Journal of Economics
AND MANAGEMENT SCIENTIES
https://jems.ink
ISSN 2655-1934 (print), 2655-6685 (online)

Analysis of Generation Z Consumer Behavior in Online Purchases: Purchase Habits and Brand Preferences in the Digital Era

Yolanda Desti[1], Yozi Putri Sakinah[2], and Nora Damayanti[3]*

[1,2,3] *Universitas Adzkia, Indonesia*

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 13 November 25
Final Revision: 20 November 25
Accepted: 25 November 25
Online Publication: 31 December 25

KEYWORDS

Generation Z, Purchase Habits, Brand Preference, Digital Marketing, Customer Reviews

A B S T R A C T

This study explores the influence of Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing on Purchase Habits and Brand Preference among Generation Z consumers in Indonesia's online shopping environment. Using a quantitative approach with Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data were collected from 213 respondents aged 18 to 26 who actively shop online. The results indicate that all three independent variables significantly influence Purchase Habits, with Digital Marketing showing the strongest effect. However, only Customer Reviews and Digital Marketing significantly impact Brand Preference, while Digital Information Access does not. These findings suggest that habitual purchasing behavior is primarily driven by informational convenience, while brand preference formation is more influenced by emotional and social engagement. The study contributes theoretically by integrating cognitive and affective dimensions of digital consumer behavior and practically by offering insights into strategic digital marketing tailored to Generation Z. Recommendations for further research include exploring mediating factors such as trust or social identity and conducting cross-generational comparisons to enrich understanding of evolving consumer dynamics in digital ecosystems.

KATA KUNCI

Generasi Z, Kebiasaan Pembelian, Preferensi Merek, Pemasaran Digital, Ulasan Pelanggan

A B S T R A K

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh Akses Informasi Digital, Ulasan Pelanggan, dan Pemasaran Digital terhadap Kebiasaan Pembelian dan Preferensi Merek pada konsumen Generasi Z dalam konteks belanja online di Indonesia. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan metode Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) yang melibatkan 213 responden berusia 18 hingga 26 tahun yang aktif berbelanja secara daring. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ketiga variabel independen berpengaruh signifikan terhadap Kebiasaan Pembelian, dengan Pemasaran Digital sebagai faktor paling dominan. Namun, hanya Ulasan Pelanggan dan Pemasaran Digital yang terbukti berpengaruh signifikan terhadap Preferensi Merek, sementara Akses Informasi Digital tidak menunjukkan pengaruh yang signifikan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kebiasaan berbelanja lebih banyak dipengaruhi oleh kemudahan informasi, sedangkan pembentukan preferensi merek lebih dipengaruhi oleh keterlibatan emosional dan sosial. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini mengintegrasikan dimensi kognitif dan afektif dalam perilaku konsumen digital, sementara secara praktis memberikan wawasan bagi strategi pemasaran digital yang efektif dan relevan dengan karakter Generasi Z. Penelitian lanjutan disarankan untuk mengeksplorasi faktor mediasi seperti kepercayaan atau identitas sosial, serta melakukan perbandingan antar generasi untuk memperkaya pemahaman mengenai dinamika perilaku konsumen dalam ekosistem digital.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

yolandadesti@adzkia.ac.id

DOI

10.37034/jems.v8i1.286

1. Introduction

The digital transformation of global retail ecosystems has significantly influenced consumer behavior, especially among Generation Z individuals born and raised in a technology driven environment. This generation displays unique online purchasing behaviors shaped by mobile first access, social interactivity, and multimedia exposure [1]. According to GfK Consumer Life Global, 74% of Gen Z prefer to shop via mobile, and 97% are influenced by social media content. These behaviors indicate a shift from need based purchasing to habit based digital experiences, underscoring the importance of analyzing how Gen Z forms purchase habits and brand preferences in online shopping contexts [2].

Purchase habits represent repeated consumer behaviors formed through routine exposure, trust, and convenience [3]. Studies have shown that Gen Z builds online shopping routines based on digital platform ease, social recommendations, and the perceived value of the transaction process. Meanwhile, brand preference extends beyond product utility, encompassing brand identity, emotional resonance, and social relevance [4]. Modern consumers, particularly Gen Z, increasingly

favor brands that align with their social values, sustainability concerns, and self-expression [5].

A key factor shaping these behaviors is Digital Information Access, which allows consumers to search, evaluate, and compare products across platforms. Research shows that enhanced access to accurate product information leads to higher consumer confidence and more frequent purchasing [6]. However, while it facilitates decision making, it may not directly foster brand loyalty, which typically arises from emotional and experiential brand engagement [7].

Another significant predictor is Customer Reviews, particularly electronic word of mouth (eWOM), which Gen Z perceives as more authentic than traditional advertisements [8]. Reliable reviews can influence both short-term purchasing decisions and long-term brand perceptions. Positive eWOM serves as a social proof mechanism, reinforcing both habitual purchases and strong brand preference [9].

In addition, Digital Marketing plays a central role in engaging Gen Z. Personalized, interactive, and influencer-based marketing efforts significantly shape Gen Z's purchasing intentions and brand attachments [10]. Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), digital marketing strategies influence consumer attitudes and norms that contribute to habitual and preferential brand behaviors [11].

Despite the proliferation of research on digital consumerism, few studies have concurrently analyzed the impact of digital information access, customer reviews, and digital marketing on both purchase habits and brand preferences among Gen Z, particularly within the Indonesian context. Most prior studies focus on isolated aspects of online purchasing without integrating the socio digital environment characteristic of Gen Z behavior [12]. This study seeks to fill that research gap by analyzing these relationships in an integrated framework.

Although numerous studies have investigated online consumer behavior among Generation Z, most have focused narrowly on either psychological aspect such as trust in customer reviews or technological aspects like access to information, often treating these variables in isolation. This fragmented approach overlooks the complex interplay between cognitive, social, and emotional factors that simultaneously influence both purchase habits and brand preferences in digital environments [13]. Furthermore, much of the literature is situated in Western or highly developed digital markets, with limited empirical evidence drawn from emerging economies like Indonesia, where digital ecosystems and user behavior differ significantly. Most existing studies also focus on purchase intentions as an outcome, neglecting the formation of habitual behavior and long-term brand preference, which are critical in shaping sustainable consumer relationships [14]. In addition, although the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is widely used to explain online purchasing, it is rarely extended to include contemporary digital marketing variables such as influencer-based engagement, emotionally driven campaigns, and content authenticity factors that strongly resonate with Generation Z [15]. Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by integrating three major antecedents digital information access, customer reviews, and digital marketing within a single empirical model to examine their simultaneous impact on both online purchase habits and brand preferences. By contextualizing this model within the Indonesian digital economy and grounding it in TPB, this research provides a comprehensive and locally relevant understanding of Generation Z consumer behavior that fills important theoretical and practical gaps in the literature [16].

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of digital information access, customer reviews, and digital marketing on the online purchase habits and brand preferences of Generation Z consumers. This research aims to contribute theoretically by integrating cognitive and emotional components of digital behavior, and practically by offering insights for brands and marketers to develop effective strategies for engaging young consumers in the digital era [17].

2. Research Method

2.1. Research Approach and Variables

A quantitative approach was employed to assess the causal relationships among the constructs using numerical data. This approach is suitable for analyzing the statistical influence of independent variables Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing on the dependent variables Buying Habits and Brand Preferences. Each variable was conceptualized based on relevant consumer behavior theories and previous empirical studies.

The study is based on a reflective measurement model where indicators represent latent constructs. The independent variables represent key drivers of consumer decision-making in digital commerce environments, while the dependent variables capture behavioral outcomes. This approach enables generalization of findings across similar populations.

The study focuses on Generation Z, defined as individuals aged between 18 and 26 years, who are active digital consumers. The research framework aims to explain the behavioral patterns of this cohort in the context of Indonesia's rapidly growing e-commerce ecosystem, where digital marketing and user generated content have a significant impact on purchasing decisions and brand loyalty.

2.2. Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The target population consisted of Indonesian Generation Z consumers, aged 18 to 26, who actively shop online. To ensure the relevance of the data, a purposive sampling technique was adopted. Participants had to meet specific criteria: (1) be within the defined age range, (2) have made at least two online purchases in the past three months, and (3) regularly use social media to search for product related information or reviews. These criteria ensured that respondents possessed adequate exposure to digital commerce environments. A total of 213 valid responses were collected through an online survey, which exceeded the minimum sample size requirement based on the 10-times rule of the largest number of indicators per construct used in PLS-SEM. This sampling approach was appropriate for selecting respondents with relevant experience, thus enhancing the study's external validity. The sample represents a cross section of active e-commerce users and provides insights into the digital consumption patterns of young Indonesian consumers in a rapidly evolving online market.

2.3. Data Collection

Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms. The instrument consisted of closed ended questions measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The questionnaire was pre tested to ensure clarity, reliability, and content validity. Respondents were approached through social media platforms and asked to voluntarily complete the survey based on their personal online shopping experiences. In addition to primary data, secondary sources such as industry reports, academic journals, and digital consumer behavior surveys were used to strengthen the conceptual framework and support findings. This dual approach provided both empirical evidence and contextual grounding.

Ethical standards were maintained throughout the process, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were informed of the study's purpose and their rights. The structured data collection enabled consistent measurement across respondents and minimized response bias. The final dataset was screened for missing values and outliers to ensure data integrity and prepare it for statistical analysis using SmartPLS.

2.4. Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. This technique was chosen due to its suitability for predictive modeling, especially in studies involving multiple constructs and complex relationships. PLS-SEM is robust in handling small to medium sample sizes and does not require normal distribution of data, making it ideal for behavioral research with real world data. The analysis process involved two stages: assessment of the measurement model and evaluation of the structural model.

The measurement model was tested for reliability and validity using outer loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). The structural model was evaluated through R-square values, path coefficients, and significance testing using bootstrapping. This allowed for hypothesis testing of the proposed relationships among variables. The use of PLS-SEM enabled simultaneous examination of the direct and indirect effects among constructs, providing a comprehensive understanding of how digital factors influence Generation Z's buying behavior and brand preferences in the online context.

2.5. Measurement of Variables

Each research construct was measured using multiple indicators adapted from validated instruments in prior studies. Digital Information Access was measured through items assessing ease of finding, understanding, and using online product information. Customer Reviews included indicators that captured perceptions of trustworthiness, relevance, and usefulness of peer reviews in digital environments. Digital Marketing was evaluated through items relating to personalized promotions, interactivity, and content engagement across social platforms. Buying Habits were measured by frequency, consistency, and tendency to repeat purchases on e-commerce platforms. Brand Preferences included measures of brand loyalty, emotional attachment, and likelihood of repeated selection.

All items used a 5-point Likert scale to reflect respondents' level of agreement. The questionnaire was translated and back-translated to ensure accuracy and cultural relevance. Pretesting confirmed that the measurement items were clearly understood. This operationalization ensures construct validity and allows reliable quantification of abstract concepts. The design supports robust statistical analysis through PLS-SEM and contributes to the study's goal of understanding the digital behavioral patterns of Indonesian Generation Z consumers.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents the results of the data analysis in a systematic manner to address the research questions previously formulated, followed by a discussion grounded in theoretical perspectives and prior empirical findings. The data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with the assistance of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The analysis was conducted in two major stages: evaluation of the outer model, which includes tests of validity and reliability, and evaluation of the inner model to examine the structural relationships among latent constructs.

Subsequently, the discussion elaborates on the influence of each independent variable Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing on the dependent variables, namely Purchase Habits and Brand Preference among Generation Z consumers. The presentation of results follows a logical sequence based on hypothesis testing outcomes, complemented by comparisons with relevant literature and discussions on theoretical and practical implications. Subheadings are employed to guide the reader through the structure of findings and interpretation. To avoid redundancy, quantitative data are primarily presented in summary tables and supporting figures, without repetitive explanation in the main text.

3.1. Respondent Characteristics

To provide contextual background and ensure the relevance of the research sample, a descriptive analysis was conducted on the demographic and behavioral characteristics of the respondents. These characteristics include gender, age group, most frequently used e-commerce platform, and frequency of online shopping. Understanding these aspects is essential to interpret subsequent findings accurately and to verify the alignment of the sample with the target population Generation Z consumers in Indonesia who are actively engaged in online shopping.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	71	33.3
	Female	142	66.7
Age	18–20 years old	113	53.1
	21–23 years old	83	39.0
	24–26 years old	17	8.0
Most Frequently Used Online Shopping Platform	Shopee	164	77.0
	Tokopedia	2	0.9
	TikTok Shop	44	20.7
	Instagram Shop	3	1.4
Online Shopping Frequency	1–2 times in the last 3 months (low)	113	53.1
	1–3 times per month (medium)	76	35.7
	≥4 times per month (high)	24	11.3

Based on the Table 1, it is known that the majority of research respondents were female (142 people, or 66.7%), while 71 people (33.3%) were male. This indicates that women are more dominant as online purchasers than men, in line with the tendency for women to be more active in digital shopping activities due to their high interest in fashion, beauty, and personal care products. Based on age category, the majority of respondents were in the 18–20 year old range (113 people) (53.1%), followed by 21–23 year old (83 people) (39.0%), and 24–26 year old (17 people) (8.0%). This condition indicates that respondents were dominated by the young Generation Z group, who are considered digital natives and very familiar with e-commerce activities.

In terms of online shopping platforms, the majority of respondents chose Shopee as their most frequently used platform, with 164 respondents (77.0%), followed by TikTok Shop with 44 respondents (20.7%), while Instagram Shop and Tokopedia were used by a smaller proportion of respondents, 1.4% and 0.9%, respectively. This indicates that Shopee remains the most popular e-commerce platform among Generation Z due to its easy shopping experience, attractive promotions, and interactive features like free shipping and flash sales. Meanwhile, TikTok Shop is gaining popularity due to its integration of video content with a live shopping feature that appeals to younger users.

Based on online shopping frequency, more than half of respondents (53.1%) were classified as low (1–2 times every three months), followed by medium frequency (1–3 times per month) with 76 respondents (35.7%), and high frequency (≥4 times per month) with 24 respondents (11.3%). These findings indicate that most Generation Z have relatively moderate online shopping habits, where shopping occurs periodically but not too frequently. Overall, these respondent characteristics reflect the profile of young digital consumers in Indonesia, dominated by women aged 18–23, with a strong preference for the Shopee platform and online shopping patterns that tend to be routine but controlled.

3.2. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity assesses whether multiple indicators of a construct are interrelated and measure the same concept. Convergent validity is confirmed when factor loadings are above 0.70, indicating strong construct representation. Convergent validity is used to assess whether multiple indicators of a single construct are positively correlated and consistently measure the same underlying concept. In this study, convergent validity was evaluated based on the value of outer loadings for each indicator. According an acceptable threshold for outer loading is 0.70 or higher, indicating that the indicator has a strong representation of the construct. The results of convergent validity are presented in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, all indicators across the five latent variables Digital Information Access, Brand Preference, Customer Reviews, Digital Marketing, and Purchase Habits exhibited outer loading values exceeding 0.70. This result confirms that each indicator contributes significantly to explaining its respective construct. For instance, indicators ADI3 to ADI6 for Digital Information Access range from 0.742 to 0.807, indicating good convergent validity. Similarly, other constructs also show consistent loading values above the threshold, such as Digital Marketing (ranging from

0.772 to 0.863) and Brand Preference (ranging from 0.729 to 0.799). These findings demonstrate that the instrument items used in the study are both valid and appropriate for measuring the intended constructs in the context of Generation Z's online shopping behavior.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Results

Indicator	Digital Information Access	Brand Preference	Customer Reviews	Digital Marketing	Purchase Habits
ADI3	0.742				
ADI4	0.798				
ADI6	0.807				
BP1		0.760			
BP2		0.729			
BP3		0.791			
BP4		0.799			
BP6		0.731			
CR1			0.746		
CR3			0.824		
CR4			0.841		
CR5			0.762		
DM2				0.800	
DM3				0.815	
DM4				0.772	
DM5				0.863	
DM6				0.809	
PH3					0.723
PH4					0.792
PH5					0.768
PH6					0.777

3.3. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses whether a construct is truly distinct from other constructs in a model. Discriminant validity ensures that indicators of a construct are not highly correlated with indicators of other constructs, thus confirming that each construct measures a unique concept. In this study, discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which states that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct must be greater than the correlation between that construct and other constructs. The results of discriminant validity, including the extracted AVE values, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Results

Construct	Digital Information Access	Brand Preference	Customer Reviews	Digital Marketing	Purchase Habits
Digital Information Access	0.783				
Brand Preference	0.438	0.763			
Customer Reviews	0.496	0.453	0.795		
Digital Marketing	0.433	0.588	0.258	0.812	
Purchase Habits	0.547	0.640	0.411	0.562	0.766

As shown in Table 3, the diagonal values in bold represent the square roots of the AVE for each construct. These values are higher than the off-diagonal correlations in their corresponding rows and columns. For example, the square root of the AVE for Digital Information Access is 0.783, which exceeds its correlations with Brand Preference (0.438), Customer Reviews (0.496), Digital Marketing (0.433), and Purchase Habits (0.547). Similarly, each construct satisfies this criterion, confirming strong discriminant validity. This implies that each latent variable in the model measures a distinct aspect of Generation Z's online consumer behavior, and there is no multicollinearity among the constructs, reinforcing the robustness of the measurement model.

3.4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the amount of variance captured by a construct from its indicators. An AVE value above 0.50 indicates good convergent validity, meaning the construct is able to explain at least 50% of the variance in its indicators. The results of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) calculation for each construct are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Results

Construct	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Digital Information Access (X1)	0.613
Customer Reviews (X2)	0.631
Digital Marketing (X3)	0.660
Purchase Habits (Y1)	0.586
Brand Preference (Y2)	0.582

As shown in Table 4, all constructs in this study Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, Digital Marketing, Purchase Habits, and Brand Preference exceed the minimum threshold, with AVE values ranging from 0.582 to 0.660. The highest AVE is observed in the Digital Marketing construct (0.660),

suggesting a strong level of representation from its indicators. Meanwhile, the slightly lower AVE values in Brand Preference (0.582) and Purchase Habits (0.586) still confirm adequate levels of validity. These results affirm that all constructs in the model meet the necessary standards for convergent validity and are suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

3.5. Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha is a reliability measure that assesses the internal consistency of a set of indicators, namely the extent to which items within a construct correlate with each other. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable, indicating good reliability. The results of the reliability analysis, including the Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Reliability Test Results (Cronbach's Alpha)

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
Digital Information Access (X1)	0.701
Customer Reviews (X2)	0.809
Digital Marketing (X3)	0.871
Purchase Habits (Y1)	0.768
Brand Preference (Y2)	0.820

As shown in Table 5, all five constructs Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, Digital Marketing, Purchase Habits, and Brand Preference demonstrate Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold. The Digital Marketing construct exhibits the highest reliability score at 0.871, indicating a strong internal consistency among its indicators. The other constructs also show good reliability, with values ranging from 0.701 to 0.820. These results confirm that the measurement items are sufficiently consistent and reliable for use in further analysis within the structural model framework of the study.

3.6. Inner Model

After testing the outer model, the next step is to evaluate the inner model (structural model). The inner model, also known as the structural model, is used to assess the relationships between latent constructs in a Structural Equation Model (SEM). One of the main measures used to evaluate the inner model is the R-square (R^2) value, which indicates the amount of variance the model can explain for each endogenous latent variable. A higher R^2 value indicates that the model is able to explain a greater proportion of the variance in the dependent construct, meaning the model has a better fit to the data.

Table 6. Inner Model Results

Dependent Variable	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Brand Preference	0.448	0.440
Purchase Habits	0.449	0.441

As presented in Table 6, the R-Square value for Brand Preference is 0.448, which means that 44.8% of the variance in brand preference among Generation Z consumers can be explained by Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing. Similarly, the R-Square for Purchase Habits is 0.449, indicating that the same three independent variables collectively explain 44.9% of the variance in online shopping habits. Although more than half of the variance in both dependent variables remain unexplained potentially influenced by other behavioral, social, or emotional factors these R^2 values are considered moderate and acceptable in behavioral research. These findings validate the structural model's relevance in capturing significant aspects of Generation Z's digital consumer behavior.

3.7. Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the results of the structural model analysis to evaluate the proposed hypotheses regarding the influence of Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing on Generation Z consumers' Purchase Habits and Brand Preference in the context of online shopping. The hypothesis testing was conducted using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. Key statistical indicators used to assess the significance of each hypothesized path include the original sample estimate (β), t-statistics, and p-values. The decision rule is based on the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), where a p-value less than 0.05 indicates that the relationship between constructs is statistically significant. Table 7 summarizes the outcomes of the hypothesis testing, including the direction and strength of each relationship within the structural model.

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Pathway	Original Sample (β)	t-Statistic	p-Value	Significance
H1	Digital Information Access → Purchase Habits	0.297	4.314	0.000	Significant
H2	Customer Reviews → Purchase Habits	0.162	2.714	0.007	Significant
H3	Digital Marketing → Purchase Habits	0.391	6.753	0.000	Significant
H4	Digital Information Access → Brand Preference	0.091	1.323	0.186	Not Significant
H5	Customer Reviews → Brand Preference	0.286	4.894	0.000	Significant
H6	Digital Marketing → Brand Preference	0.474	8.812	0.000	Significant

The results of the hypothesis test show that all independent variables have a significant influence on Purchasing Habits, while only two variables have a significant influence on Brand Preference. First, Digital Information Access has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Habits ($\beta = 0.297$; $t = 4.314$; $p = 0.000$), but does not have a significant influence on Brand Preference ($\beta = 0.091$; $t = 1.323$; $p = 0.186$). This indicates that ease of information access has a greater influence on routine purchasing behavior than on the

formation of brand preferences. Second, Customer Reviews have a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Habits (β = 0.162; t = 2.714; p = 0.007) and also on Brand Preference (β = 0.286; t = 4.894; p = 0.000), which means customer reviews play an important role in building trust and strengthening brand loyalty among Generation Z. Third, Digital Marketing has a positive and significant influence on both Purchasing Habits (β = 0.391; t = 6.753; p = 0.000) and Brand Preference (β = 0.474; t = 8.812; p = 0.000), making it the most dominant factor in the research model. This finding confirms that intensive and interactive digital marketing activities not only encourage online purchasing habits but also strengthen Generation Z's brand preferences, so it can be concluded that digital marketing is the most influential variable in shaping consumer behavior in the current e-commerce era.

4. Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that digital interactions significantly shape Generation Z's online consumer behavior in Indonesia. The findings reveal that Digital Information Access, Customer Reviews, and Digital Marketing all positively influence Purchase Habits, with Digital Marketing being the most dominant predictor. However, only Customer Reviews and Digital Marketing show a significant influence on Brand Preference, while Digital Information Access does not. This suggests that while convenient access to information fosters habitual online shopping, emotional engagement and peer validation are more crucial in building long-term brand affinity among young consumers. The results offer several practical implications. Businesses targeting Generation Z must prioritize interactive digital marketing strategies and foster authentic customer engagement to build both repeat buying behavior and brand loyalty. Social proof mechanisms, such as user reviews and influencer endorsements, should be strategically integrated into marketing campaigns. In addition, enhancing digital content personalization could deepen emotional connections with brands.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Directorate of Research and Community Service (*Direktorat Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat*/DPPM), Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, under Grant Agreement Numbers 131/C3/DT.05.00/PL/2025, 013/LL10/DT.05.00/PL/2025, and 010.20/LPPM Penelitian/UA/2025. The authors also extend their sincere gratitude to Universitas Adzkia for its support throughout the research process.

References

[1] Rahmelina, L., Firdian, F., Maulana, I., Aisyah, H., & Na'am, J. (2019). The effectiveness of the flipped classroom model using e-learning media in introduction to information technology course. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning, 14*(21), 148–162. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v14i21.10426

[2] Akram, U., Ansari, A. R., Fu, G., & Junaid, M. (2021). Online purchase intention in Chinese social commerce platforms: Being emotional or rational? *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 63*, 102669. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102669

[3] Priporas, C. V., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2017). Generation Z consumers' expectations of interactions in smart retailing. *Computers in Human Behavior, 77*, 374–381. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.058

[4] Choi, E., & Sung, Y. (2018). Instagram versus Snapchat: Self-expression and privacy concern on social media. *Telematics and Informatics, 35*(8), 2289–2298. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2018.09.009

[5] Chevalier, J. A., & Mayzlin, D. (2006). The effect of word of mouth on sales: Online book reviews. *Journal of Marketing Research, 43*(3), 345–354. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.43.3.345

[6] Lee, J., Park, D.-H., & Han, I. (2008). The effect of negative online consumer reviews on product attitude. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications, 7*(3), 341–352. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2007.05.004

[7] Tyrväinen, O., Karjaluoto, H., & Saarijärvi, H. (2020). Personalization and hedonic motivation in creating customer experiences and loyalty in omnichannel retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 57*, 102233. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102233

[8] Wang, X., Yu, C., & Wei, Y. (2012). Social media peer communication and impacts on purchase intentions. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 26*(4), 198–208. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2011.11.004

[9] Chu, S.-C., & Kim, Y. (2011). Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). *International Journal of Advertising, 30*(1), 47–75. https://doi.org/10.2501/IJA-30-1-047-075

[10] Hollebeek, L. D., & Macky, K. (2019). Digital content marketing's role in consumer engagement. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 45*, 27–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2018.07.003

[11] Meire, M., Hewett, K., Ballings, M., Kumar, V., & Van den Poel, D. (2019). The role of marketer-generated content in customer engagement marketing. *Journal of Marketing, 83*(6), 21–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919873903

[12] Nagaraj, S. (2021). Role of consumer health consciousness, food safety & attitude on organic food purchase in emerging market: A serial mediation model. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 59*, 102423. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102423

[13] Howard, M., Böhm, S., & Eatherley, D. (2022). Systems resilience and SME multilevel challenges: A place-based conceptualization of the circular economy. *Journal of Business Research, 145*, 760–777. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.03.014

[14] Wu, X., Xiong, J., Li, H., & Wu, H. (2019). The myth of retail pricing policy for developing organic vegetable markets. *Journal of retailing and consumer services, 51*, 8-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.02.013

[15] Sheth, J. N. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on consumer behavior: Will the old habits return or die? *Journal of Business Research, 117*, 280–283. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.05.059

[16] Taghikhah, F., Voinov, A., & Shukla, N. (2021). Shifts in consumer behavior towards organic products: Theory-driven data analytics. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, *61*, 102516. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102516

[17] Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, *53*(1), 59–68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003