friends, did not share posts posted by liked company profiles or performed these activities rarely.

Enterprises should focus on formulating the content provided to customers and on taking actions that will engage customers in social media and be active towards them. Taking care of individual engagement in discussions, likes and shares, as well as the visibility of individual posts may be a better indicator of a company's success than the number of people following the profile (Alves, 2023). A holistic approach to customer contact and service (omnichannel marketing) is the best way to communicate with Generation Z on social media, still constituting an interesting puzzle for marketers (Alves, 2023). Customer orientation using knowledge about which of the activities undertaken by enterprises in social media will most stimulate the activity and interest of Generation Z customers, leading to their involvement in communication, will allow not only to optimize the company's costs incurred for communication, but above all to acquire and keep customers. Future research should be conducted on a larger sample, and quantitative research should be supplemented with qualitative research. Undertaking research in other countries would allow us to compare the features of Generation Z's activity in social media and determine whether and which of them occur regardless of geographical location.

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