

## THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTION ON GENERATION Z'S PURCHASING DECISIONS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Social media as a marketing tool is increasingly becoming the primary focus of companies in today's digital era. This phenomenon is inseparable from shifts in consumer behavior, where individuals increasingly rely on social media as a source of information and interaction. The use of social media as a marketing tool is increasingly becoming the focus of companies in the current digital era. This phenomenon is tied to changes in consumer behavior that increasingly depend on social media as a resource for information and interaction. This study aims to analyze the consumer behavior of Generation Z in using social media when making purchasing decisions. This research employs a quantitative method with descriptive and verification approaches. The data obtained were analyzed by describing the research object, and a verification analysis was performed, which was interpreted descriptively. The results of this study indicate that the respondents' assessments regarding social media content, social media interaction, and purchasing decisions fall into a high category. This means that most respondents agree with the positive statement items for each indicator across all variables. The results of the verification analysis show that the social media content and social media interaction variables have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, both partially and simultaneously. The combined influence of the social media content and social media interaction variables on purchasing decisions is 48.00 percent.*

*Keywords: Social Media Content, Social Media Interaction, Purchasing Decisions*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### a) Background of Study

The use of social media as a marketing tool is increasingly becoming the primary focus of companies in today's digital era. This phenomenon is inseparable from changes in consumer behavior, which increasingly relies on social media as a source of information and interaction. According to Statista in 2023, it is estimated that there will be more than 4.3 billion social media users worldwide, demonstrating how crucial these platforms are in connecting companies with their consumers (Statista, 2022). Companies that ignore the potential of social media in marketing risk falling behind in increasingly fierce competition.

One highly influential consumer group in the use of social media is Generation Z. This generation, born between 1997 and 2012, grew up in an era of rapidly and continuously evolving technology and the internet (Pew Research Center, 2019). They have a strong tendency to use social media as a tool to interact, seek information, and even shop. The use of social media in marketing will influence consumer decisions to purchase products or services being marketed. The success of marketing through social media is determined not only by a company's presence on those platforms but also by a deep understanding of consumer behavior within them.

An understanding of the products and services being marketed is inseparable from the social media content broadcasted by the company. Social media content will influence consumer behavior, particularly for Generation Z, where social media has become an integral part of their

daily lives. Social media provides opportunities for companies to interact directly with consumers, creating closer and more personal relationships. Generation Z tends to be more skeptical of traditional advertising and places more trust in recommendations from fellow social media users. Interacting with social media will ultimately influence their purchasing decisions. Therefore, research needs to be conducted on consumer behavior in using social media platforms to make purchasing decisions.

Based on the preceding description, the objectives of this study are to analyze the consumer behavior of Generation Z in utilizing social media when making purchasing decisions, and to determine the influence of social media content and social media interaction on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **b) Marketing**

Marketing is one of the core activities carried out by a company to maintain its survival, grow, and generate profits. This is because marketing is a corporate activity that interacts directly with consumers. According to Kotler & Keller (2009), marketing is identifying and meeting human and social needs. Meanwhile, according to William J. Stanton (in Sunyoto, 2013), marketing is a total system of business activities designed to plan, price, promote, and distribute want-satisfying goods to target markets and achieve organizational goals. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that marketing is a total system designed to plan, satisfy needs, price, promote, and distribute products capable of fulfilling needs and desires to achieve organizational objectives and secure profits.

### **c) Marketing Mix**

Within the scope of marketing, there is a concept known as the marketing mix. The marketing mix is a set of marketing variables that must be mastered and understood by a company to achieve its goals. According to Kotler and Keller, as translated by Benyamin Molan (2012), the marketing mix is the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives. Meanwhile, according to Buchari Alma (2012), the marketing mix is a strategy to blend marketing activities to find the maximum combination that yields satisfying results. The marketing mix contains a set of marketing tools famously known as the 4Ps: product, price, place (distribution channels), and promotion, whereas services marketing includes additional tools like people, physical evidence, and process, making it known as the 7Ps (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

### **d) Consumer Behavior**

Consumer behavior is an essential aspect of marketing studies that has garnered significant attention from researchers and business practitioners over the past few decades. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), consumer behavior refers to the processes individuals or groups undergo to select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires.

### **e) Social Media as a Marketing Tool**

Social media has become a highly influential marketing tool in today's digital era. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is defined as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. Through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, companies can interact directly with consumers, build brand awareness, expand market reach, and even increase sales (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010;

Mangold & Faulds, 2009). According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media provides opportunities for companies to interact directly with consumers, establishing closer and more personalized relationships.

#### **f) Generation Z**

Generation Z, also known as "Digital Natives" or the "Internet Generation," is a demographic cohort born between 1997 and 2012. They grew up amidst rapid digital technological advancements, making them highly proficient users of technology and the internet (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Generation Z possesses unique preferences regarding media consumption and shopping behavior that distinguish them from previous generations (Nguyen & Ding, 2020). Generation Z was raised in a digital era saturated with technology and internet connectivity. They display unique characteristics in using social media as a tool to interact, search for information, and shop (Pew Research Center, 2019). According to Smith and Anderson (2018), Generation Z tends to be more familiar with technology and more habituated to using social media compared to previous generations.

#### **g) The Relationship Between Social Media and Purchasing Decisions**

The use of social media has had a significant impact on consumer behavior, particularly among Generation Z. According to PwC (2018), more than 50% of Generation Z reported obtaining inspiration for their purchases through social media platforms, while 44% stated they choose brands based on recommendations or influence from social media. Generation Z tends to seek product information, read reviews, and interact with brands via social media before making a purchasing decision (PwC, 2018). According to Smith and Katzenbach (2019), consumers' use of social media affects how they interact with brands and products, as well as influences their purchasing choices.

#### **h) Social Media Content**

PricewaterhouseCoopers (2019) found that Generation Z tends to trust recommendations from fellow social media users more than traditional advertising. The content presented on social media also exerts a major impact on the behavior of Generation Z consumers. According to Tuten and Solomon (2018), engaging and relevant content has the potential to influence consumer attitudes and behavior, including purchasing decisions. The way Generation Z uses social media is closely linked to the type of content presented; if content does not match consumer preferences or needs, they will likely ignore or reject it.

Research by Kaur and Kumar (2020) also demonstrates that engaging and relevant content can increase consumer engagement on social media. The quality of content presented on social media will influence consumer interaction. Engaging and relevant content tends to secure more interactions from consumers, such as likes, comments, or shares, which can enhance brand awareness and the potential to make purchasing decisions. The type of content shown on social media can influence consumer purchasing decisions. Informative, entertaining content, or content providing solutions to consumer problems has the potential to elevate consumer interest and sway purchasing decisions.

#### **i) Social Media Interaction**

Consumer interaction with social media is a critical factor in understanding consumer behavior on these platforms. According to Alhabash and Ma (2017), interaction with content has a significant impact on the formation of consumer attitudes and behavior and can influence the purchase of products or services. The relationship between consumers and brands via social media is an essential aspect of understanding consumer behavior. According to Kaplan and Haenlein

(2019), social media enables companies to build more personal and direct relationships with consumers, which can influence consumer perceptions of the brand and motivate them to make a purchase.

Research by González-Herrero and Smith (2017) also indicates that a strong relationship between consumers and brands on social media can boost consumer loyalty. Social interaction among consumers on social media can also impact brand awareness. Discussions, reviews, or product/service recommendations among consumers can help expand brand reach and increase consumer awareness.

#### **j) Hypotheses**

A hypothesis is a tentative answer to the research problem statement. Based on the explanation above, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** social media Content partially influences Generation Z's Purchasing Decisions.
- **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Social Media Interaction partially influences Generation Z's Purchasing Decisions.
- **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Social Media Content and Social Media Interaction simultaneously influence Generation Z's Purchasing Decisions.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study utilizes a quantitative method with descriptive and verification approaches, where data are obtained from the research sample and analyzed by describing the research object, alongside a verification analysis interpreted descriptively (Sugiyono, 2023).

#### **k) Population and Sample**

According to Sugiyono (2023), a population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that possess specific quantities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and subsequently concluded. In this study, the population is defined as Generation Z individuals residing in West Java Province who use social media and have conducted online purchasing transactions on Shopee. The exact size of the population in this study is unknown. According to Sugiyono (2023), a sample is a portion of the size and characteristics possessed by that population. In this study, the researcher employed non-probability sampling, a sampling technique that does not provide an equal opportunity or chance for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample (Sugiyono, 2023). According to Cochran (1991) and Sugiyono (2019), to determine the sample size when the population size is unknown, the following formula is used:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 \cdot P \cdot Q}{d^2} ;$$

Where:

$n_0$  = Sample size for an unknown population size

$Z^2$  = Z-table value  $(1 - \alpha/2) = 1,96$

$d$  = Margin of error tolerated (mis : 5% maka  $d=0,05$ )

$P$  = Probability (chance of success/failure) 50% = 0,5

$Q = 1 - P (=0,5)$

Accordingly, the number of samples in this study amounts to 385 respondents.

#### **l) Data Collection Techniques**

The data collection technique used involved respondents filling out questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, as well as conducting direct interviews with respondents. The data obtained utilized an ordinal scale.

#### **m) Data Analysis Methods**

Before analyzing the primary research data, data quality tests were conducted. These quality tests include research instrument tests and classical assumption tests.

##### **1. Research Instrument Testing**

The instrument to measure all variables in this study used a questionnaire, presented to respondents so they could provide statements corresponding to what they felt and experienced. A questionnaire as an instrument must meet primary requirements, namely being valid and reliable. Therefore, validity and reliability testing must be performed.

##### **2. Classical Assumption Testing**

Several tests must be run prior to conducting correlation and regression analyses to test whether the model used represents or approximates reality. To evaluate the feasibility of the regression model used, it must first satisfy the classical assumption tests. The classical assumption tests used include tests for normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity autocorrelation, and linearity.

##### **3. Descriptive Analysis**

Descriptive analysis explains the respondents' descriptive assessment of the research variables, consisting of social media content, social media interaction, and purchasing decisions. To make it easier to interpret the variables under study, categorization of respondent response scores was carried out.

##### **4. Verification Analysis**

According to Sugiyono (2023), verification analysis is a research method used to find out and test data using statistical calculations to answer the problem formulation and test hypotheses. By using verification analysis, the influence of social media content and social media interaction on purchasing decisions can be determined, both partially and simultaneously. Verification analysis includes multiple linear regression analysis and hypothesis testing.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **n) Data Quality Test Results**

Data quality analysis consists of instrument validity and reliability testing. The validity test results indicate that every statement item from the instrument for the variables social media content, social media interaction, and purchasing decisions is declared valid, with a significance value less than 0.05 and an r-calculated value greater than the r-table at an  $\alpha$  level of 0.05. The reliability test results indicate that every statement item from the instrument for the variables social media content, social media interaction, and purchasing decisions is declared reliable, with a Cronbach's A value greater than the r-table at  $\alpha$  level of 0.05. Based on these data quality test results, it can be concluded that the results of this study are dependable (valid) and consistent, allowing them to be used as measurement tools.

#### **o) Classical Assumption Test Results**

The Normality Test conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test assumes that residuals are normally distributed. The significance value of the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test obtained is greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$ , so it can be concluded that the data distribution is normal.

The multicollinearity test results show that each variable (social media content and social media interaction) has a tolerance value greater than 0.10, leading to the conclusion that there is no multicollinearity problem.

The heteroscedasticity test results yielded a significance value greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$  for both social media content and social media interaction, indicating that the regression model does not exhibit heteroscedasticity.

The autocorrelation test results using the Durbin-Watson Test (DW-Test) show that the calculated DW value is greater than the table DW value (dU) at  $\alpha$  level of 0.05. Hence, it can be concluded that autocorrelation does not occur.

The linearity test results show that the significance value of the *deviation from linearity* for both independent variables (social media content and social media interaction) on the dependent variable of purchasing decisions has a significant value greater than the significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ . This indicates that the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is strictly linear.

From all classical assumption test results, it can be concluded that the model produced in this study can be utilized to predict the influence of the independent variables (social media content and social media interaction) on the dependent variable of purchasing decisions.

#### p) Descriptive Analysis Results

According to Sugiyono (2023), descriptive analysis is part of statistical analysis used to analyze data by providing a description or overview of the collected data as it is, without intending to draw conclusions that apply generally or as generalizations. The descriptive overview of the variables used in this study is explained as follows:

##### 1. Social Media Content

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis of respondents' responses to social media content items, an average score value of 75.83% was obtained, indicating a high category. This means that most respondents agree with the items present in the social media content variable, where these items influence consumer behavior.

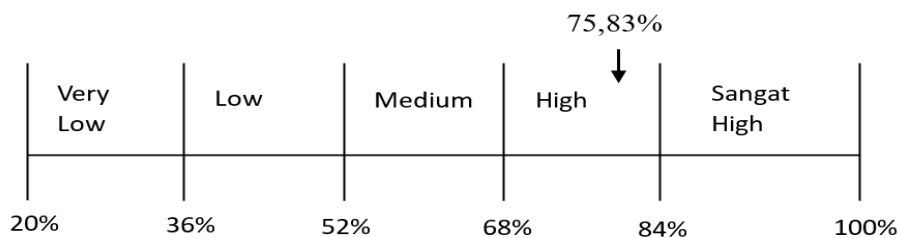


Figure 1. Continuum Line of Respondents' Responses to Social Media Content Variables (X1)  
(Note: Figures 1, 2, and 3 correspond to the continuum lines with scores ranging from 20% to 100%, placing 75.83%, 78.85%, and 81.26% in the "High" category).

##### 2. Social Media Interaction

Based on the analysis results, the descriptive profile of respondents' feedback regarding social media interaction items yielded an average score of 78.85%, indicating a high category. This means

that most respondents agree with the items in the social media interaction variable, which influences consumer behavior.

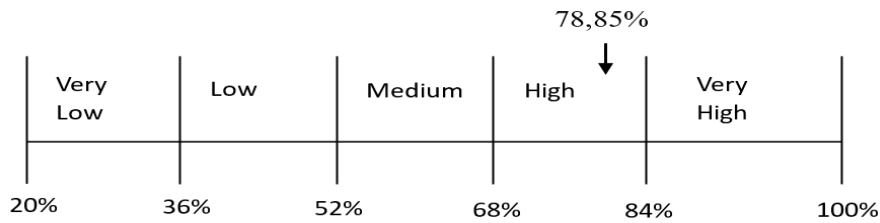


Figure 2. Continuum Line of Respondents' Responses to Social Media Interaction Variables (X2)

### 3. Purchasing Decisions

Based on the analysis results, the descriptive profile of respondents' feedback regarding purchasing decision items yielded an average score of 81.26%, indicating a high category. This means that most respondents agree with the items within the purchasing decision variable, which influences consumer behavior.

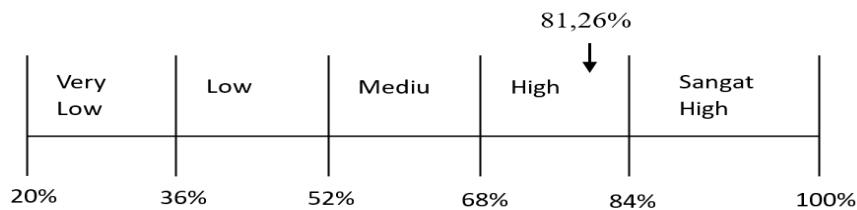


Figure 3. Continuum Line of Respondents' Responses to Purchasing Decision Variables (X3)

#### q) Verification Analysis Results

Verification analysis was performed to test the hypotheses using parametric statistical analysis. The results are as follows:

#### 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized	Standardized			
	Coefficients	Coefficients	Beta		
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	3.461	.141		2.856	.005
1 Social Media Content (X1)	.345	.035	.380	6.040	.000
Social Media Interaction (X2)	.160	.027	.168	2.578	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision (Y)

Source: Data processing results, 2026

From the results of the multiple linear regression analysis, the regression equation can be constructed as follows:

$$Y = 3.461 + 0.345X1 + 0.160X2 + e$$

Based on the regression equation, the influence of the social media content variable (X1) and social media interaction (X2) on purchasing decisions (Y) is explained as follows:

- A **constant value of 3.461** indicates that if there is no influence from social media content (X1) and social media interaction (X2), the level of purchasing decisions (Y) stands at 3.46 units.
- The **regression coefficient for social media content (X1) of 0.345** implies that every single unit increase in social media content (X1) will increase purchasing decisions (Y) by 0.346 (noted as 0.346 in text) units.
- The **regression coefficient for social media interaction (X2) of 0.160** implies that every single unit increase in social media interaction (X2) will increase purchasing decisions (Y) by 0.160 units.

## 2. Hypothesis Testing (t-Test)

The t-test is used to test the partial significance of the relationship between social media content (X1) and social media interaction (X2) on the dependent variable, purchasing decisions (Y). This is determined by comparing the t-calculated value with the t-table value. The value of the t-table is  $t(\alpha/2; n-k) = t(0.025; 382) = 1.966$ . The t-test results can be seen in Table 2 below.

*Table 2. The Influence of Social Media Content (X1) and Social Media Interaction (X2) on Purchasing Decisions (Y)*

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.461	.141		2.856	.005
Social Media Content (X1)	.345	.035	.380	6.040	.000
Social Media Interaction (X2)	.160	.027	.168	2.578	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision (Y)

Source: Data processing results, 2026

Table 2 shows the partial test (t) results as follows:

- The **influence of the social media content variable (X1)** has a t-calculated value of 6.040, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.966, with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This signifies that social media content has a positive and significant partial effect on purchasing decisions (Y). This is because online marketing content such as attractive packaging and engaging narratives can influence consumer behavior, turning initially uninterested consumers into interested buyers.
- The **influence of the social media interaction variable (X2)** has a t-calculated value of 2.578, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.966, with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This signifies that social media interaction has a positive and

significant partial effect on purchasing decisions (Y). This is because social media interactions broadcasted in online marketing, such as live streams, discount promotions, etc., can shape consumer behavior, prompting initially indifferent consumers to become interested.

### 3. Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

In this study, the F-test is utilized to determine the joint (simultaneous) effect of the independent variables, namely social media content (X1) and social media interaction (X2), on purchasing decisions (Y). The F-test is conducted by comparing the F-calculated value against the F-table value ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $k-1$ ;  $n-k$ ) =  $F(0.05; 2; 385) = 2.628$ . The F-test results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Simultaneous F-Test Results (ANOVA)

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	158.097	2	79.049	183.248	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1 Residual	164.785	382	.431		
Total	322.882	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchasing Decision (Y)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Content, Social Media Interaction

Source: Data processing results, 2026

Based on the F-test results in Table 3, an F-calculated value of 183.248 was obtained, which is greater than the F-table value of 2.628, with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the variables social media content and social media interaction simultaneously exert a significant effect on the purchasing decision variable. This occurs because social media content broadcasted alongside interactive engagement with consumers shifts consumer behavior, making them interested and driving them to finalize a purchase decision.

### 4. Coefficient of Determination Test (R<sup>2</sup>)

Determinant analysis is conducted to see the extent to which the independent variables, social media content and social media interaction influence the dependent variable, purchasing decisions. The results of the Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>) analysis can be seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination Test Results (R<sup>2</sup>)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.700 <sup>a</sup>	.490	.480	6.368

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Content, Social Media Interaction

*Source: Data processing results, 2026*

The explained coefficient of determination (Adjusted R Square) is 0.480. This means that 48.00% of the variance in the purchasing decision variable (Y) is influenced by shifts in the social media content (X1) and social media interaction (X2) variables. The remaining 52.00% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### r) Conclusion

- Most respondents provided a high response rate toward items in the social media content, social media interaction, and product purchasing decision variables among Generation Z through social media.
- Social media content partially exerts a positive and significant influence on Generation Z's purchasing decisions through social media.
- Social media interaction partially exerts a positive and significant influence on Generation Z's purchasing decisions through social media.
- Social media content and social media interaction simultaneously exert a positive and significant influence on Generation Z's purchasing decisions through social media.

### s) Suggestions

- The results show that the average consumer response remains in the high category (not yet the highest) regarding shopping at online stores, specifically Shopee, meaning some consumers still respond low. Therefore, it is recommended to address existing shortcomings, such as improving information quality and minimizing risks by providing clear information about internet-based sales, so consumers understand how to transact safely, thereby enhancing consumer trust.
- Future researchers can expand this study by examining consumer trust, ease of use, information quality, and risk perception toward purchase intention.

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