Technology: A Generational Study

Erin Dwinell

English-150

Dr. Van Ness

September 27, 2016

This generational study provides a comparison and contrast of teen technology use in Generation Y, nineteen nineties teens, and Generation Z, present day teens. The way teenagers use social media and communication methods display multiple differences, whereas the way teens stimulate and support technological devices demonstrates the similarity between the two generations.

Generation Y spent their teenage years in a developmental time of technology that was the building blocks for the use of future innovations. The world of technology started with a limited amount of programs, twenty-three thousand to be exact, on the web available for use. Social media did not receive an abundant amount of attention in the nineteen nineties, therefore teens did not feel they were missing out on events being publicized online. Not all teenagers of this generation found the web to be interesting or even wanted to be involved. In an article from *Educational Technology and Mobile Learning*, statistics show that only half of teens were active online validating why only five percent of teens used the internet daily for personal or school circumstances. Similarly, to the contrast of social media, low statistics of internet use confirms Generation Y did not communicate and interact by hiding behind a screen; rather, teens continued to participate in direct communication and interaction daily, regardless of the development and availability of the internet. Data from the previously mentioned article states that more than half of Generation Y talked verbally on the phone every day, and sixty-four percent of those teens reported to directly interact with peers outside of school premises. Communication was not disrupted and disturbed by technological development in the teenage years of Generation Y. Opposed to these differences, this generations’ strife for innovation is comparative to that of present day Generation Z. Technological devices were portable and multiplying; The Game Boy, Disc-Man, and portable DVD players were the common tech-devices used in the teenage life of Generation Y. The excitement of the Nintendo reveal in the nineteen nineties, showed the enthusiasm and support towards innovation; Similarly, to the anticipation of new technological devices in present day, both generations encourage these devices to rapidly increase.

In contrast to the Generation Y, Generation Z’s technological advancements are more importantly the source of development in society, rather than just the device being developed. 1.2 billion websites are now available for users to research, browse, and chat; Thus, creating more openings for social networks to continue to flourish and control the minds of Generation Z. The *Educational Technology and Mobile Learning* article pronounces that ninety- five percent of teens are active online and eighty-one percent of those are on social media networks; This exemplifies the contrast to the fifty percent of Generation Y teens that were active online in their teenage years. Internet access practically everywhere, due to Wi-Fi, provides opportunities for consumption of social media websites including Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat, that urges indirect communication methods. Likewise, to the contrast of social media, Generation Z’s main source of communication is texting, while talking over the phone continues to decrease. The article mentioned above, presents the statistics that the average Generation Z teen sends sixty texts a day and only thirty-nine percent of them receive phone calls daily. The influence of technology on communication methods has proved to inhibit the support of direct interaction. The previously mentioned article provides the fact that only thirty-five percent of Generation Z teens interact with their peers outside of school, in contrast to the sixty-four percent of Generation Y that said they met up outside of school. Insufficient communication methods presented through technological devices, still do not prove reasonable cause for a change. Similar to teenage years of Generation Y, technological advancements continue to multiply the amount of devices available to teens. The release of a new Apple or Microsoft device, even a new software, sparks a fire in teens to install the newest update and buy the latest phone, laptop, or computer. Both Generation Y and Generation Z, motivate technological advancements through glorified anticipation and excitement.

A comparison of teen technology use in Generation Y with that in Generation Z teens demonstrates more differences than similarities. Technology is and was constantly advancing and controlling the future. Steve Jobs, the CEO, chairman, and co-founder of Apple Inc., once said “Everyone here has the sense that right now is one of those moments when we are influencing the

future.”