Who'S clicking on on-demand? media consumption patterns of generations Y & Z

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ABSTRACT

The current research looks at media consumption patterns of members of generations Y and Z, who grew up in an age of significant digital communications and Internet changes. A comprehensive survey of 800 Israeli respondents was conducted: 500 from Gen Y and 300 from Gen Z. The findings show intergenerational differences in media consumption patterns. The youngest respondents (generation Z) consumed more on-demand content than their generation Y counterparts. In both cohorts, no gender-based differences in media consumption patterns were found, although the sector-based digital divide remained stable: even among the younger respondents, secular individuals consume more digital content than religious individuals.

1. Introduction

"Generation" is a social term commonly used by researchers in psychology, sociology, literature, and political science to refer to specific social patterns and patterns of consciousness of different age cohorts. Many researchers have studied the evolution of generational groups, the components of their identities, and the factors that affect their world-views (e.g. Refs. [1–12]. In the twentieth century in western society, it is acceptable to refer to four main generational groups: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z. However, there are studies that also refer to the "quiet generation" (1925 and 1945), who lived pre and during World War II, through the Great Depression and fought in the war [13,14].

Media consumption constitutes an important element in the development of generational identity, and may even constitute a foundation for the evolution of the defining characteristics of each generation [7,10, 15–20]. Numerous studies have explored intergenerational differences in media consumption. In general, the younger the individual during the occurrence of a historical or foundational event, the greater the event's impact on their life. Additionally, generational status also affects viewing habits and media consumption preferences. The "Fresh Contact" element effects media usage habits which crystallize mainly during childhood and adolescence and remain stable over one's life [3,7,15,19, 21].

The emergence of the Internet led to gaps between the digital natives of Generation Y and Baby Boomer and Generation X digital immigrants forced to adapt to the new reality and learn new technologies at a relatively older age [1,22]; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2013; [19,23, 24]. While Generation Y experienced the innovation of the Internet during their childhoods, Generation Z was born directly into the digital world. For them, the main impact of the Internet stems from the rise of social media [25–27].

However, significant media changes have occurred in the past decade, with traditional media adding a layer of digital on-demand content to their offerings. The current study explores the consumption patterns of members of Generations Y and Z and postulates that differences between the groups will be found due to fresh contacts which occurred in early childhood and are formative for their media consumption habits [7,10,11,15–18,28]. In addition, the current study explores whether there are effects of sociodemographic variables such as gender and religiosity on intergenerational differences. The novelty of the research lies in the fact that today Generation Z is a generation of young adults who have assimilated habits and patterns of use and consumption of media, and therefore this research may add to our understanding of their behavior. This justification is even more factual in the Israeli case. First, Israel is a high-tech nation with a plethora of media outlets, websites, and digital on-demand content characterized by increased and diverse media consumption. Second, the demographic

characteristics of Israel's population are varied, and thus have the potential to offer us an in-depth examination of media consumption characteristics of several groups.

2. Literature review

2.1. Generation gaps

"Generation" is a term widely used in the fields of psychology, sociology, literature, and political science, referring to social patterns and patterns of consciousness of different age groups [20]. This concept has several definitions, the simplest of which refers to the biological aspects of a generational group, specifically year of birth (e.g., the generation of people born in 1960([1–3,7–11]. The psychological definition of the term defines "generation" based on a specific period in a person's life-cycle. This definition is based on the idea that each stage in life is characterized by a specific physical, mental or social state [24]. In addition, the sociological definition grants a sociological and historical sense to "generation", considered simultaneously the producer and outcome of a unique cultural and social period. The conditions of life in each period differ in their effects on patterns of reasoning, awareness, and social behaviors of each generation [2,6–8,10,29].

Within the sociological context, the generational characteristics are mainly affected by the shared history of people of similar ages [8,30,31]. Each generation experiences specific social, political or economic events that are considered turning points in society, and these affect their lives and are imprinted in their memories. A group's shared exposure to these events, in addition to their similar impact, leads to the evolution of a shared worldview for that generation [3,7,8,11,15,28–30,32,33].

This generational worldview leads to the consolidation of identity comprised of values, beliefs, expectations, opinions, priorities, and behaviors, which remain stable over the remainder of the lives of members of a generation [29–31,33,34]. Generally, the opinions and behaviors of members of the same generation are similar as a result of the similar impact of shared foundational events. Each generation is characterized by a generational identity, and because each generation is exposed to different shared experiences, identity structures differ between generations [1,3,8,9,11,17,29–32,34]. Generational boundaries form when people born after foundational events identified with the previous generation experience events of a significantly different nature, creating a new generational identity [3,6,8].

An important defining element of generational identity is fresh contact: The younger the individual during the occurrence of a historical or foundational event, the greater the event's impact on their life. That is, generational identities and worldviews are more strongly affected by 'Fresh Contact'- events that occurred in the childhood and adolescence of each generation [3,7,21]; Opperman, 2014). Many researchers have studied the formation of various generations, their distinct generational identities, and the factors that affected their respective worldviews. In the twentieth century in western culture, four main generations have been identified: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z.

Baby Boomers – Born in the 1920s, the first demographic cohort to be named as a generation in research and in public consciousness [18, 35–37]. Baby Boomers were born between 1942 and 1964, so named for the sharp rise in birth rates in the western world during the 1940s [9,17, 18,36].

Generation X – Born between the mid-1960s and 1979 [18,32,35, 37–39]. The name "Generation X″ is based on Douglas Coupland's iconic "Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture". He claimed that the entire generation is a "lost generation" - on the one hand nameless, yet on the other aware of its status as a distinct, growing social group [18, 32].

Generation Y – Born in the 1980s and 1990s. Researchers are divided on the precise end date of this generation. While it is widely accepted that this generation includes individuals born between 1980 and 1995,

some researchers extend this period to 2000. The name of this generation suggests that they are the biological and cultural followers of Gen X-ers, although other names have been given to this cohort, including Millennials and Generation Next [27,30,35,37,38,40–43].

Because most Gen X-ers married and had children at a relatively older age, they raised their children when they were older [37]. Many parents sought to give their children everything that they themselves had lacked in their own childhoods, and, as a result, they are much more involved in their children's care and education [18,37]. Parents tended to be over-protective of their Generation X children, involved them in their decision, and praised their smallest achievements. As a result, many Gen Y-ers have a very good relationship with their parents and even after reaching adulthood they involve their parents in their important life decisions. Due to the constant praise they received from their parents, Gen Y-ers are more self-confident and optimistic than their parents. They are hardworking, goal oriented, and prefer to work in collaboration with others [3,18,27,37,44,45]. However, parental involvement did impair Gen Y-ers' independence. For example, 25% of US residents born between 1980 and 1990 (who were between age 25 and 35 at the time of the study) live with their parents [45]. The fact that the parents of Gen Y-ers placed strong emphasis on their children's education and achievements also led to development of unrealistic expectations for their own lives. They are impatient to receive immediate responses to any action they perform, unable to accept failure, and always feel pressured to advance and accumulate achievements as quickly as possible [3,29,44,45]; Sima & Pugsley, 2010; [37].

The central foundational event in the lives of Gen Y is the rapid acceleration in technological development, especially with the Internet. Instantaneous worldwide communication and connectivity through the Internet led many researchers to define Generation Y as the first global generation [24,30,31,40,43]. Prensky [23] coined the term "digital natives" to describe Generation Y, because they are the first generation that grew up in a digital world connected through the Internet.

In contrast to the Baby Boomers and General X, who were forced to learn how to use digital technologies at an older age, Gen Y-ers experienced the digital transformation in their early childhood, a fact that has enormous impact on their generational identity [24]. As a result, Gen Y-ers are more capable of coping with frequent change than members of previous generations, because they became habituated to the constant entrance of new technologies into their lives [46]. Furthermore, as a result of the pervasive use of the Internet, Gen Y-ers tend to multitask and are used to searching for and acquiring information quickly and effortlessly, a fact that also affects their behaviors at work [3,23,24,30,47,48].

Generation Z – The final generation of the twentieth century and first of the twenty-first century. It is accepted that this generation includes all individual born from 2000 to the present [49]. The name of this generation continues the alphabetical trend that began with Generation X [18,26,27,45,50–52].

Generation Z shares several traits with Generation Y, but also significantly differs from Generation Y [50,52]. Gen Z-ers grew up in a period of widespread uncertainty and war, characterized by a constant sense of danger. The 9/11 terror attack on the World Trade Center in 2001 is considered the first significant foundational event for Generation Z. This attack and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan caused them to feel constantly under threat and to believe that their lives are in imminent danger. As a result, Gen Z-ers are pessimistic, anxious, and unable to rely on others [18,27,45,50,52].

Another foundational event that affected Generation Z was the global financial crisis of 2008. This crisis led to a wave of economic and employment instability that strongly affected their parents, causing them to be stricter with their children [18,53]. As a result, members of Generation Z are financially responsible, motivated, and believe that the only way to get ahead is to work independently and earn your place in the world [18,25–27,45,50,52,53].

The financial crisis also increased class differences and inequalities,

as a result of which many parents strove to position themselves in the upper classes, to avoid economic or social deprivation. As a result, children of Generation Z are extremely competitive (Swartz et al.; [18].

Despite the multiple hardships they experienced in their childhood, the members of Generation Z grew up in a more diverse world than did previous generations. The Internet increased global communications [54], and communications were no longer limited to individuals within their geographic reach. A study by MacKenzie et al. [38] found that the number of racially mixed families increased by 400% in the past 30 years, creating ethnically diverse families in what became known as "the pluralistic generation." A foundational event relating to the diversity of Generation Z was the election of Barack Obama, the first Black president of the United States, in 2008. As a result, Gen Z-ers are characterized by tolerance and a high level of acceptance of diversity [18,38].

2.2. Generational media consumption

The media play an important role in the development of generational identities, and as a potential foundation for the evolution of generational personalities. Media cover historical and foundational events, making them accessible to the general public and increasing their impact as common denominators for an expanding group of people [7,21,48,55].

Numerous studies have examined generational differences in media consumption. Media use habits are determined mainly in childhood and adolescence, and remain stable throughout one's life. Each generation tends to prefer the media that was popular during their childhood – or new media innovations that marked their childhood as a foundational event; that is, their fresh contact [7,10,11,15–18,28]. For example, Baby Boomers and Gen X-ers are defined as the television generation. Television entered into public life when Baby Boomers were kids, and was considered a foundational event. Although for Gen X-ers television was no innovation, it remained their medium of choice [7,11,16,18,36,37].

In contrast, Gen Y-ers were affected mainly by the advent of the Internet during their childhood, and so this generation became "the Internet generation." The Internet and technology quickly became an inseparable part of their lives: Today, only 0.4% of Generation Y do not use the Internet at all and only 25% do not own a computer [3,41]. A recent study showed that Gen Y-ers attribute great significance to the Internet in their lives, with 53% of respondents preferring to give up their sense of smell or one of their hands rather than give up their Internet access [37].

In contrast to previous generations, Gen Y-ers tend to prefer a broad range of media rather than focus exclusively on the Internet. As a result, Gen Y-ers regularly watch television, read newspapers, and listen to the radio [55]. This diversification of use stems mainly from the fact that this generation tends to multitask and can, for example, listen to music on the radio or watch a television program while surfing on the Internet. As a result, Generation Y preferences are not limited to a single medium, as is the case with previous generations [7,18,26,40].

The advent of the Internet created gaps between the digital natives of Generation Y and the digital immigrants of Generation X and Baby Boomers [22]; Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2013 [23]; Venter, 2016(. In contrast to Generation Y, who experienced the Internet's entrance into their lives while growing up, Generation Z was born into a digital world and have no memory of life without Internet access and the technological developments surrounding it [49]. As a result, they take technology for granted (Crumpacker & Crumpacker, 2013; [18,25,37,53]. The Internet's main impact on the generational identity of Generation Z stems from the rise of social media. The ability to communicate with and easily share life events with others is especially popular in Generation Z [25–27]. For example, 84% of Generation Z regularly use one or more social network, 73% upload videos to YouTube, and 71 use Snapchat [26]. The popularity of social networks reinforced the competitive nature of this generation, who tend to compare their lives to the lives of their friends as seen on the Internet [18,25–27,53]. While social networks have been adopted by Generation Y, they are less careful about

their online image. Gen Y-ers tend to post more general items that are disseminated across the globe, while competitive generation Z-ers prefer to post and share content on social media that presents themselves in a positive light, and is designated exclusively for their defined target audience [25].

In the formative years of Generation Z, access to the Internet increased through the advent of smartphones. As a result of mobile connectivity, smartphones became a basic necessity for them. Taylor [26] found that 97% of Generation Z in the US own a smartphone, with all using it regularly. Dorsey [53] also noted that in contrast to the arguments of parents of previous generations, the lack of access to a smartphone causes Generation Z-ers more harm than good.

(H1). Based on the literature review regarding generational characteristics and their fresh contacts which are formative for their media consumption habits [7,10,11,15–18,28], we assume that the older generation (Generation Y) will consume more traditional media such as newspapers and radio compared to the younger generation (Generation Z) and vice versa: The younger generation will consume more on-demand content (e.g., YouTube and VOD) than the older generation.

2.3. The digital divide

A digital divide exists between individuals who have access to information technologies and digital media as well as know-how to use them for their own interests and others with no such access or knowledge [56]. The digital divide is generally divided into two degrees of inequality: the first distinguishes between individual who are or are not connected to the Internet and the second focuses on the surfing patterns of those connected to the Internet, measuring different types of use of this medium [57].

Research focusing on the global digital divide indicates an association between various online uses and demographic factors such as education, age, religiosity, place of residence, income, and gender [55, 58–64]. Over time, gender-based digital differences declined and were eliminated in developed countries, with income-based differences also declining in significance [60,65,66].

(H2). Based on the literature regarding the digital divide, and specifically its gender-based digital elimination in developed countries [60, 65], no differences will be found between the media consumption habits of men and women in Generations Y and Z.

In spite of gender-based digital differences declination, religious-based digital divides remain. Religious and traditional communities across the world have adopted a suspicious attitude toward communications technologies. This mistrust largely reflects the confrontation between traditional values and modernity, and is the outcome of two main concerns: (a) technological platform that facilitates the infiltration of undesirable content inconsistent with fear of the community values and beliefs (thereby constituting a threat) [67] and (b) fear of damage to the community's lifestyle caused by a disruption to its traditional social and communicative arrangements [68]. Religious communities tend to be based on a hierarchical structure, control over access to content, and top-down content conveyance. These technologies based on broad availability of content therefore undermine community hierarchy [69]: [70,71]: [72]. Studies conducted in Israel report a negative association between degree of religiosity and Internet surfing [73].

As such, religious and secular individuals make different use of their leisure time, also reflected in their respective media consumption patterns. For example, secular adolescents consumer more media than their religious counterparts [74], a finding attributed to differences socialization and significance attributed to leisure culture and its components in each sector.

(H3). Based on the literature review regarding religious hierarchical structure and control over access to content alongside fear of technologies based on broad availability of content that therefore undermines

community hierarchy [68,69]: [70,71]: [72], we postulate that secular and religious individuals in Generations Y and Z will differ in media consumption habits; specifically, that secular individuals will consume more digital content while religious individuals will consume more traditional media content.

3. Method

The data were collected via a corresponding instrument, a web-based survey of a representative sample of the Jewish population in Israel from two generations: Generation Y (between age 18 and 35) and Generation Z (between age 14 and 17). The survey was conducted by a professional research institute in February 2020. The research institute operates in accordance with international guidelines and criteria of the ESOMAR organization and the questionnaires were examined and approved by an ethics committee. Panel participants were paid for their participation in order to encourage participation of low-income individuals. The sample consisted of 800 participants (48.6% male, $M_{age} = 22.5$, SD = 6.7). Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), the sampling error was ±3.5%. Distribution of gender and age was similar to CBS data with respect to the sampling error.

The distribution of gender and age in the sample matched gender and age data of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

3.1. Measures

The questionnaire included about 27 items concerning media consumption of various types of media (radio, newspapers, TV, on demand) and socio-demographic characteristics.

For each means of communication marked as relevant, the respondents were asked to what extent they consume that particular medium.

Participants responded on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Interviewees completed questionnaires at different hours of the day. *Control variables* were gender, age, education, Religious.

3.2. Statistical analyses

Two-sample independent t-tests was used to examine the research hypotheses and F tests and one-way ANOVAs where the relevant demographic variable contained more than two groups. Where the equality of variances required for F/one-way Anova tests did not exist (based on a Levene test), a Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was performed instead. Where the parametric test (the F test) is non-parametric (the KW test) and shows statistical significance, follow-up paired t-tests (on all possible levels) were performed, using the BH method to correct the p value.

3.3. Findings and discussion

Our H1 was supported by the findings related to consumption of the older generation (Generation Y) of traditional media (newspapers, radio and television) and on demand content (YouTube and VOD) compared to the younger generation (Generation Z) and vice versa (See Tables 1–6).

3.4. Newspapers

Table 1 shows that members of Generation Y more frequently consume newspapers than members of Generation Z, although the difference is not statistically significant ($p > .05$). General Y members more frequently consume newspapers than Generation Z because they grew up in a period in which newspapers were more dominant and relevant, compared to Generation Z. The research literature indicates that each generation tends to consume the media which established its "fresh contact; " that is, the media that was dominant during their childhood [7,10,11,15–18,28].

Generation Z is a digital generation in all respects, and considers newspaper to be an outdated and even impractical medium. When members of Generation Z need information, they will seek familiar and available sources such as updates on social media, or they will use their smartphone, in general, which is a basic necessity for Gen Z-ers [25–27].

Respectively, the previous research identified a trend that more and more media outlets and media figures maintain pages on social networks and update them regularly, sometimes even before official reports in the press and traditional media [75–80].

Table 2 shows that members of older generations frequently consume significantly more radio than members of younger generations ($p < .05$). Young people consider radio to be an outdated, analogue medium and, therefore, members of the digital Generation Z, who favor on-demand content, consume music and content through dedicated apps such as YouTube, Facebook, Apple Music, Spotify and others.

Table 3 shows that members of the older generation (Generation Y) frequently use significantly more radio apps than Generation Z ($p = .05$). It is worth noting that this difference exists despite the fact that radio stations have developed apps that support on-demand listening and offer genre-based playlists [81–83]. Individuals who regularly consume non-digital radio are also exposed to the radio station apps and/or are motivated to search for radio station digital services (apps). That is, for Generation Z radio is an unfamiliar "foreign" medium, and so they have less desire to listen to radio content – even on digital platforms. In contrast, for Generation Y, radio is a familiar medium, one they also consume in its digital form.

Table 1, 2, and 3 indicate that Generation Y more frequently consumes traditional media such as newspapers and radio than Generation Z (differences in radio and radio app consumption are statistically significant). Generation Y uses more radio apps since they have an affectionate connection to traditional radio and are willing to consume its content through online platforms (Loar, 2022).

Table 4 shows that Generation Y and Generation Z television consumption habits are very similar, with the former consuming at a slightly more frequent rate. Both generations were raised on television and television may be viewed as a relevant medium for these consecutive generations. Nonetheless, since television was a slightly more significant and attractive medium when Gen Y-ers were children, and its fresh contact effect is therefore stronger, as adults this generation also consumes slightly more television than Generation Z. These findings are consistent with the existing literature, which indicates that a generation raised on a specific medium, and therefore affected by fresh contact by that medium, will tend to favor it in adulthood [7,10,11,15–18,28]. However, Gen Z-ers were born into on-demand media consumption environment.

Table 5 shows that Gen Z-ers frequently consume significantly more VOD than Gen Y-ers ($p < .05$). VOD is digital, rapid, accessible, and

Table 1
Newspaper consumption, generation Y and generation Z.

Groups	Y	Z
N	504	304
Mean	2.1	2.07
Standard Deviation	1.03	0.96

Table 2
Radio consumption, generations Y and Z.

Group	Y	Z
N	504	304
Average	3.4	2.61
Standard Deviation	1.25	1.24

Table 3

Radio app consumption, generations Y and Z.

Groups	Y	Z
N	504	304
Mean	2.45	2.28
Standard Deviation	1.22	1.23

Table 4

Television consumption, generations Y and Z.

Groups	Y	Z
N	504	304
Mean	3.63	3.61
Standard Deviation	1.38	1.44

Table 5

VOD consumption, generations Y and Z.

Group	Y	Z
N	504	304
Mean	3.22	3.46
Standard Deviation	1.55	1.43

Table 7

Newspaper consumption, by gender.

Groups	Female	Male
N	415	393
Mean	1.97	2.21
Standard Deviation	0.94	1.06

Table 8

YouTube consumption, by gender.

Group	Female	Male
N	415	393
Mean	3.19	3.2
Standard Deviation	1.3	1.28

Table 9

YouTube consumption, secular individuals, by gender.

Group	Female	Male
N	219	192
Mean	3.27	3.45
Standard Deviation	1.32	1.26

dynamic, matching Generation Z's traits [25–27].

Table 6 shows that Gen Z-ers frequently consume significantly more YouTube content than Generation Y (p < .05). A possible explanation is the fact that Generation Z was born into a digital on-demand world, and are habituated to consume exactly the content they want, when they want. YouTube is thus the optimal model of on-demand digital consumption, in which Gen Z-ers are natives since they had a fresh contact with it [25–27].

Our H2 was supported by the findings related to media consumption habits of men and women in Generations Y and Z (See Tables 7–9).

Table 7 shows that compared with women, men in Generations Y and Z consume newspapers more frequently, and the difference is statistically significant (p < .05). These findings are consistent with the findings of a study on adolescents by Soen and Rabinovitz [74]. Although we are in a digital age, newspapers are still considered a medium that deals more extensively in "hard" news; that is, politics, economics, and similar topics – and less extensively in "soft" news such as culture, leisure, and lifestyle. Previous studies show that compared to men, women consume more "soft" news [84].

Tables 8 and 9 indicate a smaller digital divide between genders when examining all respondents, and specifically the secular sector, with respect to YouTube consumption. This finding is in line with numerous studies that show little of a digital divide between men and women, especially in the case of content relevant for both genders. In fact, this may increase viewer motivation to overcome differences in knowledge as they relate to operating digital devices, which was also found in other studies on the narrowing of the digital divide in many societies [83,85].

Our H3 was reinforced by the findings related to media consumption habits of secular and religious individuals in Generations Y and Z (See Tables 10–17). While much of media research focuses on secular organizations operating in a Western, liberal context, little attention has been paid to the tension between religion and modernity within media outlets [86]. In Israel, the ultra-orthodox, for example, are seen as a

minority group despite their swelling numbers in the general population, partly because they are self-segregated.

Table 10 shows the Orthodox and religious more frequently consumer newspapers than traditional and secular individuals. The KW test shows that the difference between the two means is statistically significant (p < .05). Follow-up tests show that the most significant difference exists between religious and secular individuals (adjusted p = 6.2e-0.5). The differences between traditional and secular individuals is also statistically significant (adjust p = .031).

Newspaper consumption increases in line with an increase in the degree of religious observance, as this is a medium extensively accessible to the religious community, which has more strongly established reading habits than their secular counterpart (Rosenberg et al., 2016). Moreover, because religious individuals observe the Sabbath, when no electrical or digital devices are used, they read extensively and consume newspapers on the Sabbath. Access to the digital world is also increasingly restricted as religiosity increases, since the digital world is increasingly considered a prohibited space [67].

Table 11 shows that in Generation Z, the difference between, on the one hand, traditional and secular individuals and, on the other, ultra-Orthodox and religious is similar and even greater. A KW test shows that the difference between the means is statistically significant (p < .05). Follow-up tests show that the most significant difference is between religious and secular individuals (adjusted p = .012).

Analogue newspapers are "closed-format" and contain no hyperlinks, manifested in differences between Generation Y and Z. The latter is accustomed to information flow and hyperlinked content along with the parallel use of several mediums simultaneously.

Table 12 shows that traditional and secular individuals consume more radio than their ultra-orthodox and religious counterparts. Results of the F-test show that the difference between the means is statistically significant (p < .05). Follow-up tests show that the most significant differences are between secular and religious individuals (adjusted p = .00052) and between traditional and religious (adjusted p = .00052).

Table 6

YouTube consumption, generations Y and Z.

Group	Y	Z
N	504	304
Mean	3.06	3.41
Standard Deviation	1.26	1.31

Table 10

Newspaper consumption, by degree of religious observance.

Groups	Ultra -Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	23	160	214	411
Average	2.35	2.33	2.16	1.94
Standard Deviation	1.15	0.9	0.98	1.02

Table 11

Newspaper Consumption, Generation Z, by religious observance.

Groups	Ultra-Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	8	89	58	149
Average	2.88	2.25	2.17	1.89
Standard Deviation	1.36	0.76	0.9	1.02

Table 12

Radio consumption by religious observance.

Group	Ultra- Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	23	160	214	411
Mean	2.78	2.73	3.25	3.18
Standard Deviation	1.31	1.29	1.25	1.31

This can be attributed to the community-oriented nature of religious life in which less mass media is consumed. As a result, few radio stations are dedicated to the religious and ultra-orthodox sector, which significantly limits availability and access for this group [83].

In addition, Tables 13 and 14 indicate that the difference in television consumption between, on the one hand, traditional and secular individuals and, on the other, religious and ultra-orthodox is maintained in Generations Y and Z. F-test results show that the difference is statistically significant ($p < .05$ in both cases).

Follow-up tests show that the most significant differences in television consumption are between secular and traditional and religious (adjusted $p < 2e{-}16$) and between secular and traditional and ultra-orthodox (adjusted $p = 5.6e{-}11$ and $p = 1.5e{-}08$). Follow-up tests show that the most significant differences in VOD consumption are between traditional and religious individuals and internally between traditional individuals (adjusted $p = .00032$ and adjusted $p = 1.5e{-}0.8$, respectively), retaining the digital divide between these sectors. In fact, the ultra-orthodox sector does not watch television at all and does not directly consume VOD content, which is generally designed for secular individuals.

Table 15 shows that traditional and secular individuals frequently consume more YouTube content than the ultra-orthodox and religious. F-test results show that the difference between the means is statistically significant ($p < .05$). Follow-up tests show that the most significant difference is between religious and secular individuals (adjusted $p = 7.9e{-}05$), with significant differences also found between secular and ultra-orthodox individuals (adjusted $p = .0012$) and between traditional and religious and between traditional and ultra-orthodox (adjusted p value $= .0038$, in both cases). These findings are consistent with previous research on digital divides that indicates that as the level of religiousness increases, the acces to technological innovations decreases [67]. Furthermore, more religiously observant communities impose greater restrictions on open access, linked content, and contents with ads as they are characterized by hierarchical structure and content control, with information disseminated along the hierarchy in a top-down manner [69–72].

In contrast, Table 16 shows that in the religious sector, women frequently consume more YouTube content than men (borderline statistical significance, $p = .06$). This may be attributed to the fact that in the religious sector men are subjected to a stronger obligation to engage

Table 13

Television consumption, by religious observance.

Group	Ultra-Orthodox Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	23	160	214	411
Mean	1.65	2.49	3.97	3.98
Standard Deviation	0.98	1.45	1.15	1.19

Table 14

VOD consumption, by religious observance.

Group	Ultra-Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	23	160	214	411
Mean	2.3	2.59	3.49	3.55
Standard Deviation	1.4	1.48	1.4	1.47

Table 15

YouTube consumption, by religious observance.

Group	Ultra-Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	23	160	214	411
Mean	2.39	2.84	3.24	3.36
Standard Deviation	1.27	1.32	1.18	1.29

Table 16

YouTube consumption, religious sector, by gender.

Group	Female	Male
N	81	79
Mean	3.02	2.65
Standard Deviation	1.33	1.28

in modest viewing [87]. YouTube is a medium that combines extensive advertisements, much of which violates the religious community's standards of modesty. The same situation applies to hyperlinked content, with high potential to spill-over into inappropriate content. Therefore, it is possible that more men avoid YouTube for this reason. Furthermore, In the ultra-orthodox community, women carry the burden of homemaking while men study Torah and therefore spend more time in highly structured activities like yeshiva learning. As such, they may use YouTube as a relevant tool for their domestic tasks. This content may also be more easily accessible to women, who are more likely to work outside the home, as opposed to men, who are not exposed to technology as much because they are engaged in full-time Torah study [88,89].

The digital divide between the secular and religious sectors has remained stable in Generations Y and Z. Table 17 indicates that secular and traditional individuals frequently consume more YouTube content than the ultra-orthodox and religious – even among Generation Z. Results of an F-test show that the difference between the means is statistically significant ($p < .05$). Follow-up tests show that the most significant difference is between secular individuals and religious sectors (adjusted $p = 7.7e{-}05$) and significant differences were also found between secular individuals and the ultra-orthodox (adjusted o $= 0.0094$).

Secular individuals are more liberal in consuming content and have greater access to technology. In contrast, the religious sector is more conservative about consuming content and increased use of technology [90]. This finding is consistent with a study that found that religious individuals consume less media than secular individuals [74], due to their distinct conceptions of leisure time.

4. Summary and conclusions

This study was designed to map the differences in media consumption of the younger generations, members of Generations Y and Z.

Table 17

YouTube consumption, generation Z, by religious observance.

Group	Ultra-Orthodox	Religious	Traditional	Secular
N	8	89	58	149
Mean	2.38	2.99	3.36	3.74
Standard Deviation	1.51	1.34	1.19	1.23

Consistent with the findings of other studies, "Fresh Contact" affects viewing habits and media preferences. Media consumption habits are typically formed during childhood and adolescence and remain fixed over the remainder of one's life. Each generation consumes more of the medium with which it grew up [25–27].

Our H1 was fully suported by the findings as the current research indicates that members of Generation Y frequently consume more traditional media (newspapers and radio) than do members of Generation Z. Furthermore, television consumption was found to be close to identical in both Generations Y and Z. This is due to the fresh contact effect. That is, Generation Y grew up on television, and so it may be considered a transitional medium relevant to these two consecutive generations. In contrast, Generation Z consumes more digital media (new media): YouTube and VOD, which are congruent with Generation Z's traits of immediacy and rapid access. These are similar to the features of social media with which they grew up and which influenced their generational identity [25–27].

Our H2 was fully suported by the findings of the current study that indicate that the digital divide narrowed with respect to content relevant to both genders, in line with previous studies [83,85]. Thus, no significant gender effects in YouTube consumption were found, with relevant YouTube content actually increasing motivation to overcome gaps in knowledge of how to operate various digital tools. In contrast, it is interesting to note that in the religious sector women frequently consume more YouTube than men. This may be due to religious men being subject to stricter obligations of modest viewing than women, with YouTube a potential gateway to religiously inappropriate content. Therefore, in the religious community, men avoid YouTube more than women, who may make instrumental use of digital platforms as part of their homemaking duties [87].

Our H3 was supported by the findings of the current study and religious individuals were found to frequently consume more analogue media (newspapers) and less of other media types (radio, television, and YouTube). When a demographic distinction is made between the secular and religious sectors in these generations, the traditional ratio regarding access to technology between religious and secular individuals is retained. This gap was maintained among the religious in Generation Z: newspapers are considered more conservative content than other media types. The digital divide is also reflected in the frequency of digital media use. This is to be expected in view of the fact that these platforms offer an infinite variety of content for secular consumers, but far more limited choices for the religious sectors. In fact, as level of religiousness increases, content options are progressively more limited. Even so, content variation for the religious sector may be more available in the future through dedicated forms of VOD – for example, YouTube channels approved for use by religious authorities [68]. Still, even if this does become a reality, differences in consumption habits between the secular and religious sectors will remain as the former will always enjoy an advantage when it comes to sophisticated and diversified digital platforms.

To summarize, today the digital infrastructure for media consumption is more available and accessible than ever [91]. Our findings show that the digital gap between individuals of different degrees of religiosity was maintained despite the fact that the two younger generations — Generations Y and Z — live in and are immersed in a digital world. These differences are the result of content restrictions imposed on different religious groups. In contrast, the digital divide between men and women has closed because no gender-specific consumption restrictions exist. That is, digital divides can be reduced in a liberal environment in which content is equally available and accessible. In contrast, in the religious community digital media obstacles based on immutable traditions persist, consolidating the digital divide. This trend may continue as religious restrictions on the use of technology are primarily seen by community authorities as protective measures, with selective adjustments permissible under very narrow circumstances – for instance, the kosher smartphone [68].

Ultimately, our findings indicate that generational traits are reflected in and affect media consumption patterns: Generation Z consumes more mobile digital content and focuses on VOD and YouTube. As noted, members of this generation were born into a world of extensive access to the Internet and smartphone use [26]. That is, fresh contact affected their generational identity, which is characterized by immediacy and connectivity [25–27]. In contrast, Generation Y thoroughly adopted YouTube and VOD and *grew up* with on-demand content – without being born into it like Generation Z [7,10,11,15–18,28]. The current study also found that Generation Y consumes more newspaper and radio than Generation Z, as these are the media types that it grew up with.

Future research should examine whether the use of media meets the needs of different generations through other sociological and/or psychological theories. For example, an investigation using the Big 5 psychological theory - whether personality traits can influence the use of media and whether the use of different media by generations Y and Z depends on personality type.

One should be aware that our current study is not without limitations, which derive mainly from the limits of our database. The participants in this study were internet users, and their awareness of, and attitudes toward, social media may be greater than those of individuals participating in an offline study. In addition, our sample did not include Israeli-Arbas (who constitute approximately 20% of Israel's population) because of their low willingness to participate in online surveys and the consequent difficulty in enrolling a representative sample of this population in an online survey.

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