

A Study on the Association of Purchase Behavior and Social Media of Gen Z in Indonesia

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Abstract

Purposes: This research aims to explore the association between social media usage and purchase behavior among Generation Z in Indonesia. Specifically, it seeks to understand how social media content and influencers impact the purchasing decisions of this demographic, providing insights that can inform digital marketing strategies tailored to Gen Z.

Methodology: The study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing primary data collected through online surveys. Purposive sampling was used, targeting individuals from Generation Z with experience using e-commerce platforms and active social media accounts. Data analysis was conducted using Smart Partial Least Square (SmartPLS) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses.

Findings: The research findings support the hypotheses that social media content and influencers significantly influence the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. The study reveals that engaging and visually appealing social media content, along with influencer endorsements, plays a crucial role in shaping the purchasing decisions of this demographic.

Novelty: This research contributes to the existing literature by providing a focused analysis of the Indonesian Gen Z population, a demographic that has not been extensively studied in this context. The study also offers practical insights for businesses and policymakers aiming to enhance digital marketing strategies and e-commerce platforms for this specific audience.

Research Implications: The study suggests that businesses should prioritize creating compelling social media content and leveraging influencer marketing to effectively reach and engage Gen Z consumers in Indonesia. Additionally, it highlights the need for improved ICT infrastructure to support the growing e-commerce landscape in the country.

Keywords: Generation Z, Social Media, Purchase Behavior, Influencers, Digital Marketing, Indonesia, E-commerce

JEL Classification: D23, D83, F63, H11, O32

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Indonesia has experienced a significant surge in technological advancements and digital integration across various aspects of daily life. This rapid evolution has given rise to a generation commonly referred to as "digital natives" — individuals who have grown up in a world permeated by digital technologies. The term "digital native" encompasses those who are inherently comfortable navigating the digital landscape, effortlessly using smartphones, social media platforms, and other digital tools from an early age.

With Generation Z contributing to 27.94% of the total population in Indonesia, (Proporsi Populasi Generasi Z Dan Milenial Terbesar Di Indonesia, 2021) it is evident that this generation plays a significant role in the country's demographic landscape. 35% of the Gen Z population in Indonesia use the internet for more than 6 hours a day. (Kemkominfo and Katadata Insight Center (KIC), 2023) There are 167.0 million social media users in Indonesia in January 2023 (Kemp, 2023) underlining the pervasive influence of digital platforms across diverse segments of the population.

Young people in Japan will search the internet to find information to support purchase decisions but also say they tend to discuss their intentions with their friends on Line before buying anything. Gen Z in Japan is greatly influenced in their brand selection by video content: they learn about new brands via video-based social media (YouTube or TikTok). In Vietnam, by contrast, while genZ-ers also use the internet for shopping they reported being more likely to rely on their parents for advice when shopping for themselves (Gentina & Parry, 2021). According to Hootsuite and We Are Social, Indonesia possesses 353.8 million mobile devices connected to the internet, surpassing the total Indonesian population by 128%. (Hootsuite (We Are Social) 2023)

The research aims to comprehensively explore and understand the digital landscape as it pertains to the purchase behavior of Generation Z (Gen Z) in Indonesia. The primary purpose is to gain insights into the factors influencing Gen Z's decision-making process when making purchases in the digital realm. By mapping the digital landscape, the study intends to identify patterns, preferences, and trends that characterize the purchase behavior of Gen Z in Indonesia. Additionally, the research seeks to provide valuable implications for businesses, marketers, and policymakers to better tailor their strategies and offerings to align with the unique characteristics of this demographic.

The benefits of this research is providing a profound insight into the characteristics, behaviors, and preferences of the Gen Z purchase behavior, which can be utilized by businesses, governments, and non-profit organizations in policy development, marketing strategies, and educational programs. By understanding the digital preferences and behaviors of Gen Z, the research can contribute to empowering young individuals in making informed choices, navigating the digital landscape responsibly, and participating actively in the digital economy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gen Z

Gen Z, is the first born in the world of Internet-connected technology. (Cilliers, 2017) Viewing Generation Z as members of the information society, they turn out to be cleverer than the previous generations, referring to their media and technological literacy. They are not more intelligent or smart and do not know more than the others; they just have more information sources and they know how to use them. In addition, they know how to do it incredibly fast. They represent the active media audience with the highest level of intuitive technological literacy, which makes them stronger. (Scholz & Rennig, 2019)

The interests of Generation Z extend beyond specific issues and topics, encompassing a broad awareness of all that is novel. They lean on their individual sources of information, yet maintain a keen interest in global challenges. From local incidents and updates from friends to remarkable events unfolding on the opposite end of the globe, Gen Z demonstrates an inclusive curiosity that spans various scales and scopes. (Scholz & Rennig, 2019)

Another distinguishing feature of Gen Z is their proficiency in technology and a preference for communication through digital means rather than direct interpersonal contact. (Poláková & Klimova, 2019) With advancements in multimedia technology, including tablets, smartphones, social media, and flat-screen TVs, Gen Z individuals have acclimated to a world where constant connectivity is the

norm. This generation exhibits a comfort with interaction and communication facilitated by these technologies. (Turner, 2015)

Gen Z possesses a shorter attention span, they are impatient, consume information from all over the world from a variety of sources, preferring digital media to traditional media and have a constant need to receive new, different types of information (Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

Social Media Use and Purchase Behavior

Social media refers to the utilization of diverse web 2.0 platforms founded on user-generated content. This enables users to craft online portfolios, interconnect them, and share them via social media services. (Obar & Wildman, 2015) With the growing number of social media users, businesses have seized this opportunity to leverage it as a marketing platform. (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018)

Choosing social media as an advertising platform is motivated by its potential to create a global business presence (Eid et al., 2019), enhance brand awareness and loyalty. (Maria et al., 2019) The rising number and special features of social media, such as being user-friendly and visually appealing, have attracted companies to promote and conduct business through social media. Social media is a new platform for individuals to purchase products or services. (Hassan et al., 2022)

Purchase behavior refers to the process where consumers decide to choose from multiple products to fulfill their needs, minimize cost, and maximize satisfaction (Behl & Nayak, 2018) Social media has the potential to expedite users' purchasing journeys—from awareness and findability to reputation, conversion, and advocacy. This acceleration of purchasing decisions may be impacted by the existence of social media proof (such as recommendations on social platforms), the influence of influencers (social media users with a strong and loyal audience), and testimonials. (Hassan et al., 2022)

Conceptual Framework of The Research

This study investigates three main constructs consisting of two independent variables, namely Social Media Influencers, Social Media, and one dependent variable, namely Purchase Behavior. For more details, see Figure 1 below:

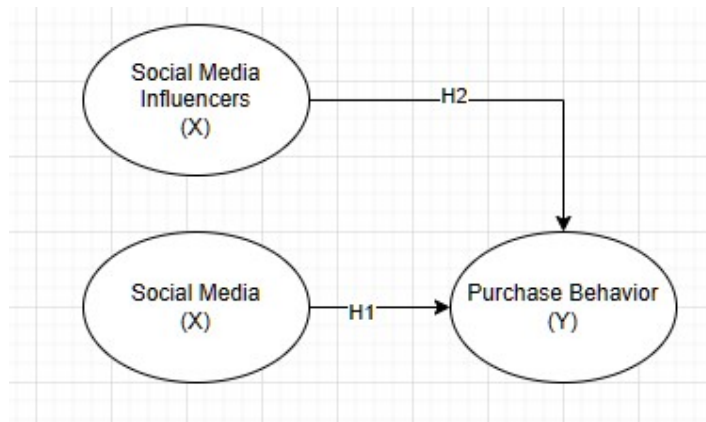


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of The Research

The majority of existing studies have defined purchasing behavior as the intent to make a purchase. (Makudza et al., 2020) (Manzoor et al., 2020) (Bari et al., n.d.) For example, Instagram has the highest impact on the consumers in Iran. The features of attractiveness of design, conversation, attractive environment, and ease of use are among the most important factors that contribute to greater adoption to this social media. (Janavi et al., 2021) However, there exists a requirement to systematically examine the utilization of social media and its consequential influence on tangible purchasing behavior, particularly within the Indonesian context, specifically focusing on Generation Z.

Hypothesis Development

H1: Social media Content is positively associated with purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z.

Maulid et al (2022) Conduct a research about how social media content creation, specifically in Instagram could affect the purchase behavior of Indonesian gen Z. Research implies content creation impacts consumer purchase decisions, especially on train service users in Indonesia. (Maulid et al., 2022)

H2: Social Media Influencers Influence The Purchase Behavior of Indonesian Gen Z

Nugroho et al (2022) conducted a research about how social media influencers could affect purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. Research implies the majority of respondents who are Gen Z agree that the promotion of cosmetic products using influencers on social media is able to attract interest to pay attention to the promotion. The majority of respondents agree that the promotion of cosmetic products using influencers on social media was able to arouse the desire to know more about the product (Nugroho et al., 2022)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data and Sample

This study is classified as quantitative research and applies primary data to analyze individual adoption. To collect the data, this paper conducted online surveys. Purposive sampling is used as the sampling technique as follows: all participants are Gen Z, have experience with using an e-commerce platform, and have a social media account.

Data Analysis

The model testing and reliability and validity assessments are performed using Smart Partial Least Square (SmartPLS) and structural equation modeling (SEM), which is a tool utilizing a component-based estimation approach (Hwang, 2014)

Survey Instrument

To obtain the Gen Z insight, this research paper considers several questionnaire sections. The questionnaire was designed for the primary data collection for this study. Part one of the questionnaire was concerned with participants' demographic information, including age, and gender. The second part will consist of participant's behavior and perspective about social media, and how it could affect participant's purchase behavior.

This study utilizes a Likert scale as a crucial component of the survey instrument, ranging from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The Likert scale will be employed in the second part of the questionnaire, focusing on participants' behavior and perspectives regarding social media and its potential impact on their purchasing behavior. Participants will be asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with statements related to the influence of social media on their purchasing decisions. This quantitative approach using the Likert scale aims to provide a nuanced

understanding of participants' attitudes and perceptions, allowing for a more detailed analysis of the factors influencing consumer behavior in the context of social media and e-commerce platforms.

IV. FINDINGS AND RESULT

Respondent characteristics

Table 3.1 exhibits the respondent characteristics; of all participants, 40.7% are female, while 59.3% are male. Respondent's age is divided into three categories with the majority of respondents falling within the age range of 22 to 26 years.

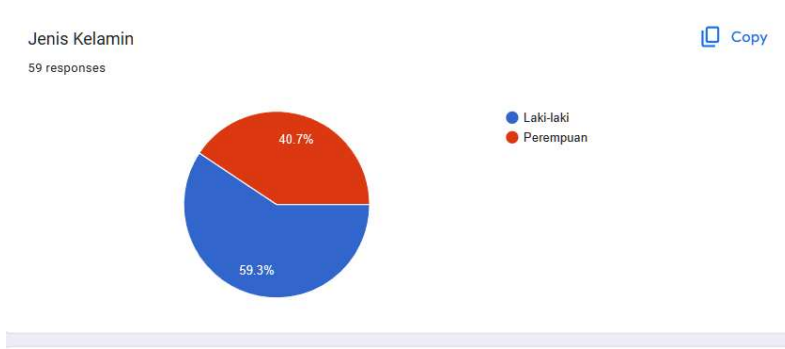


Figure 3.1 Respondent's Gender

An interesting observation is that the average duration of social media usage per day exceeds 4 hours for 52.5% of the participants, indicating a significant engagement with these platforms. Conversely, only 16.9% of respondents reported using the internet for less than 2 hours daily. Notably, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube emerge as the preferred social media platforms among the participants. Additionally, the study indicates a prevalent trend in e-commerce, with fashion and clothing accessories being the most commonly purchased products.

Table 3.1 Respondent characteristics

Item	Categories	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	24	59.3%
	Female	35	40.7%
Age (In Years)	<18	4	6.2%
	18-21	11	19.6%
	22-26	44	74.2%
duration of using social media platforms in a day	<2 hours	10	16.9%
	2-4 hours	18	30.5%
	>4 hours	31	52.5%
Social Media (frequently used)	Instagram	54	91.5%
	Facebook	15	25.4%
	Twitter/X	42	71.2%
	Tiktok	36	61%
	LinkedIn	13	22%
	Snapchat	7	11.9%
	Youtube	35	59.3%
	Threads	7	11.9%
Products (frequently purchased)	Fashion	46	78%

Food and beverage	27	45.8%
Health and beauty	33	55.9%
Fashion accessories	34	57.6%
Gadget and accessories	31	52.5%
Sport equipment	20	33.9%
Electronics	28	47.5%
Toys and hobby	28	47.5%
Household equipment	17	28.8%
Automotive	19	32.2%
Travel ticket and Hotels	25	42.4%

Results and Discussion

	Purchase Behavior Social Media	Social Media Content	Social Media Influencer
PI1	0.830	0.805	0.909
PI2	0.879	0.808	0.633
PI3	0.803	0.643	0.471
PI4	0.872	0.831	0.690
SM2	0.802	0.812	0.585
SM3	0.781	0.872	0.629
SM4	0.732	0.835	0.630
SM5	0.704	0.771	0.627
SM6	0.789	0.795	0.852
SMI1	0.706	0.748	0.903
SMI2	0.651	0.628	0.827
SMI3	0.570	0.606	0.831
SMI4	0.760	0.747	0.898
SMI5	0.753	0.759	0.859
SMI6	0.725	0.600	0.825
SM1	0.792	0.924	0.677

Figure 4.1 Discriminant Validity

Figure 4.1 presents the discriminant validity test, which is performed by cross loading the data among the variables and shows that most of the items exhibit high loading (>0.7). The aim of the discriminant validity analysis is to provide a clear assessment of whether the proposed construct has the highest relationship with its indicators compared to the other constructs.

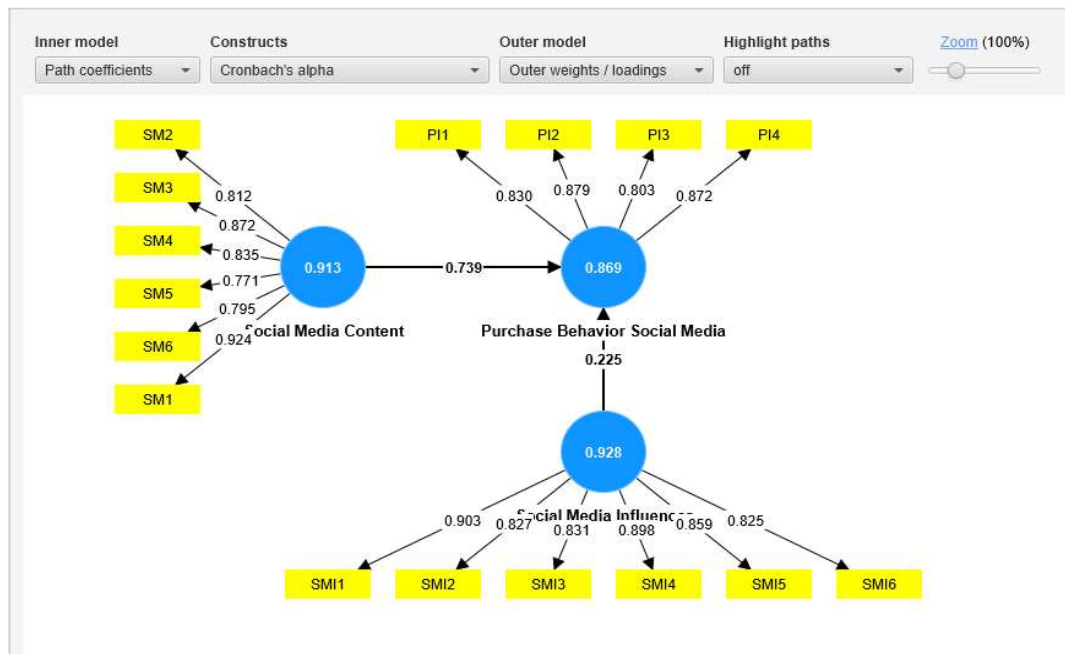


Figure 4.2 PLS test results using SmartPLS 4.0

Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability serve as metrics for assessing internal consistency and reliability by examining the interconnectedness of observed item variables. As depicted in Figure 4.2, the data demonstrates reliability, given that both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability exceed

the threshold of 0.6 (Eisingerich & Rubera, 2010).

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) assesses convergent validity, with the data considered to have sufficient convergent validity when the AVE score surpasses 0.5.

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Purchase Behavior Social Media	0.869	0.878	0.910	0.717
Social Media Content	0.913	0.915	0.933	0.699
Social Media Influencer	0.928	0.933	0.943	0.736

Figure 4.3 Cronbach's Alpha

	Path coefficients
Social Media Content -> Purchase Behavior Social Media	0.739
Social Media Influencer -> Purchase Behavior Social Media	0.225

Figure 4.4 Path Coefficient

Figure 4.4 shows the result of path coefficients, all variables have a positive coefficient as follows: Social Media Content-Purchase Behavior Social Media (0.739), and Social Media Influencer-Purchase Behavior (0.225). Figure 4.1 describes the path analysis of the PLS test results, with all variables having a positive coefficient there is a hypothesis that there is a direct effect among these variables. Social media influencer and Social media content does affect the purchase behavior from Gen Z.

Table 4.1 Results of the hypothesis testing

Hypothesis		Result
H1	Social media Content is positively associated with purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z.	Supported
H2	Social Media Influencers Influence The Purchase Behavior of Indonesian Gen Z	Supported

Hypothesis 1 defines that there is a positive association between social media content and the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. In this context, the hypothesis contends that the content disseminated across various social media platforms plays a pivotal role in shaping the purchasing decisions of the Gen Z demographic in Indonesia. The hypothesis suggests that the engaging and persuasive nature of social media content, including visuals, narratives, and interactive features, significantly influences the consumer choices and preferences of the Gen Z population.

Hypothesis 2 proposes that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. This hypothesis implies that the recommendations and endorsements made by influencers on social media platforms have a noteworthy impact on the purchasing choices of the Gen Z population in Indonesia. The study seeks to explore and analyze these hypotheses to contribute valuable insights into the intricate relationship between social media dynamics and the purchasing behavior of the Gen Z cohort in the Indonesian context.

Hypothesis 2, social media influencers influence the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z is supported by Nugroho and Hapsari (Nugroho et al., 2022) who stated that social media influencers do influence Gen Z purchase intention.

The increasing quantity and distinctive characteristics of social media, including their user-friendly interfaces and appealing content, have enticed businesses to promote and engage in commerce through these platforms. Social media has emerged as a platform for individuals to make purchases of products or services.

The findings of the study bear certain limitations and drawbacks that necessitate consideration. Firstly, the prevalence of fake reviews and counterfeit products on social media platforms poses a challenge, as the authenticity of user-generated content can be questionable. This introduces an element of skepticism into the reliability of the data, potentially impacting the accuracy of the results. Secondly, Gen Z's penchant for following current trends may prove to be a double-edged sword. While the study highlights their current preferences, there is a risk that these trends may quickly become obsolete, rendering the findings less relevant in the rapidly evolving landscape of digital culture.

Through the exploration of two key hypotheses, the research has provided valuable insights into the factors influencing purchase decisions within this demographic. The first hypothesis (H1) has been supported, affirming a positive association between social media content and the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. The persuasive impact of engaging and visually appealing content on various social media platforms has emerged as a significant factor shaping the consumer choices and preferences of this demographic. This finding underscores the importance of crafting compelling and relevant content in digital marketing strategies targeting Gen Z in the Indonesian context.

Similarly, the second hypothesis (H2) has found support, indicating that social media influencers indeed wield substantial influence over the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z. The endorsement power and lifestyle portrayals of influencers on social media platforms have been identified as influential factors in shaping the purchasing decisions of this demographic. This underscores the significance of influencer marketing strategies in reaching and engaging the Gen Z audience in Indonesia. The results also suggest that business owners should create e-commerce platforms that provide more benefits and become more creative in attracting consumers, especially university students. Business owners can focus on providing a wider range of products or services, creating a website with an attractive layout, and generating user-friendly e-commerce platforms, while governments may encourage citizens by enhancing the ICT infrastructure. Better support from the government for ICT infrastructure could help business owners create better platforms that provide more advantages to consumers. With a better ICT infrastructure, individuals/consumers could access the Internet and e-commerce platforms more easily and engage in online shopping. (Diyan, 2019)

The absence of detailed information in the research on how to craft compelling content that translates into sales represents a notable gap. Not all social media content is created equal. The impact on purchase behavior may depend on the quality, relevance, and authenticity of the content. Low-quality or irrelevant content might not have the desired influence, and in some cases, it could even have a negative effect on consumer perceptions.

Lastly, the generalizability of the study's findings is constrained by its specific focus on Indonesia and Gen Z. The cultural and contextual factors inherent in this demographic and Geographical location may limit the applicability of the results to broader demographics and regions, requiring caution in extrapolating the findings to different contexts. Gen Z is a diverse demographic with varying interests, values, and preferences. What works for one segment of Gen Z may not work for another. Assuming a uniform impact of social media content on the entire generation might oversimplify their heterogeneous nature.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study consolidates key findings and imparts crucial insights. It highlights the positive association between social media content and the purchase behavior of Indonesian Gen Z, emphasizing the significance of crafting engaging content for effective digital marketing.

The conclusion underscores the influential role of social media influencers in shaping the purchasing decisions of Gen Z, validating the importance of influencer marketing strategies.

However, the conclusion also acknowledges certain limitations, including the potential for fake reviews and the ephemeral nature of Gen Z's trend-following behavior, cautioning about the need for adaptability in marketing strategies. Moreover, it calls attention to the necessity of addressing issues such as inadequate ICT infrastructure and weak regulations in Indonesia for fostering a robust e-commerce environment. In essence, the conclusion serves as a comprehensive synthesis of the study's outcomes, providing strategic guidance for businesses, policymakers, and researchers operating in the realm of digital marketing and e-commerce targeted at the Gen Z demographic in Indonesia.

Focusing on Gen Z consumers holds significant potential for companies, presenting numerous opportunities. Hence, forthcoming research endeavors should expand their focus beyond the current variables, exploring diverse areas to scrutinize both direct and indirect effects on technology adoption and individual decision-making. Integrating big data and machine learning methodologies into future studies is imperative for a more comprehensive understanding.

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