

COMPARISON OF THE ATTITUDE OF GEN-Z AND MILLENNIALS TOWARDS HEALTHY

STANDARDS IN A FRIENDSHIP

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**Abstract**

Friendships are characterised as "A voluntary relationship between two or more people that is relatively long-lasting and in which those involved tend to be concerned with meeting the needs and interests of the others as well as their own desires," per the American Psychiatric Association's Dictionary of Psychology. Gen-Z and Millennials are the youngest participant generations of the current world. Two groups of 10 individuals each are assessed on their attitudes towards standards in a friendship using a questionnaire designed by the experimenter. It was concluded that overall, Gen-Z had a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship in comparison with Millennials.

Keywords: Friendships, Gen-Z, Millennials, Standards in a friendship, questionnaire

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Friendships are characterised as "A voluntary relationship between two or more people that is relatively long-lasting and in which those involved tend to be concerned with meeting the needs and interests of the others as well as their own desires," per the American Psychiatric Association's Dictionary of Psychology. Friendships frequently grow out of shared experiences where the parties involved discover that being together is mutually beneficial. "Friendship is vital to both our physical and mental health. Strong social ties, including romantic relationships, have been shown to reduce stress, increase feelings of fulfilment and life satisfaction, and even produce better physical health outcomes.

The complex field of friendship psychology has been extensively studied by psychologists. It comprises a number of psychological processes that have an impact on the development, upkeep, and breakdown of interpersonal relationships. It is a crucial aspect of human social interactions. For wellbeing at every stage of life, strong friendships may be crucial. Children's development and capacity to create future relationships depend on their ability to make friends. Moreover, play, which develops social and communication skills, may serve as the foundation of early friendships. Numerous studies imply that maintaining positive relationships with others may promote good health and promote healthy ageing. Research has looked into how social networks may affect things like mortality, heart attack survival, depression, and anxiety. Our social networks, or the connections we have with others, can have an impact on how we feel. In fact, some research suggests that positive emotions, like happiness, can spread quickly within a network. Joining a social group, such as a book club or sports team, can have positive effects on one's health. This is because our social identity, which in turn may have an impact on our health, may depend on our sense of community and friendship. Studies, for instance, link social

connectedness to depression. Being a part of a low-status or stigmatised group can be bad for your health, but it can also work to your advantage by, for instance, offering you social support.

The development and maintenance of friendships involve a number of psychological processes. Several examples are given below.

Social attraction is the process by which people are drawn to one another because they have similar experiences, beliefs, opinions, and interests. According to research, physical attractiveness, similarity, and proximity can all affect social attraction.

- Social cognition refers to the mental processes involved in observing, interpreting, and remembering information about others and ourselves. Social cognition affects how we view other people, evaluate their actions, and remember our interactions.
- Emotional Attachment Emotional attachment is the term used to describe the feelings of kinship and rapport that develop over time between friends. Emotional attachment is influenced by mutual respect, trust, and similar circumstances. Friends frequently lend each other emotional and physical support when they are in need.
- Communication – Communication is an essential component of companionship, and it entails sharing one's ideas, emotions, and experiences. Effective communication helps to establish confidence, improve emotional ties, and resolve conflicts. According to the study Miething et al. BMC Psychology (2016), psychological wellbeing relates to perceived friendship quality, particularly in late adolescence. Although the correlation weakens when individuals enter young adulthood, the findings suggest that these dimensions should not be thought of as independent of each other. The mitigated association between network quality and well-being in young adulthood suggests that the importance of friendships for well-being decreases during the transition from late adolescence to young adulthood. Interventions that tackle reduced well-being and the increase of psychological symptoms would

therefore seem more effective in adolescence than in adulthood.

The way we connect with our friends may change as we get older, or as technology opens up new ways of connecting. Teenagers today can harness social media to communicate with friends in a way previous generations could not. They may have different types of friendship, with online and offline groups of friends – that may or may not overlap. Making friends perhaps gets harder as you get older. People begin to expect others will like them less than they actually will; some psychologists have studied how talking to strangers can be much more successful and more beneficial than people think.

The following are some of the basic fundamentals to a healthy friendship:.

- Be an Excellent Listener – Being able to attend and provide emotional support is one of the essential parts. When your peers are going through a difficult period, carefully listen to them and demonstrate empathy.
- Communicate Openly and Honestly – Open and honest dialogue is essential for developing and keeping a solid bond. Allow yourself to respectfully express your emotions and views, and urge your peers to do the same.
- Spend Quality Time – Spending valuable time with peers and regularly participating in pleasant activities can help improve your relationships and create positive memories.
- Be Reliable – Make an effort to show your peers how much you respect and value their relationship. Sending a considerate note or offering to assist with a job can go a long way toward improving your relationships.
- Be Dependable – Reliability and keeping promises is essential for establishing confidence and strengthening alliances. Make a point of showing up when you say you will and being available to your pals when they need you.
- Respect Limits – Respecting your peers' boundaries while communicating your own is

critical. Understanding and honouring each other's boundaries and tastes can help to keep friendships healthy and polite.

Gen-Z and Millennials are the youngest participant generations of the current world. Whilst both the generations are known for being the most forward in aspects, when it comes to maintaining interpersonal relationships, I believe they differ slightly. I hypothesise that While both generations might have a favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship, Gen-Z will show a more favourable attitude towards it.

'Tooby and Cosmides' theory of the evolution of friendship suggests that each person has a limited amount of time, energy, and effort and that deciding to befriend one person is simultaneously a decision not to befriend another. This theory differs from the standard theory of reciprocal altruism, which bestows benefits in the expectation that they will be returned later. Several other factors should determine the choice of friends, such as several slots already filled, psychological mechanisms, and positive externalities. The most critical details in this text are the benefits of selecting friends who are good at reading your mind and anticipating needs, selecting friends who consider you irreplaceable, and selecting friends who want the same things you want.

Reading your mind and understanding your desires, beliefs, and values can help you in ways that are beneficial to you, as well as less costly to him or her. Selecting friends who value the same things you do will positively affect your well-being, as they will change their local environments to suit their desires and your environment as you might like. This will result in a greater flow of benefits. While both generations might come close to their expectations from friends, Gen-Z might have the upper hand with their heightened awareness- both of the world

and themselves as well as younger age.

Individuals should recognise other people, recall their previous encounters, convey their values, wants, and aspirations to others, and illustrate the costs and advantages of a wide range of exchanges. Researchers have shown that individuals have philanderer capabilities by demonstrating a specific capacity for reasoning when logic puzzles are presented in contractual agreements. Individuals frequently exercise extra caution in looking for those who have received aid without covering the anticipated fees. Thus, friendships are much more complex than it appears. Finally, friendship is a complicated and multifaceted occurrence influenced by various psychological variables such as personality characteristics, social skills, attachment styles, and cognitive processes such as sensitivity and perspective-taking. According to research, it is essential for individual well-being, societal support, and personal development. Understanding friendship psychology can assist us in cultivating and maintaining healthy, satisfying interactions with others. Social support can take many forms, such as giving guidance, solace, or simply listening.

### **METHOD:**

#### **Sample of the study:**

- Group A: 10 people belonging to Gen-Z (born between 1997-2013) of Indian origin living in Dubai, UAE.
- Group B: 10 people belonging to the 'Millennial' generation (born between 1982-1996) of Indian origin living in Dubai, UAE.

#### **Procedure followed:**

Two groups of 10 individuals each are assessed on their attitudes towards standards in a friendship using a questionnaire designed by the experimenter. The questionnaire contains 10

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items rated on 5 point Likert scale ranging from Strongly agree to Strongly disagree. The subject is asked to read the questions carefully and answer according to their preferences. Instructions are given to the subject to select any of the five options against each statement, where A is 'Strongly Agree', B is 'Partially Agree', C is Undecided, D is 'Partially Disagree' and E is 'Strongly Disagree'. The responses are tabulated and mean is calculated for each group and comparative analyses are done to make inferences and draw conclusions. The mean data is represented in a bar graph for each group.

Serial number of the statements	5-point scale and their corresponding scores
Positive Statements: 1,3,5,7,9	1/2/3/4/5
Negative Statements: 2,4,6,8,10	5/4/3/2/1

The maximum score for each statement is 5. The maximum total score of all the statements is 50. There are 10 individuals in each group, so the mean of maximum possible total score is 5 ( $50/10=5$ ). The minimum score for each statement is 1. The minimum total score of all the statements is 10 and the mean of the total possible minimum score is 1. Mean score for each statement =  $(\text{Mean of maximum possible score} + \text{Mean of minimum possible score}) / 2$

Therefore, the mean score for each statement is  $(5+1)/2=3$ . This concludes that if an individual scores above the mean value of 3, it indicates a favourable *attitude* towards healthy standards in a friendship. If an individual scores below the mean value of 3, it indicates an unfavourable



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## RESULTS:

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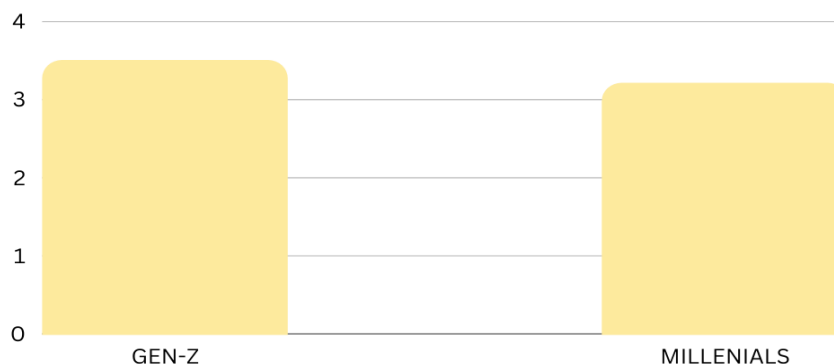
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## RAW DATA OF GROUP TWO (MILLENNIALS, 1982-1996):

QUESTIONS	A good friend is someone who is available to you at all times.	A good friend doesn't have to be an active listener.	A healthy friendship consists of constant communication of wants and needs.	A healthy friendship should never have to have arguments	A healthy friendship will entail no feelings of jealousy.	A healthy friendship is not something you have to put in too much effort into maintaining.	A good friend is someone who respects all your boundaries at all costs.	A good friend should never stop keeping in touch with you and constantly update you about their lives.	A good friend is someone who will cater to <i>all</i> your needs.	A good friend is someone you need "social battery" for.
P1.	5	1	4	2	4	2	4	1	4	2
P2.	2	5	2	4	5	1	4	4	1	5
P3.	4	1	4	2	4	2	5	1	4	2
P4.	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	2
P5.	5	1	4	5	4	1	1	5	1	1
P6.	3	1	1	5	5	1	5	4	2	2
P7.	5	1	4	5	5	1	5	4	5	2
P8.	4	5	5	2	5	2	5	1	4	1
P9.	4	5	4	5	2	5	5	4	2	3
P10.	5	4	2	5	2	4	4	1	1	2
MEAN	4.1	2.5	3.4	3.9	4	2.3	4.2	2.9	2.6	2.2
TOTAL GROUP MEAN	3.21									

## OVERALL MEAN:

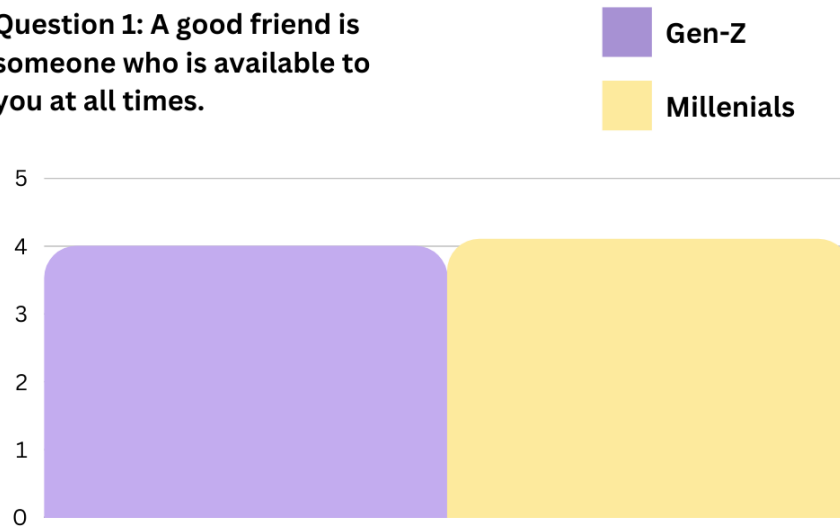


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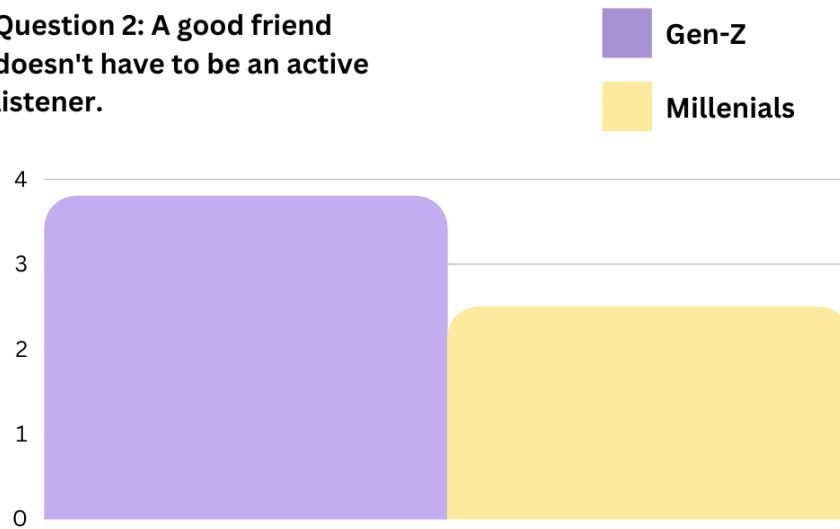
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The total group mean of the Millennials was **3.21**, while the total group mean for the Gen-Z was **3.5**.

**Question 1: A good friend is someone who is available to you at all times.**



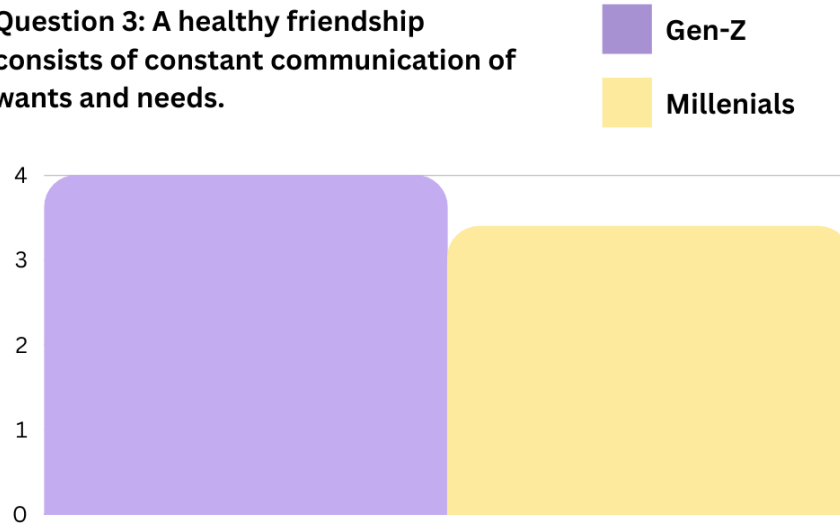
**Question 2: A good friend doesn't have to be an active listener.**



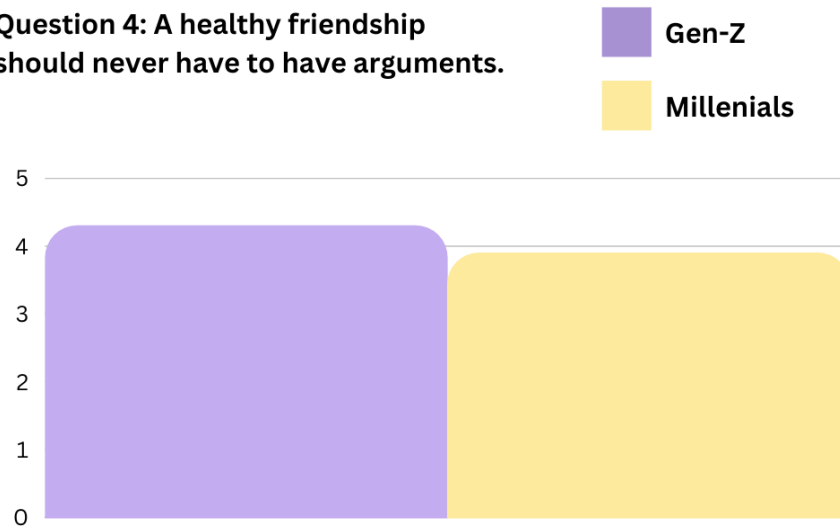
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**Question 3: A healthy friendship consists of constant communication of wants and needs.**

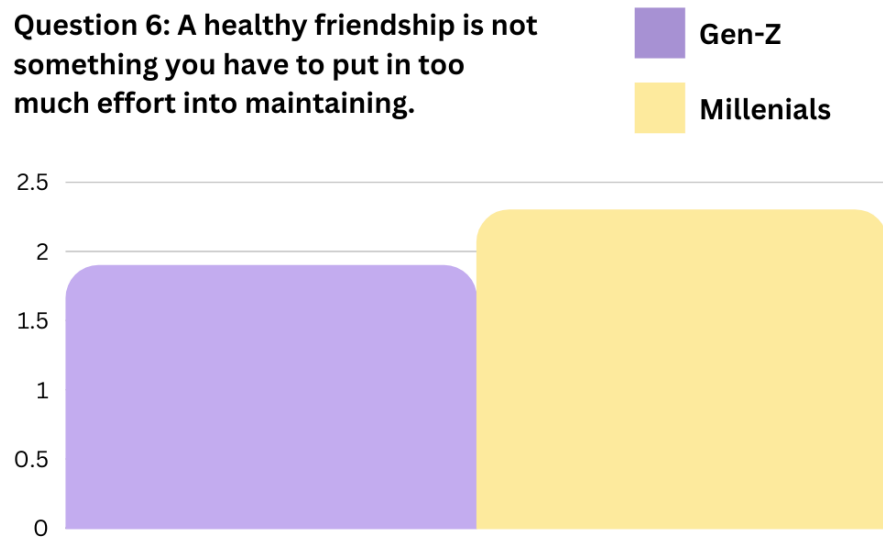
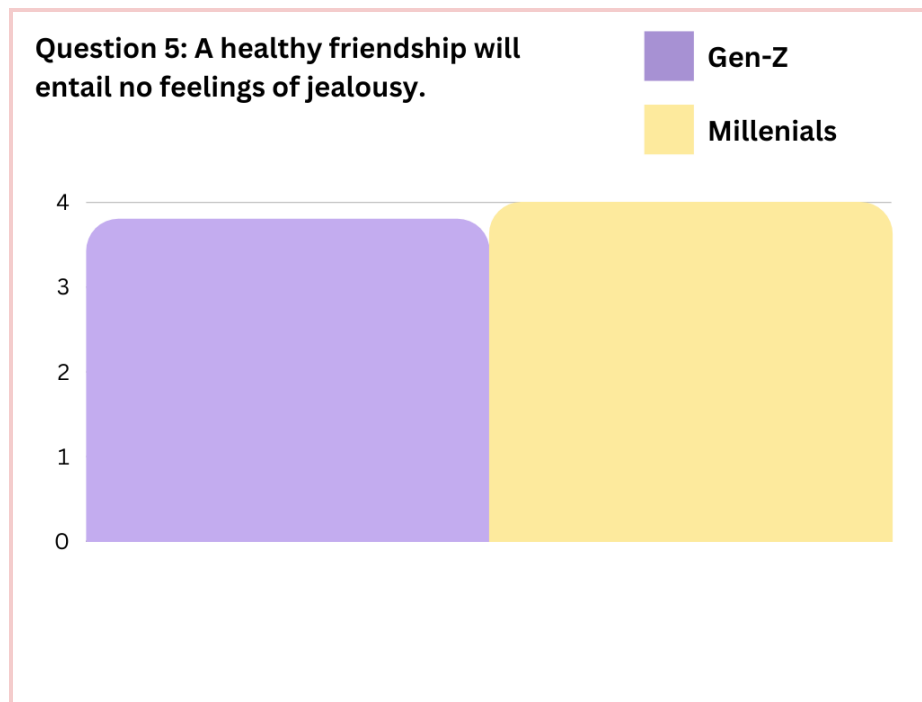


**Question 4: A healthy friendship should never have to have arguments.**



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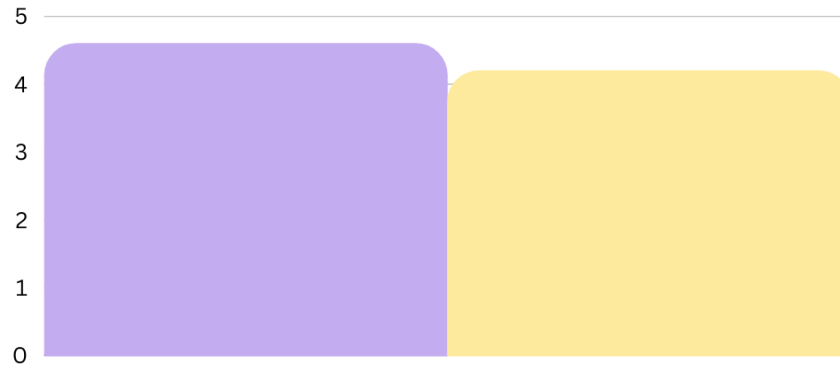


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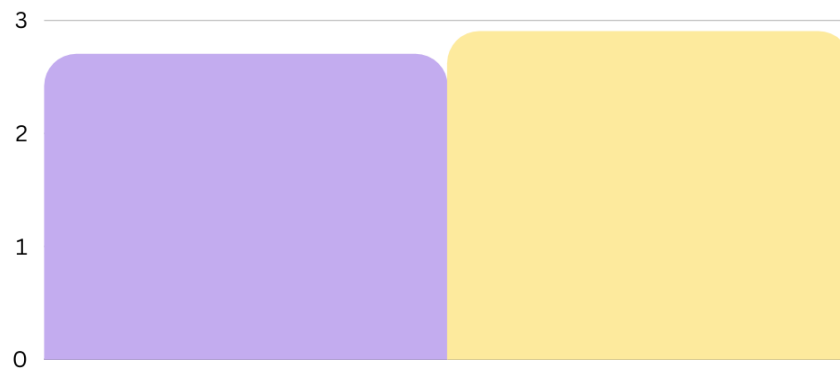
**Question 7: A good friend is someone who respects all your boundaries at all costs.**

Gen-Z  
Millenials



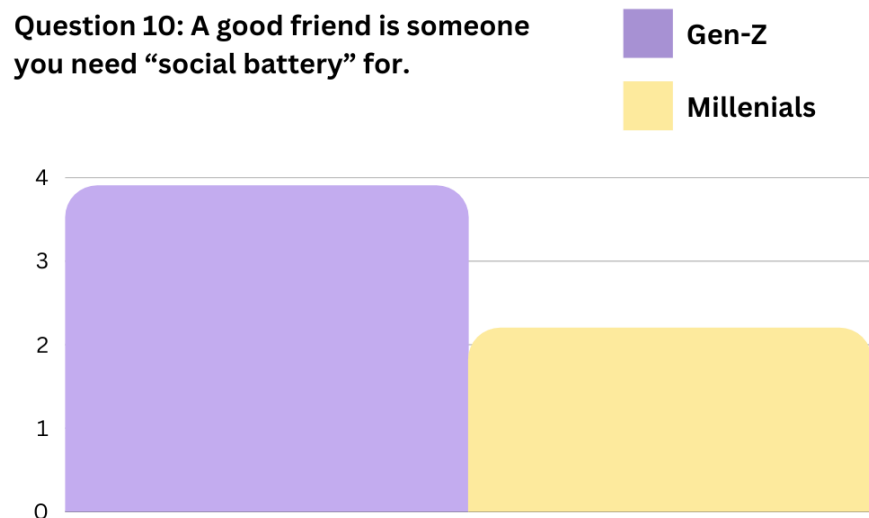
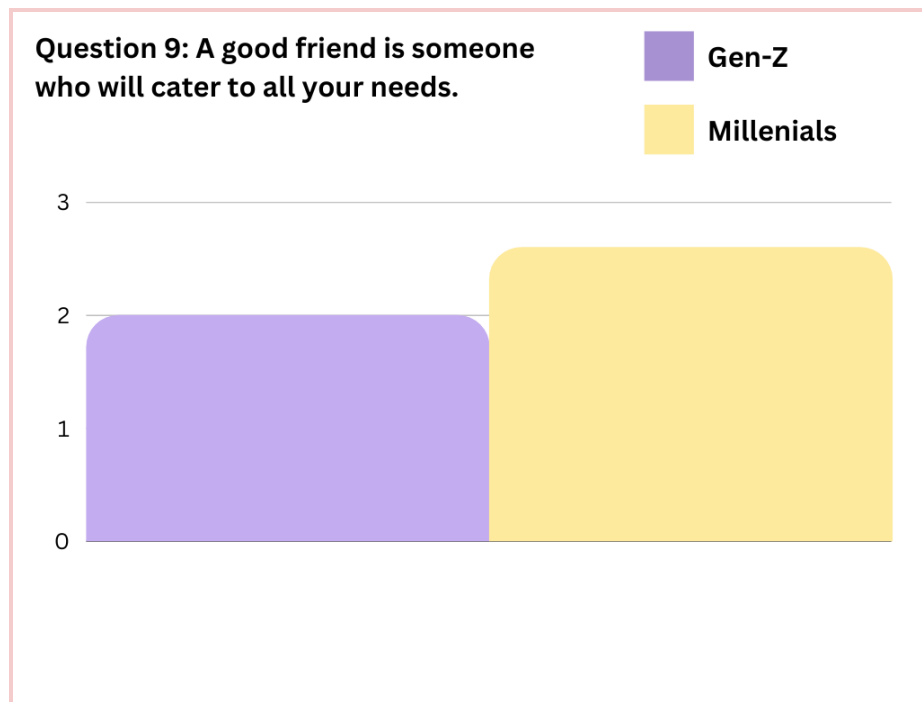
**Question 8: A good friend should never stop keeping in touch with you and constantly update you about their lives.**

Gen-Z  
Millenials



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### **DISCUSSION:**

The total mean score of Gen-Z is 3.5 which is above the mean value of 3 which indicates an overall favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship. The group has scored the highest with a mean score of 4.3 in statement no. 4 which states that ,”A healthy friendship should never have to have arguments”. This can be interpreted as a healthy outlook on friendships as different opinions can always lead to arguments. This group has scored the lowest in statement no. 6 with a mean score of 1.9 which states that,”A healthy friendship is not something you have to put in too much effort into maintaining.”. This indicates that Gen-Z believes the key to making a friendship is putting in effort.

The total mean score of Millennials is 3.21 which is above the mean value of 3 which indicates an overall favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship. The group scored the highest with a mean score of 4.2 in statement no. 7 which states that ,”A good friend is someone who respects all your boundaries at all costs.”. This can be interpreted as a healthy standard of friendship set by the generation and indicates an overall positive attitude towards healthy friendship standards. This group has scored the lowest in statement no. 10 with a mean score of 2.2 which states that,”A good friend is someone you need “social battery” for”. This indicates that Millennials too, showcase a favourable attitude towards healthy standards of friendship.

The total group mean of the Millennials was 3.21, while the total group mean for the Gen-Z was 3.5. This shows that even though both generations have an overall positive attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship, Gen-Z shows a healthier standard. This also proves the hypothesis of the study.



The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 1 was 4 while the mean of Millennials was 4.1. This indicates that the Millennials believe more strongly in the fact that a good friend is someone who is available to you at all times. They have a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 2 was 3.8 while the mean of Millennials was 2.5. This indicates that Gen-Z believes more strongly in the fact that a good friend doesn't have to be an active listener. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 3 was 4 while the mean of Millennials was 3.4. This indicates that Gen-Z believes more strongly in the fact that A healthy friendship consists of constant communication of wants and needs. They have a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 4 was 4.3 while the mean of the Millennials was 3.9. This indicates that Gen-Z believes more strongly in the fact that a healthy friendship should never have to have arguments. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 5 was 3.8 while the mean of the Millennials was 4. This indicates that Millennials believe more strongly in the fact that a healthy friendship will entail no feelings of jealousy. They have a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 6 was 1.9 while the mean of Millennials was 2.3. This indicates that Millennials believe more strongly in the fact that a healthy friendship is not something you have to put in too much effort into maintaining. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 7 was 4.6 while the mean of the Millennials was 4.2. This indicates that Gen-Z believes more strongly in the fact that a good friend is someone who respects your boundaries at all costs. They have a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 8 was 2.7 while the mean of Millennials was 2.9. This indicates that the Millennials believe more strongly in the fact that a good friend should never stop keeping in touch with you and constantly update you about their lives. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of Gen-Z for statement 9 was 2 while the mean of Millennials was 2.6. This indicates that Millennials believe more strongly in the fact that a good friend is someone who will cater to all your needs. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

The mean score of the Gen-Z for statement 10 was 3.9 while the mean of the Millennials was 2.2. This indicates that Gen-Z believes more strongly in the fact that a good friend is someone you need social battery for. They have a more unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. From the above analysis, it was concluded that overall, Gen-Z had a more favourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship, in comparison to Millennials. **This is in line with the hypothesis.**
2. Millennials scored lower in statements related to communication gaps in a friendship, which are probably factors causing them to form a comparatively unfavourable attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.
3. Gen-Z seems to have an overall positive attitude towards healthy standards in a friendship.

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