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**Introduction.** In recent decades, more attention has focused on the future of the planet (Bonera et al., 2020). Contributing to this focus the UN's recongition of environmental sustainability as a top international political agenda and a critical driver of innovation for several companies (United Nations, 2017). Despite increasing emphasis on sustainability, previous research has identified a gap between what consumers concerned with sustainability say they want and their actual eco-friendly behaviors. A recent survey revealed that 65% of consumers say they want to purchase brands advocating sustainability, but only 26% do so (White et al., 2019). Typically, sustainable products cost more to consumers and the recent economic downturn may dwindle these numbers further. Questions remain regarding how sustainability cultural emphasis impacts Generation Y (Gen Y) and Generation Z (Gen Z)'s eco-friendly behaviors.

**Literature Review.** The importance of the concept of generations is that the cultural climate individuals are born in and live their formative years through influences ways of thinking, feeling and acting (Gazzola et al., 2020). Gen Y are adults born between 1982 and 2003 (Strauss & Howe, 1991). As Gen Y comprise the largest cohort of living adults and are a majority of the workforce, this generation will have a greater impact on consumption and spending habits (Bonera et al., 2020). Gen Y have also been called the "Green Generation," as this cohort of consumers makes more efforts to purchase sustainable products than previous generations (Young, 2018). This trend is expected to continue with Gen Z, the youngest generation born after 1995 (Smith & Brower, 2012). Gen Z is the first generation to never know life without the internet and displays a high interest in engaging with new technologies (Wood, 2013). Members of this generation are less likely to step inside physical stores, shopping mostly online (Hanbury, 2019). In this study, we identified two social influences as factors for eco-friendly behaviors: normative and informative susceptibilities. Informative susceptibility indicates individuals' decision making process to comply with others' expectations, while informative susceptibility is searching for information from knowledgeable others by observing them (Miller, 1998). Because social influences of internalization and identification, as well as the need for social enhancement and interpersonal connectivity are shown to elevate adoption of social media or SNS (Ifinedo, 2016), social influences are expected to increase social media engagement for both generations. In addition, Gen Y and Gen Z's eco-friendly behaviors are likely to be developed by the influence of others. Previous research demonstrated Gen Y' intention to purchase green products is positively related to subjective norms (beliefs of socially acceptable behavior; Bautista, 2019). Further, Gen Z are adolescents and young adults (e.g., college students) aged between 6 and 24 in 2021, are in the stage of developing a sense of identity through their peer-group relations (Clasen & Brown, 1985), friend's opinions would be a crucial for their eco-friendly behaviors. Because Gen Z are highly engaged with technology, they are more likely to engage in social media to gather friends' opinions (normative susceptibility) and observe knowledgeable others,

such as fashion bloggers (informative susceptibility) compared to Gen Y. As Gen Z are exposed to eco-friendly messages from their peers via social media, they may gradually build eco-friendly behaviors. Gazzola et al. (2020) also showed that younger female consumers are highly conscious and sensitive about social and environmental issues, likely elevating their eco-friendly behaviors. Although we expect that Gen Y's eco-friendly behaviors are increased by social influences, considering the current age of Gen Y (between 25 and 40), they may already aware of and have experienced with sustainability issues; Gen Y may be less sensitive about social influences and social media messages regarding sustainability than Gen Z.

H1: Social influences (normative and informative susceptibilities) increases (a) social media engagement and (b) eco-friendly behaviors.

H2: Social influences increase (a) social media engagement and (b) eco-friendly behaviors more for Gen Z than Gen Y.

H3: Social media engagement mediates the effect of social influences on eco-friendly behaviors for (a) Gen Y and (b) Gen Z.

**Method.** An online survey was developed and distributed via Qualtrics. Individuals, who live in the United States, are female, and are aged between 18 and 39, were eligible to participate in this survey. Participants were asked to answer questions about social influences (normative and informative susceptibilities; Bearden et al., 1989), social media engagement (Alt, 2015), and eco-friendly behaviors (Abdul-Muhmin, 2007) on 7-point Likert scale.

**Results.** A total of 245 responses were collected, with more respondents in the Gen Y demographic. The participants were divided into two groups of Gen Y (aged between 25 and 39) and Gen Z (aged between 18 and 24) based on their age range. First, CFA was performed to confirm discriminant and convergent validities. Next, the variables were analyzed for descriptive statistics. Gen Z reported a higher average score for normative susceptibility ( $M = 4.14$ ) than Gen Y ( $M = 3.99$ ), but not significantly so. Gen Y reported higher average eco-friendly behaviors, informative susceptibility and social media usage than Gen Z. Next, to test hypotheses containing both mediating and moderating effects, PROCESS analysis was conducted. The result showed that normative and informative susceptibilities increased both social media engagement (normative:  $B = .34$ ,  $t = 5.09$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ; informative:  $B = .37$ ,  $t = 4.73$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ), supporting H1a. The normative and informative susceptibilities also had positive influences on social media engagement and eco-friendly behavior (normative:  $B = .13$ ,  $t = 2.25$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ; informative:  $B = .24$ ,  $t = 3.57$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), supporting H1b. However, the interaction effects between social influences and generation (Gen Y vs. Gen Z) on social media usage and eco-friendly behavior were not significant, indicating no moderating effects of generation, rejecting H2a and H2b. Further, participants who engaged more heavily on social media tended to show higher eco-friendly behavior ( $B = .32$ ,  $t = 5.93$ ,  $p \leq .001$ ). The social media engagement also mediated the effects of normative and informative susceptibilities on eco-friendly behavior for both Gen Y (normative:  $.06 < CI < .17$ ; informative:  $.06 < CI < .18$ ) and Gen Z (normative:  $.001 < CI < .15$ ; informative:  $.03 < CI < .18$ ), supporting H3a and H3b.

**Conclusion.** In both generations, social influences show a direct influence on eco-friendly behaviors and an indirect influence mediated by social media engagement. However, it appears that Gen Z is not furthering the eco-friendly behaviors observed in Gen Y. For marketers, social media outreach and ecommerce platforms will be critical to attract both younger generations, presenting opportunity to engage in forming the social influences. Retailers lacking a well-developed online presence may not reach this demographic.

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