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SCIENCE AND IT

SELF-EXPRESSION IN GEN Z

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that except where specific reference is made to the work of others, the contents of this report are original and have not been submitted in whole or in part for consideration for any other degree or qualification or course in this or any other university. This report is the collective work of myself and my team and contains nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration with others except my team members as specified in the text and Acknowledgements.

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ABSTRACT

Unleashing Authenticity: Self-Expression in Generation Z

This study explores the concept of self-expression in Generation Z, leveraging a mixed-methods approach that combines survey data, excel analysis, and database management. A total of 85+ Gen Z individuals born between 1995 and 2006 participated in an online survey, providing insights into their attitudes, behaviors, and preferences related to self-expression.

The survey data was analyzed using excel, with descriptive statistics and data visualization techniques to identify trends and patterns. The findings were further validated through database analysis, utilizing a relational database management system to store and query the data.

The results indicate that Gen Z values individuality, diversity and creativity in their self-expression, with significant correlations between self-expression and mental health, social media usage, and cultural identity. This study contributes to our understanding of Gen Z's self-expression, providing actionable insights for educators, marketers, and mental health professionals.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Self-awareness among Gen Z survey helps us to examine how they define and perceive self-awareness and how it relates to their daily lives. The survey seeks to identify factors that include social media, family, friends, education, and to investigate the relationship between self-awareness and mental health. In an effort to better understand the habits and attitudes, we conducted a google survey of respondents aged 17-30. The survey aimed to explore the ways in which Gen Z expresses themselves, the factors that influence self-expression, and the role of social media in shaping their identities.

1.1 OBJECTIVE

The goal of this report is to gain a deeper understanding of self-expression among Gen Z, examining various forms and the factors that influence it. Using a google survey, we collected data from a sample of Gen Z individuals and analyzed it using excel, employing formulas, graphs and statistical techniques to identify trends and patterns. We also utilized set theory concepts such as union, intersection, and venn diagrams, to visualize the relationships between different variables and identify areas of overlap and divergence. By leveraging these analytical methods, this report provides insights into the self-expression habits and attitudes of Gen Z, and offers recommendations for educators, marketers, and mental health professionals seeking to support and promote self-expression among this generation.

1.2 ORGANIZATION

The document is organized into several sections, each focusing on different aspects of the study. The **Introduction** section outlines the main goals and objectives of the study, describes the structure and organization of the document, and highlights the contributions and significance of the study.

The **Data Description** section provides a detailed description of the data used in the study, explains the technical aspects and methodologies used for data collection and analysis, and presents a visual representation of the workflow and processes involved in the study.

The **Data Analysis** section analyses various aspects of the data, including gender distribution and demographic characteristics of the respondents, personal expression levels, campus and peer influences, broader perspectives and personal reflection regarding self-expression among generation z.

The **Key Insights** section summarizes the key findings from the data analysis, highlighting the main insights related to gender and demographics, general awareness, password management, device security, online behaviour, and awareness and training.

Finally, the **Conclusion** section provides a summary of the study's findings and their implications, and the **References** section lists the sources and references used in the study.

1.3 Contribution

As a team member, I contributed to the development of the research report on self-expression among Gen Z. My specific contributions include:

- Background Research: I gathered relevant information, articles, and academic studies to provide a strong theoretical foundation for the project.
- Survey Design Input: I contributed ideas to refine the questions in the Google Form to ensure they effectively captured meaningful responses from participants.

By contributing to the project in these ways, I helped ensure the research was comprehensive and grounded in relevant knowledge.

CHAPTER 2

DATA ORGANIZATION

2.1 Data description

2.1.1. Demographics:

1. **Gender:** Categorical variable with options (Male, female,).
2. **Age:** Open-ended input capturing the respondent's age

NOTE: All questions are mandatory.

2.1.2. Personal Expression:

1. Primary expression of self in college:

- Description: Measures the respondent's expression in college.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Social media", "Hobbies", "Fashion/style", "Academics", "others"

2. Importance of self-expression to a college student:

- Description: Captures the importance of self-expression as a college student.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Not important", "somewhat important", "Neutral", "Very important".

3. Changes of expression in oneself after college:

- Description: Identifies the changes of expression after the beginning of the college.
- Data Type: Categorical (Multiple Selection)
- Format: Options include "yes, I've become more open", "yes, I've become more reserved", "No, it's stayed same"

4. Aspects of college life that helped influencing self-expression the most:

- Description: Helps in finding the aspects of college life that helped the most in influencing expression.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Social media ", " Friends/peers ", "Campus culture ", " Academics enviroment ", "other ",

2.1.3 Campus and Peer Influence:

1. Influence of peer or campus on self-expression:

- Description: Measures how much do peers or campus influence self-expression in college .
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include " Not at all", "A little", "Somewhat", "Significantly"

2. Campus clubs, organizations or events that allows to express:

- Description: Captures how campus clubs, organizations or events helps the respondent to allow themselves:
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Yes", "No", "May be"
-

3. Types of groups that influenced expression the most:

- Description: Identifies how different types of groups helps in expressing ones.
- Data Type: Categorical (Multiple Selection)
- Format: Options include "Creative clubs", "Activism", "Sport teams", "Professional societies"

4. Confidence level comparison:

- Description: Identifies how different individuals feel confident about expressing themselves.
- Data Type: Categorical (Multiple Selection)
- Format: Options include "Yes", "No", "May be"

2.1.4 Broader Perspectives:

1. Societal movements:

- Description: Identifies how societal movement like mental health awareness, racial justice and LGBTQ + rights affect or not in expressing.
- Data Type: Categorical (Multiple Selection)
- Format: Options include "They greatly influence me", "They somewhat influence me", "They do not influence me"

2. Freedom of self-expression in Gen Z students:

- Description: Identifying whether gen z students have more freedom to express themselves in comparison to previous generations.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Yes", "No", "May be"

3. Older generation view on present generation:

- Description: Exploring older generation view on today's generation by college students.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Positively", "Negatively", "Mixed"

2.1.5 Personal Reflection:

1. Meaning of self-expression to a college student:

- Description: Identifies the meaning of self-expression according to college students.
- Data Type: Categorical (Multiple Selection)
- Format: Options include "being true to my identity", "Standing out among peers", "Adapting to trends", "Making a difference in society"

2. Evolution of self-expression in next 5 years:

- Description: Captures the perspective of evolution of self-expression among college students in next 5 years.
- Data Type: Categorical
- Format: Options include "Becoming more authentic", "Shaped further by digital trends", "More focused on activism"

2.2 Technical description

2.2.1 Data collection methodology

- **Survey Platform:**
The data was collected using Google Forms, a user-friendly online platform for creating structured questionnaires with a variety of response formats (e.g., multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended).
- **Question Design:**
 - The survey contained 15 questions designed to capture demographic information, personal expression, campus and peer influences, broader perspectives and personal reflection.
 - Responses were designed to generate both categorical data (e.g., gender, personal expressions) and ordinal data (e.g., Likert-scale questions measuring confidence).
- **Target Audience:**
 - The survey targeted college students and youths, aiming to uncover patterns of Self-Expression and to understand its awareness among Generation Z.

2.2.2 Data Processing Tools

- Platform for Analysis:

The data collected via Google Forms was exported to **Microsoft Excel** for organization, cleaning, and analysis.

- Data Cleaning and Preparation:

69 rows of data were reviewed to identify and remove incomplete or invalid responses.

- Data was organized into structured tables, where each row represents a respondent, and each column represents a survey question

2.2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

Statistical Tools Used: Various functionalities in Microsoft Excel were leveraged, including:

1. **Formulas:** For aggregation and computation, such as calculating response frequencies, percentages, and averages.
 - **COUNTIF:** The COUNTIF function in Excel is used to count the number of cells that meet a specific condition within a range. It is particularly useful for data analysis when you need to count occurrences of a particular value or condition.
SYNTAX: COUNTIF(range, criteria)

=COUNTIFS(F2:F69,"No")

The number of respondents to 'No' are 61.

=COUNTIFS(F2:F69,"Yes")

The number of respondents to 'Yes' are 6.

2. **Conditional Formatting:** Conditional formatting is a feature in Excel that allows you to apply specific formatting to cells that meet certain criteria. This helps to highlight important information, identify trends, and make data analysis more intuitive.

3. Charts& graphs:

i. Bar Chart:

- **Description:** A bar chart displays data using rectangular bars with lengths proportional to the values they represent. It is useful for comparing different categories or groups.
- **Example:** Comparing the number of respondents that shows how much does self-expression is important to them.

ii. Clustered Bar Chart:

- **Description:** A clustered bar chart groups multiple bars together to show comparisons between different categories and subcategories. It is useful for comparing multiple variables within each category.
- **Example:** Comparing that does respondents use organizations or events to express themselves and if yes then displaying different types of groups which help to influence.

iii. Pie Chart:

- **Description:** A pie chart displays data as slices of a circle, with each slice representing a proportion of the whole. It is useful for showing the relative proportions of different categories.
- **Example:** Showing the distribution of respondents' confidence level increment from high school to college.

2.2.4 Pivot Table and Pivot Chart in Data Analysis

Pivot Table: A pivot table is a powerful tool in Excel that allows you to summarize, analyse, and explore large datasets. It enables you to reorganize and group data dynamically, making it easier to identify patterns and trends. By dragging and dropping fields into different areas (Rows, Columns, Values, and Filters), you can create customized views of your data. Pivot tables are particularly useful for performing calculations, such as sums, averages, and counts, and for generating quick insights from complex datasets.

Pivot Chart: A pivot chart is a graphical representation of the data in a pivot table. It provides a visual way to analyse and present data, making it easier to understand and communicate insights. Pivot charts are dynamic and update automatically when the underlying pivot table data changes. They support various chart types, including bar charts, line charts, pie charts, and more. Pivot charts are useful for visualizing trends, comparisons, and distributions, and they enhance the overall data analysis experience by providing an intuitive and interactive way to explore data.

2.4 Flowchart

The workflow diagram presented in this report illustrates the step-by-step process followed in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of survey data. It provides a visual representation of the sequence of tasks, tools, and methods used from the initial survey creation to the final reporting of findings.

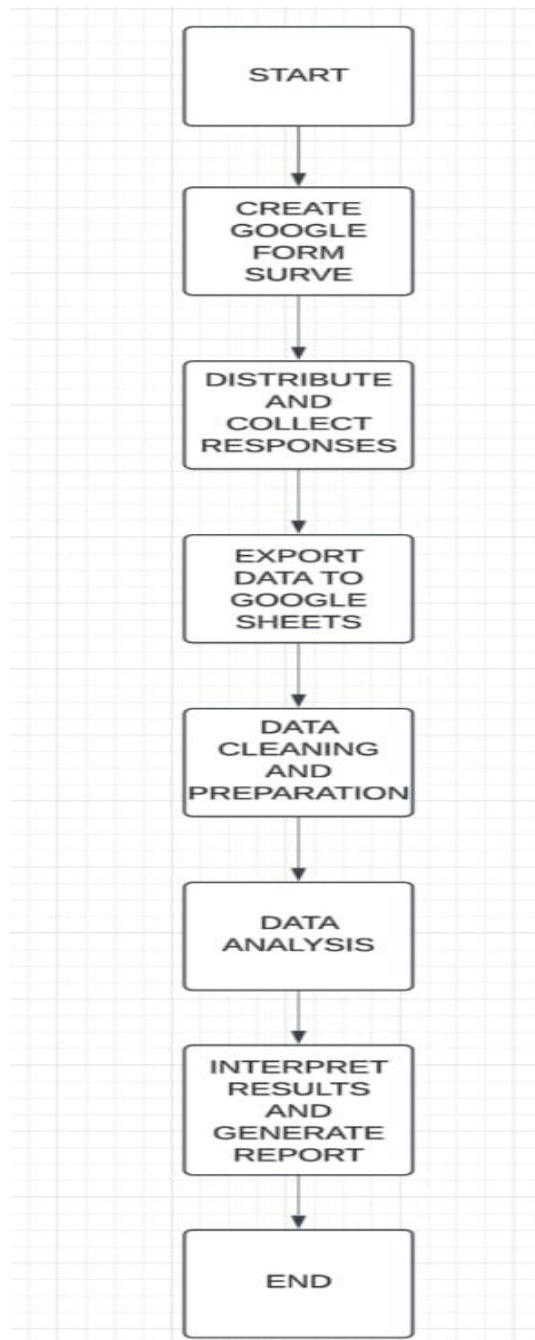


FIGURE 2.1: WORKFLOW DIAGRAM

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Gender and demographics

1. Gender ratio:

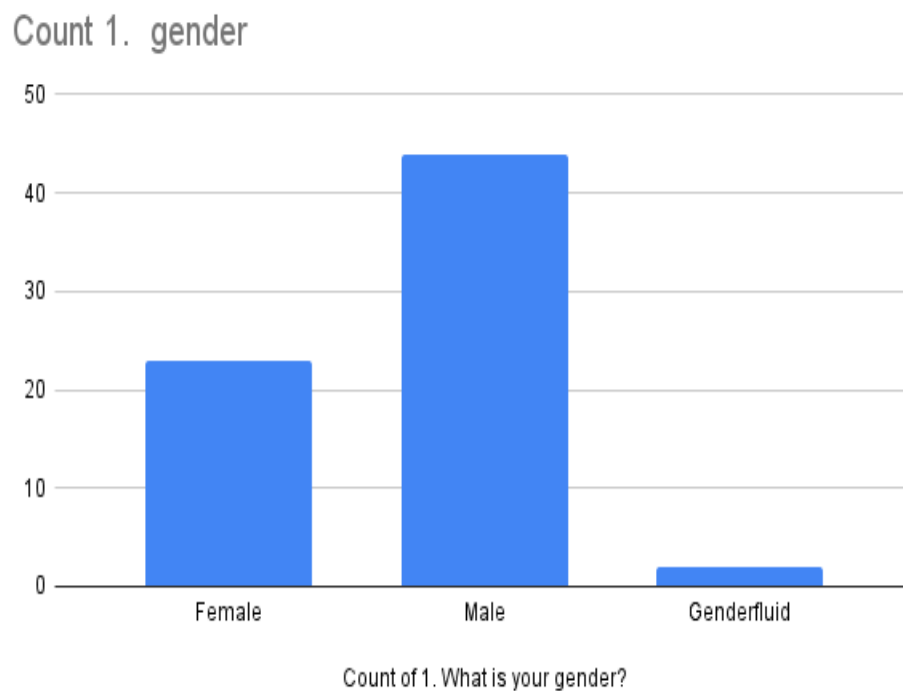


FIGURE 3.1 : BAR CHART – GENDER RATIO

- Male respondents:44
- Female respondents:23
- Gender distribution is fairly balanced with more males

2. Age ratio:

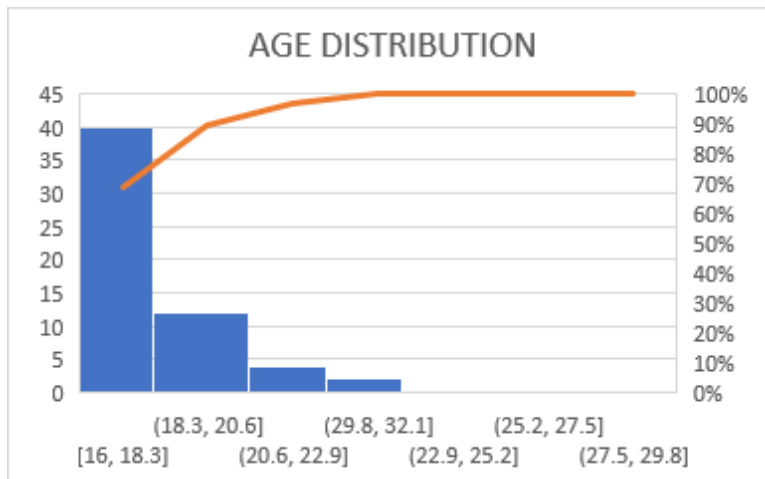


FIGURE 3.2: BAR GRAPH- AGE DISTRIBUTION

- Most of the respondents are between the age 18-22.

- A few members are from the age group of 15-17.

- A very few members are between the age 23-30.

3.2 PERSONAL EXPRESSION

3.2.1 Exploring primary expression of an individual in college.

This section analyses the primary expression of individuals in college. A clustered bar chart is used for the purpose. This chart is used when the category text is long.

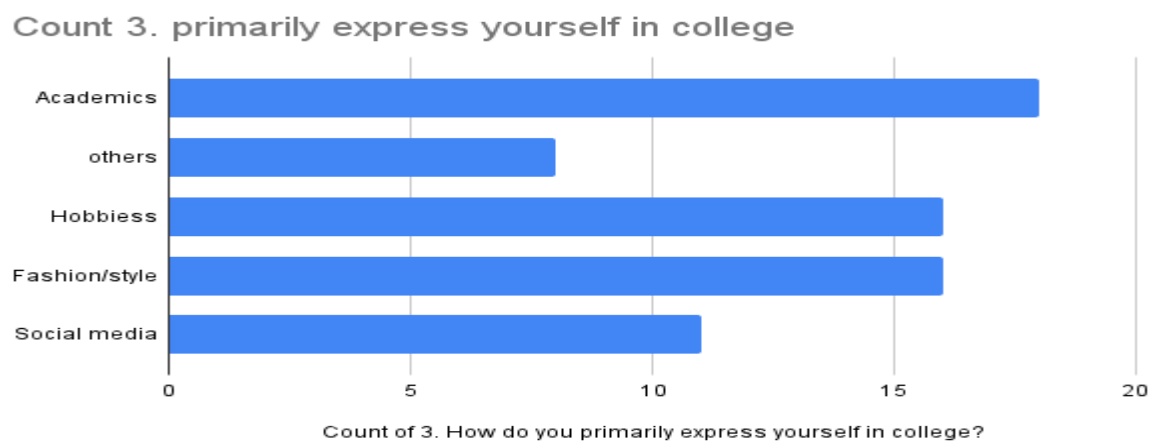


FIGURE 3.3: CLUSTURED GRAPH COMPARING COUNTS OF PRIMARYWAY OF EXPRESSION

The clustered bar chart represents the respondents' primary expression with different ways. The chart includes five categories: "Social media", "Hobbies", "Fashion/style", "Academics", "others". Each bar's length corresponds to the number of respondents in each category.

Primarily express yourself in college?	Count
Social media	11
Hobbies	16
Fashion/style	16
Academics	18
Others	8
Grand Total	69

TABLE 3.1: COUNT OF PRIMARILY EXPRESSION OF SELF IN COLLEGE

- **Social media:** This category has the medium-length bar, indicating that 11 respondents are not much expressing through social media.
- **Hobbies:** This category has the second longest bar, showing that 16 respondents have a moderate level of familiarity with hobbies.
- **Fashion/style:** This category has a second longest length bar, representing 16 respondents have a moderate level of familiarity with fashion/style.
- **Academics:** This category has the longest length bar, representing 18 respondents express themselves through academics.
- **Others:** this category has the shortest length bar, representing 8 respondents aren't sure about their way of expressing.

3.2.2 Exploring whether self expression has changed or not since college starting.

In this section, we have examined whether the youths way of expressing themselves has changed or not after joining college .

To highlight the individuals whose way of expressing has changed, conditional formatting is used to highlight cells that contain the text “Yes”. Using Conditional Formatting one can easily spot trends and patterns in their data using bars, colours, and icons to visually highlight important values.

Using COUNTIF function one can count the number of cells within a range that meet the given condition.

SYNTAX: COUNTIF(*range, criteria*)

=COUNTIFS(F2:F69,"No")

- The number of respondents to ‘No’ are 61.

=COUNTIFS(F2:F69,"Yes")

- The number of respondents to ‘Yes’ are 6

3.2.3 Exploring what aspects of college life helps in influencing self-expression the most.

This part of the survey is helpful in understanding the different ways by which college life helps in influencing self-expression the most.

Count 3. aspects of college life influence your self-expression the most

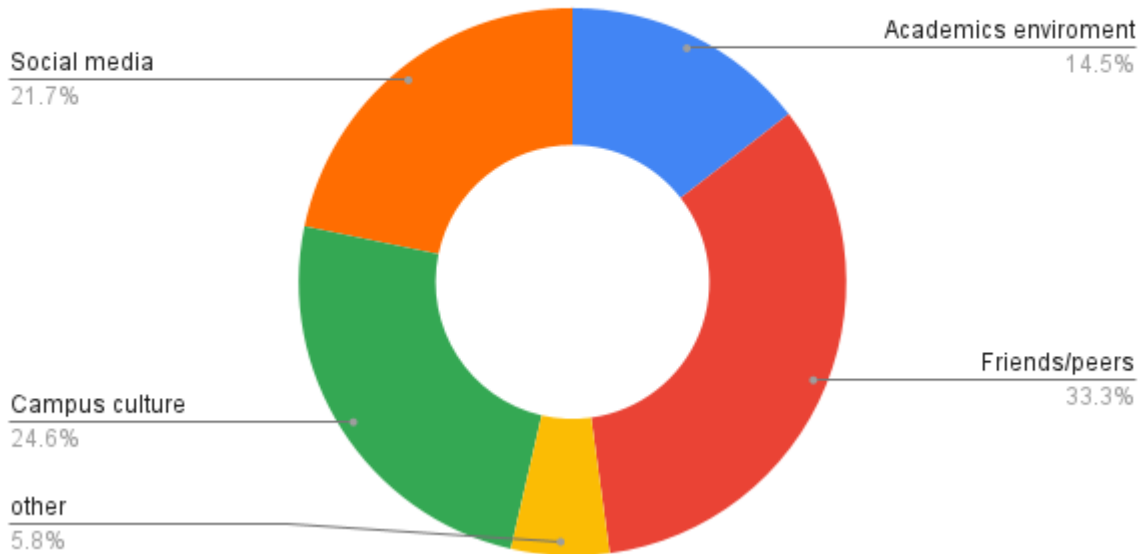


FIGURE 3.4: PIE CHART – ASPECTS OF COLLEGE LIFE

Aspects of college life that influence the most	Count	PERCENTAGE
Social media	15	21.7%
Academics environment	10	14.5%
Campus culture	17	24.6%
Friends/peers	23	33.3%
Others	4	5.8%
Grand Total	69	100%

TABLE 3.2: ASPECTS OF COLLEGE LIFE THAT INFLUENCE IT THE MOST

Each slice of the pie corresponds to the percentage of respondents using different aspects.

- The largest segment (33.3%) of respondents use friends/peers as their primary way of expressing themselves.
- A significant portion (24.6%) of respondents use both campus culture and social media, indicating a higher level of personal expression.

- Additionally, (14.5%) of respondents use academic environment, latest in gen Z showing a comprehensive approach to self-expression.

3.3 CAMPUS AND PEER INFLUENCE

3.3.1 Exploring how campus and peers helps in expressing oneself and discovering its different types

In this section it is discussed about the count of frequency of how campus and peers help in changing self-expression. The analysis is categorized in 4 groups ("Somewhat", "A little", "Not at all" & "Significantly").

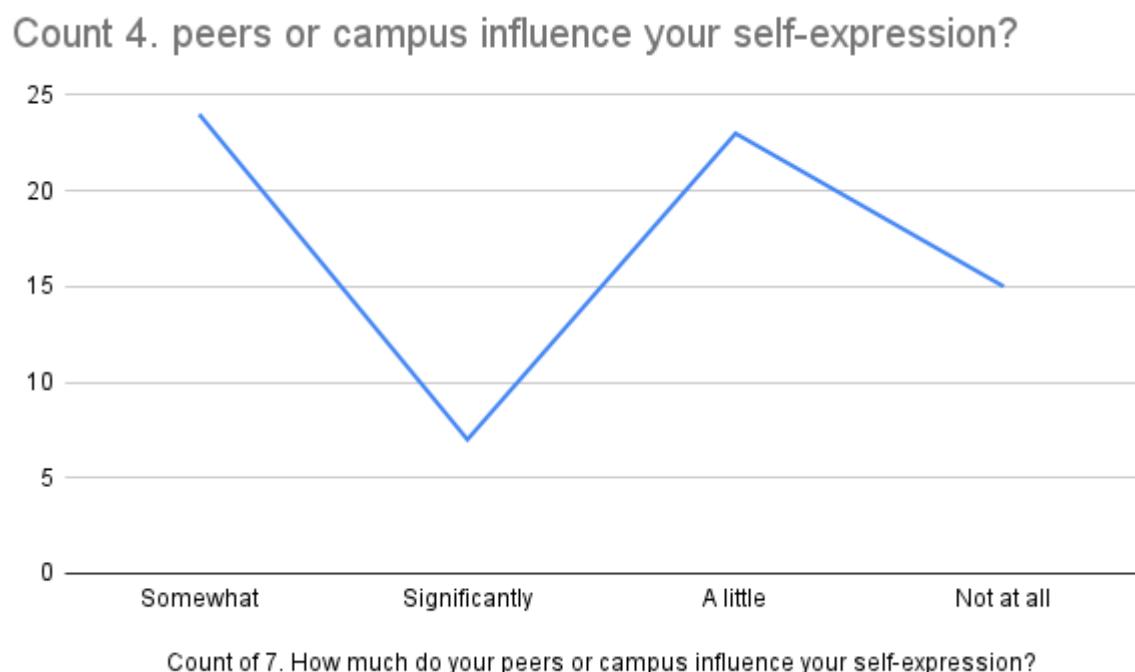


FIGURE 3.5: PIVOT CHART- CAMPUS AND PEER INFLUENCE

Campus and peer influence	Count	Percentage
Somewhat	24	34.8%
Significantly	7	10.1%
A little	23	33.3%
Not at all	15	21.7%
Total	69	100%

TABLE 3.3: TABLE SHOWING CAMPUS AND PEER INFLUENCES

- 24 respondents (about 34.8%) are somewhat influenced.
- 23 respondents (about 33.3%) are a little influenced.
- Among those who are not at all influenced are 15 respondents (21.7%)

3.4 BROADER PERSPECTIVES

3.4.1 Exploring the role of societal (e.g., mental health awareness, LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice) affect your self-expression in college.

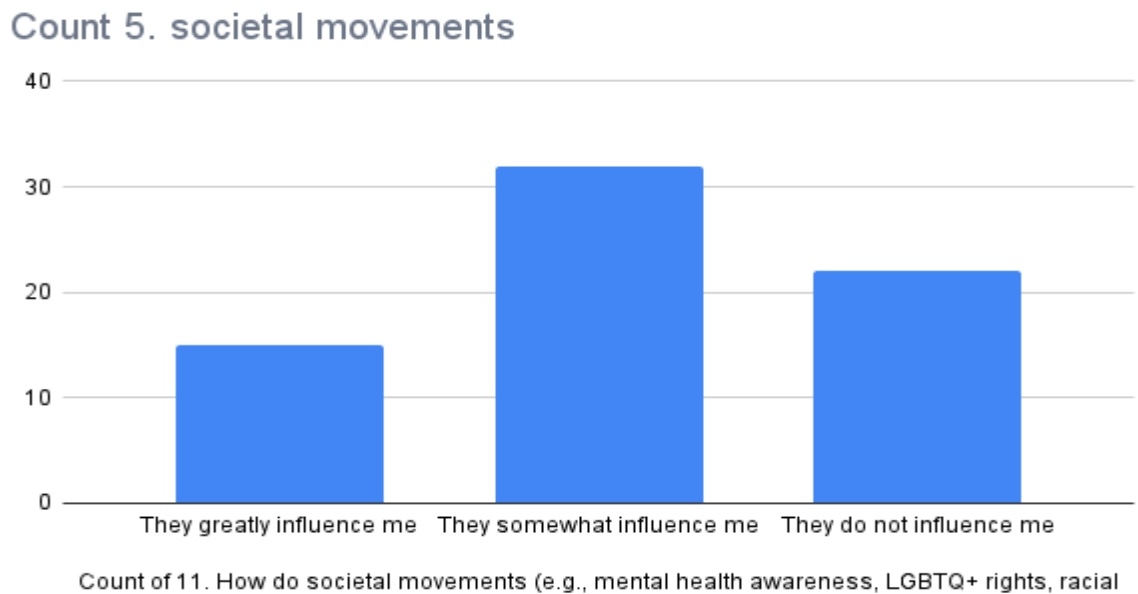


FIGURE 3.6: PIVOT CHART - TYPES OF SOCIETAL MOVEMENTS

Confidence in expressing self	percentage	Count
Yes	62.3%	43
No	20.3%	14
May be	17.4%	12

TABLE 3.4: FREQUENCY OF CONFIDENCE IN EXPRESSING

The majority of respondents (62.3%) feel more confident expressing their identity in college compared to high school. This suggests that the college environment provides greater opportunities for personal growth, exploration, and self-discovery.

This increased confidence can be attributed to several factors, including:

- **Diverse and Inclusive Campus Culture:** College campuses often foster a more diverse and inclusive environment, allowing students to connect with people from different backgrounds and perspectives.
- **Academic Freedom and Exploration:** College curricula offer a wider range of subjects and opportunities for critical thinking, which can empower students to develop their own ideas and opinions.
- **Reduced Peer Pressure:** College environments may offer more freedom from the intense social pressures and expectations that can be present in high school.

3.5 PERSONAL REFLECTION

3.5.1 Exploring the meaning of self-expression with the perspective of a college student.

Count 6. self-expression

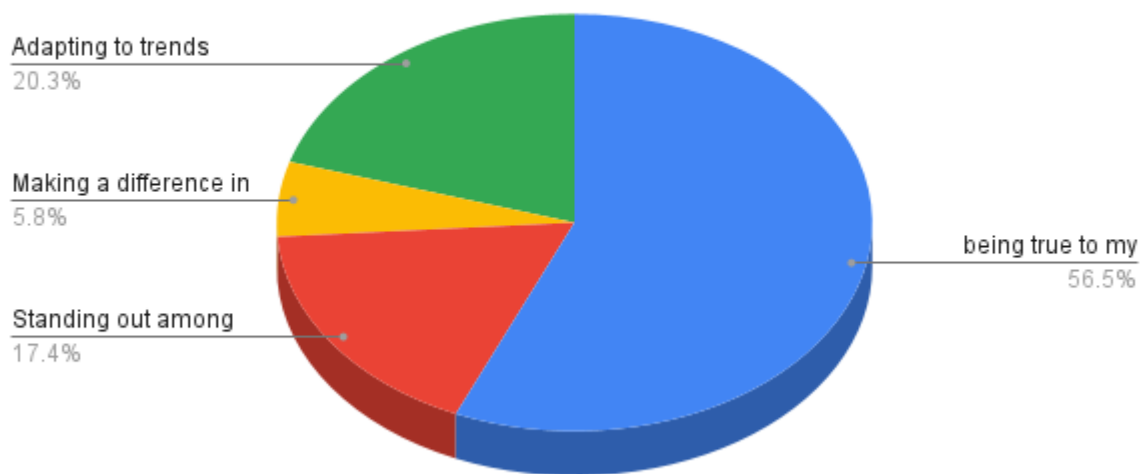


FIGURE 3.7: PIVOT CHART – REPRESENTING MEANING OF SELF-EXPRESSION ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL

Trend	Frequency	Percentage
Becoming more authentic		
More focused on activism	11	15.9%
Shaped further by digital trends	25	36.2%

TABLE 3.5: REVIEWING FUTURE ASPECTS OF SELF-EXPRESSION

The majority of respondents associate self-expression with "being true to their identity." This suggests that authenticity and individuality are central values for Gen Z college students. They prioritize expressing their true selves, rather than conforming to societal expectations or trends.

This finding highlights the importance of fostering a campus environment that encourages self-discovery and personal growth. By providing opportunities for students to explore their interests, passions, and values, institutions can help them develop a strong sense of self.

- **Authenticity:** A significant portion of respondents anticipate a greater emphasis on authentic self-expression in the coming years. This suggests a desire for genuine connection and meaningful expression.
- **Digital Influence:** Many believe that digital trends will continue to shape self-expression. This indicates the ongoing impact of social media and online platforms on how Gen Z communicates and expresses themselves.
- **Social Activism:** A notable number of respondents foresee increased focus on social activism. This suggests a growing awareness of social issues and a desire to use one's voice to create positive change.

CHAPTER 4

INFERENCES & KEY INSIGHTS

4.1 Key insights of Gender and demographics

1. Gender Ratio:

- The gender distribution among respondents is more towards male balanced, with 44 male respondents and 23 female respondents. This indicates a diverse representation of genders in the survey.

2. Age Ratio:

- The majority of respondents are between the ages of 18-22, suggesting that the survey primarily reached a youth adults demographic.
- A smaller group of respondents falls within the age range of 15-17, indicating some representation of youngsters.
- A very few respondents are between the ages of 21-30, showing limited participation from this age group.

4.2 Key insights of Personal Expression

Based on the data you provided, the most popular way that students express themselves in college is through academics (26.1 %). This is followed by hobbies (23.2%) and fashion (23.2%) equally.

1. **Hobbies:** The majority of respondents (18 out of 69) suggest hobbies are a primary mode of self-expression for Gen Z college students. This indicates a shift from traditional forms of self-expression, such as academics or social media, towards more personal and creative outlets.
2. **Academics:** A significant portion (16 out of 69) prefer academics, while important, may not be the primary channel for self-expression for many students.
3. **Fashion/styles:** A smaller group (16 out of 69) find fashion and lifestyle to be their primary mode of expression.
4. **Social media:** A lesser group (11 out of 69) prefer to express themselves by social media even though social media is popular yet considered less dominant.
5. **Others:** A least group (8 out of 69) find some other ways to express themselves.

4.3 Key insights of Campus and Peer Influence

The largest segment (34.8%) are significantly influenced by campus and peers.

1. **Not at all:** A significant portion (17 out of 69) of respondents do not find themselves to be influenced by campus or peers.
2. **A little:** A large proportion (23 out of 69) of respondents feel a little influenced by their peers and campus in expressing themselves.
3. **Significantly:** A least count (7 out of 69) of respondents found it significant .
4. **Somewhat:** A good portion (24 out of 69) of respondents feel a bit confident in expressing themselves by getting influenced by campus and peers.

4.4 Key insights of Broader Perspectives

The data suggests that societal movements, such as those related to mental health, LGBTQ+ rights, and racial justice, have a significant impact on the self-expression of Gen Z college students.

- 1. They greatly influence me:** A notable portion of respondents (21.7%) indicate that these movements "greatly influence" their self-expression. This suggests that these movements are shaping their values, beliefs, and how they engage with the world.
- 2. They somewhat influence me:** Another significant portion (46.4%) indicates that these movements "somewhat influence" their self-expression. This suggests a more nuanced relationship, where these movements may influence certain aspects of their identity and behaviour, but not necessarily their core values or beliefs.
- 3. They do not influence me:** An intermediate portion (31.6%) do not find societal movements impacting them.

This insight highlights the role of societal movements in shaping the identities and values of young people. It also suggests that colleges and universities should create spaces where students can engage in critical discussions about social issues and express their views freely..

4.5 Key insights of Personal Expression

The data collected with the above survey states that the majority of the respondents(56.5%) are being true to their identity as the actual meaning of self-expression.

1. **Being true to my identity:** A large number of respondents (39 out of 69) express their self expression as being true to their identity.
2. **Adapting to trends:** A significant number of respondents (14 out of 69) express themselves more with the growing trends in today's generation.
3. **Standing out among peers:** A small number of respondents (12 out of 69) by standing out among peers means truly the expression to them.
4. **Making a difference in society:** A least number of respondents(8 out of 69) find themselves as standing up in society to make difference as the true meaning of self expression.

CONCLUSION

This report analyzes the results of a survey conducted to understand the self-expression patterns of Gen Z college students. The survey delved into various aspects of self-expression, including its importance, influences, and evolution. Key findings reveal that self-expression is highly valued by Gen Z students, and it is significantly shaped by their peers, campus culture, and societal movements. The key findings of the survey are listed below:

1. Importance of Self-Expression:

- A significant majority of respondents consider self-expression to be very important.
- Students associate self-expression with being true to their identity, standing out, and making a difference.

2. Influences on Self-Expression:

- **Peer Influence:** Peers play a crucial role in shaping self-expression, particularly in terms of fashion, hobbies, and social media trends.
- **Campus Culture:** Campus culture, including clubs, organizations, and academic environments, also significantly influences self-expression.
- **Societal Movements:** Societal movements like mental health awareness, LGBTQ+ rights, and racial justice have a notable impact on students' self-expression.

3. Evolution of Self-Expression:

- Many students have become more open in their self-expression since starting college.
- Gen Z students perceive themselves as having more freedom of expression compared to previous generations.
- Older generations generally have a positive view of Gen Z's self-expression.

Future Recommendations

Based on the survey findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1. Foster Inclusive Campus Environments:**
 - Create inclusive spaces that encourage diversity, individuality, and open expression.
 - Organize events and workshops that promote self-awareness, empathy, and respect for different perspectives.
- 2. Support Student Organizations and Initiatives:**
 - Provide resources and support for student-led initiatives that promote self-expression, such as clubs, art groups, and social justice organizations.
- 3. Educate on Digital Citizenship:**
 - Offer workshops and resources to help students navigate social media responsibly and ethically.
 - Promote digital literacy and critical thinking skills to encourage thoughtful online expression.
- 4. Promote Mental Health Awareness:**
 - Provide mental health resources and support services to help students cope with stress and anxiety.
 - Encourage open conversations about mental health and self-care.

By implementing these recommendations, colleges and universities can create environments that empower students to express themselves authentically and contribute positively to society.

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