

THE INFLUENCE OF INFLUENCERS, PEERS AND EASE OF ACCESS TO ONLINE SHOPPING ON GEN Z CONSUMPTIVE BEHAVIOR AMONG STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY, STATE UNIVERSITY OF MAKASSAR

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Influencers (X1), Peers (X2), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3) on Consumptive Behavior (Y) among Generation Z students at the Faculty of Psychology, State University of Makassar. A quantitative approach with a descriptive-correlational design was used. From a population of 2,064 students, 87 respondents were selected using non-probability sampling with the Slovin formula. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. Instrument validity was tested using Pearson correlation, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS. The results show that Influencers, Peers, and Ease of Access to Online Shopping are all in the high category, with mean scores of 58.60 (71.46%), 55.08 (76.50%), and 60.45 (76.53%), respectively. Consumptive Behavior is also in the high category, with a mean score of 58.42 (78.95%). Partially, Influencers ($t = 3.939$), Peers ($t = 5.681$), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping ($t = 4.206$) significantly influence Consumptive Behavior ($\text{sig. } 0.000 < 0.05$). Simultaneously, the three variables have a significant effect with an R^2 value of 61.4%. These findings indicate that consumptive behavior among Generation Z students is strongly shaped by social influence and digital accessibility, highlighting the importance of strengthening digital and financial literacy to encourage more rational consumption decisions.

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INTRODUCTIONS

The rapid development of information and communication technology has reshaped social, economic, and cultural life in contemporary society. Beyond changing how people work and learn, digital technology has transformed

patterns of interaction and the way individuals construct and interpret their identities. One of the most visible outcomes of this transformation is the rise of social media as a dominant space of interaction.

Social media is no longer merely a communication tool, but a space where identity is continuously constructed and displayed through images, lifestyles, and symbolic representations. Features such as likes, followers, stories, and comments strengthen the performative aspect of identity, positioning digital presence as equally important as, or even more important than, real-world existence. (Bu'ulolo & Hulu, 2025, Fiqriani et al., 2025; Zis et al., 2021) In this context, individuals especially young people tend to present idealized versions of themselves as a form of self-actualization and social validation.

This dynamic is particularly relevant to Generation Z, a cohort born between 1997 and 2012, who grew up alongside digital technology. As intensive users of social media, Generation Z is highly exposed to trends, influencer content, and personalized advertising that shape their consumption patterns. Purchasing decisions are increasingly influenced by what is viral, aesthetically appealing, and socially recognized, rather than by functional needs. Data from Goodstats.id (Rainer, 2024) show that social media use in Indonesia is dominated by platforms such as WhatsApp (90.9%), Instagram (85.3%), Facebook (81.6%), TikTok (73.5%), YouTube (66.5%), and Telegram and X (61.3%). This high level of exposure increases the likelihood that individuals compare themselves with curated digital content and develop consumption desires based on online trends (Palma Juanta et al. (2025).

Among the factors shaping this pattern, influencers play a central role. They act as producers of lifestyle narratives that encourage imitation and create a culture of following among young users. As a result, consumptive behavior is increasingly driven by symbolic meanings embedded in digital content rather than by actual needs. At the same time, peer influence reinforces these tendencies. Peers function as reference groups that shape standards of lifestyle and consumption, where conformity and the need for social acceptance often lead to unplanned purchasing decisions (Li et al, 2023; Pepe, 2025). This influence operates both in direct interactions and through digital environments, including group chats and social media exchanges.

In addition, the ease of access to online shopping accelerates consumptive behavior. E-commerce platforms offer convenience, flexible payment systems such as pay-later and installment options, and continuous promotional exposure. Algorithm-based recommendations further intensify consumption by presenting products aligned with users' preferences. Previous studies show that accessibility, affordability, and platform design significantly increase online shopping frequency among Generation Z (Marhusin et al., 2026; Yasmine Aurora et al., 2025;). These conditions create a digital environment that not only enables but also encourages impulsive consumption.

Taken together, influencer exposure, peer dynamics, and ease of online shopping access form a socio-digital ecosystem that promotes consumptive behavior. Consumption is no longer limited to fulfilling needs, but becomes part of identity construction and a means of achieving social recognition.

However, although previous studies have examined these factors separately, there is still limited research that integrates influencers, peers, and online shopping accessibility within a single analytical framework, particularly in the context of symbolic consumption. This gap is important, as contemporary consumption behavior is increasingly shaped by symbolic meanings rather than functional considerations.

This study is grounded in Jean Baudrillard's Theory of Symbolic Consumption, which explains that consumption in modern society is driven by symbols, images, and social meanings attached to goods rather than their utility. Influencers act as producers of signs, peers reinforce these meanings through social validation, and online shopping platforms facilitate rapid access to symbolic goods (Koch & Elmore, 2006; Sholahuddin, 2025; Marhusin et al., 2026)

Empirically, this phenomenon can be observed among students of the Faculty of Psychology, State University of Makassar. As part of Generation Z, they are highly engaged with social media and online shopping platforms, making them a relevant group for examining contemporary consumptive behavior.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of influencers, peers, and the ease of access to online shopping on consumptive behavior among Generation Z students. The novelty of this research lies in

integrating these three variables within the framework of symbolic consumption to provide a more comprehensive understanding of student consumption behavior in the digital era.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationships between variables. The independent variables consisted of Influencers (X1), Peers (X2), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3), while Consumptive Behavior (Y) was treated as the dependent variable. The population of this study included all Generation Z students enrolled at the Faculty of Psychology, State University of Makassar, totaling 87 individuals. Given the relatively limited population size and the practical constraints during data collection, this study used a non-probability sampling technique, specifically accidental sampling. This technique allows researchers to select respondents based on their availability and willingness to participate at the time of data collection. It was considered appropriate for this study because it enabled efficient data gathering within a specific academic environment while still capturing relevant characteristics of the target population.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of 77 items, which covered respondent demographic profiles as well as indicators of each research variable. The instrument was developed based on relevant theoretical frameworks and previous studies. All items were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To ensure the quality of the instrument, validity and reliability tests were conducted prior to hypothesis testing. The validity of the items was examined using the Pearson product-moment correlation, where items were considered valid if the correlation coefficient (*r*-count) exceeded the critical value (*r*-table) at a significance level of 0.05. Meanwhile, the reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient value greater than 0.70 indicating that the instrument was reliable and internally consistent.

Data analysis was carried out using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was used to provide an overview of respondents' characteristics and variable distributions, while inferential analysis was applied to test the research hypotheses. Specifically, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the simultaneous and partial effects of the independent variables (Influencers, Peers, and Ease of Access to Online Shopping) on the dependent variable (Consumptive Behavior). This method was chosen because it allows for the assessment of the relative contribution of each independent variable while controlling for the others, making it suitable for explaining complex relationships among multiple predictors.

All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 26. This study was conducted over a four-month period, from September to December 2025.

Research Variables 1. Research variables

Variabel	Variable Definition	Indicator
Influencer (X1)	Influencers are individuals who have the ability to influence the views, preferences, and behavior of the audience through the content they share on social media.	1. Influencer Credibility 2. Influencer Attraction 3. Interaksi & Engagement 4. Type of Content Served (Khalifah et al., 2025)
Peer (X2)	Peers are social groups consisting of individuals of relatively equal age, status, and life experience, so that interactions within them are more egalitarian than family relationships or formal authorities.	1. Peer Pressure 2. Conformity (Joining a Group) 3. Social Interaction 4. FOMO / Fear of Falling Behind the Trend 5. Group Norms (Batool & Batool, 2025)

Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3)	The ease of access to online shopping refers to the extent to which a digital platform allows users to make transactions quickly, practically, and without obstacles. The development of e-commerce and digital technology creates an environment that makes it easier for consumers to find products, compare prices, and make payments only through smartphone devices.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ease of Navigation 2. Ease of Transaction 3. Promotions & Supporting Features 4. Accessibility & Flexibility 5. <i>Efficiency & Convenience</i> (Najwa & Pradana, 2025)
Consumptive Behavior (Y1)	Consumptive behavior refers to the tendency of individuals to buy goods or services not based on functional needs, but to fulfill desires, emotional urges, or the search for symbolic value.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impulse Purchases 2. Tendency to Follow Trends 3. Status or Lifestyle Symbols 4. External Thrust 5. Mismatch between Needs and Purchases (Ocel et al., 2023)

To analyze the data, use the regression equation formula. Perform Hypothesis Test analysis, namely t-test (partial test), F-test (simultaneous test), Determination Coefficient Test (R²)

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Consumptive behavior among Generation Z students is not a phenomenon that stands on a single factor, but the result of interaction between social, digital, and symbolic dimensions. Consumption is no longer solely oriented towards fulfilling functional needs, but also on the search for identity, social recognition, and self-representation in the digital space.

The influence of influencers, peer dynamics, and ease of access to online shopping form an ecosystem that strengthens each other. When students continue to be exposed to the ideal lifestyle on social media, get validation from friend groups, and are facilitated by instant e-commerce platforms, the tendency to impulse purchases becomes even higher. This condition creates an imbalance between rational needs and symbolic impulses, which ultimately encourages consumptive behavior as part of the strategy to maintain social existence and self-image in the digital era.

The results of this study based on descriptive statistical analysis of 87 respondents showed that the Influencer variable (X1) had an average score of 58.60 with a response percentage of 71.46%. The Peer variable (X2) obtained an average score of 55.08 with a response percentage of 76.50%. Furthermore, the Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3) variable recorded an average score of 60.45 with a response percentage of 76.53%. Meanwhile, the Consumptive Behavior variable (Y1) produced an average score of 58.42 with a response percentage of 78.95%. Overall, all research variables were in the high category, which shows that respondents have a relatively high level of exposure and tendency to consumptive behavior.

Hypothesis testing is performed using t-test and multiple linear regression analysis. The t-test is used to determine the partial influence of each independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y). Multiple linear regression analysis, on the other hand, examines the collective influence of all independent variables on divorce. Detailed results of hypothesis testing are presented in the table below:

Table 1. T test Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	41.383	.546		123.856	.000
	KemudahanAksesBelanjaOnline_X3	.435	.103	.491	4.206	.000
	TemanSebaya_X2	.596	.105	.581	5.681	.000
	Influencer_X1	.377	.096	.500	3.939	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PerilakuKonsumtif_Y1

Based on the results of the analysis, it is known that if the t_{cal} value is $> t_{table}$, then there is an influence of the independent variable (X) on the dependent variable (Y). The significance value for the variables X1, X2, and X3 is all 0.000, which means it is less than 0.05. Using the t_{table} value of 1.66278, the results of the t-test show that: for the variable X1 (Influencer), $t_{cal} (3.939) > t_{table} (1.66278)$; for the X2 variable (Peers), $t_{cal} (5.681) > t_{table} (1.66278)$; and for the X3 variable (Ease of Access to Online Shopping), $t_{cal} (4.206) > t_{table} (1.66278)$. These results show that all independent variables, namely Influencers, Peers, and Ease of Access to Online Shopping, have a positive and significant influence on Consumptive Behavior.

To find out whether the variables Influencer (X1), Peer (X2), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3) simultaneously affect Consumptive Behavior (Y1), multiple linear regression analysis (F test) was carried out with the help of SPSS Statistics. This test was carried out through the ANOVA table presented as follows:

Tabel 2. Multiple Regression analysis

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	214.718	3	34.906	39.315	.000 ^b
	Residual	58.212	82	.846		
	Total	272.930	85			

a. Dependent Variable: PerilakuKonsumtif_Y1

b. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer_X1, TemanSebaya_X2, KemudahanAksesBelanjaOnline_X3

In this study, based on the ANOVA results, the significance value is 0.000 (< 0.05) and the calculated F value is 39.315, which is greater than the F table value of 2.72. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variables Influencer (X1), Peer (X2), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3) simultaneously have a significant effect on the Consumptive Behavior (Y) variable.

Furthermore, to determine the proportion of the combined influence of the independent variables (X) on the dependent variable (Y), a coefficient of determination test was conducted using the Model Summary output, particularly by examining the R-square value. Based on the data, the R-square value is approximately 0.787, indicating that 78.7% of the variation in Consumptive Behavior can be explained by the three independent variables, while the remaining 21.3% is influenced by other factors outside the model.

Tabel 3. Koefisien Determinan

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
1	.743 ^a	.562	.552	.911

a. Predictors: (Constant), Influencer_X1, TemanSebaya_X2, KemudahanAksesBelanjaOnline_X3

Based on the results of the analysis in the Model Summary table, an R Square value of 0.562 was obtained. This indicates that the variables Influencer (X1), Peer (X2), and Ease of Access to Online Shopping (X3) simultaneously explain 56.2% of the variation in Consumptive Behavior. Meanwhile, the remaining 43.8% is influenced by other factors outside the variables examined in this study and is not explained by this research model.

As one of the many factors that influence consumption behavior, influencers are proven to play an important role, as reflected in the findings of this study, this is in line with research conducted by Nasar & Riady (2025), titled “*Analisis Perilaku Konsumtif Gen-Z Melalui Peran Influencer dan E-commerce*”, which shows that influencers significantly shape students' consumptive behaviors, primarily through the frequency of content exposure, trust in promotions, and their influence on purchasing decisions.

Peers have also been shown to be a factor influencing consumptive behavior, this is supported by research Susanti (2016), titled “*Pengaruh Pergaulan Teman Sebaya Terhadap Perilaku Konsumtif Mahasiswa Pendidikan Ekonomi Fkip Untan Pontianak*” which shows that there is an influence of the independent variable of Peer Association (X) on the bound variable of Consumptive Behavior (Y). When compared with t of the table at a significant level of 95% of 2.02439. Then t is calculated larger than t table or $18.958 > 2.02439$ so that H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected. A simple linear regression calculation obtained the equation $Y = 4.028 + 0.873X$. The Coefficient of Determination in the study showed the contribution of the influence of the independent variable (X), namely peer association to the bound variable (Y), namely consumptive behavior by 90.4%.

The ease of access to online shopping also plays a significant role in shaping consumptive behavior. This finding is consistent with Rajaba et al. (2024), in their study titled “*Kemudahan Penggunaan Fitur Aplikasi E-Commerce terhadap Perilaku Konsumtif Mahasiswa*,” which shows that the accessibility of e-commerce platforms influences students' consumptive tendencies, particularly through the availability of promotions and discounts. However, beyond confirming previous findings, the present study suggests that ease of access does not merely facilitate transactions but actively reshapes how consumption decisions are made. Features such as shopping carts, personalized product searches, reviews, and continuous promotional exposure reduce the cognitive effort required in purchasing decisions, making consumption more immediate and less reflective. In this sense, accessibility functions not only as a technical convenience but as a mechanism that normalizes impulsive and repetitive consumption patterns.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to Jean Baudrillard's Theory of Symbolic Consumption by situating it within the contemporary digital ecosystem of Generation Z, particularly in the Indonesian university context. The findings indicate that students' consumptive behavior is no longer primarily driven by use value, but by sign value attached to products, as reflected in the significant influence of influencers, peers, and ease of access to online shopping, with a simultaneous contribution of 61.4%. Influencers operate as producers of signs by constructing and circulating idealized lifestyle representations through visual and narrative content. Unlike traditional advertising, this process is embedded in everyday digital interactions, making the promoted lifestyles appear more authentic and attainable. As a result, students are encouraged to consume not for functional purposes, but as a way to align themselves with these symbolic representations and construct their digital identities.

Peer influence further intensifies this process by providing a social framework in which these symbolic meanings are validated and reinforced. Consumption becomes a shared language through which individuals negotiate belonging, status, and acceptance within their social groups. This finding extends previous studies (Li et al., 2023; Pepe, 2025) by showing that peer influence in the digital era operates not only through direct interaction but also through mediated environments, where comparison and validation occur continuously. In this context, consumptive behavior is sustained not simply by individual desire, but by ongoing social pressure and the need for recognition.

the ease of access to online shopping acts as a structural accelerator that enables the rapid circulation and realization of symbolic consumption. Algorithm-driven recommendations, instant payment systems, and promotional strategies shorten the distance between desire and acquisition. Compared to earlier studies that emphasize convenience and affordability (Marhusin et al., 2026; Yasmine Aurora et al., 2025), this study highlights how digital infrastructure transforms consumption into a near-instant process, leaving little room for rational evaluation.

Taken together, these findings not only support Baudrillard's argument that consumption functions as a system of signs, but also extend it by demonstrating how, in the context of digital platform capitalism, the production, circulation, and validation of signs occur simultaneously through influencers, peer networks, and technological systems. As a result, consumption becomes a central strategy for Generation Z students to construct self-image, maintain social existence, and negotiate identity across both digital and real-life spaces.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that influencers, peers, and ease of access to online shopping play an important role in shaping consumptive behavior among Generation Z students at the Faculty of Psychology, State University of Makassar. Each variable has a significant effect, both individually and simultaneously, indicating that students' consumption patterns are closely tied to social influence and the digital environment in which they interact.

These findings suggest that consumptive behavior among students is not merely a matter of personal preference, but is shaped by a broader socio-digital context that continuously encourages consumption through social validation, lifestyle representation, and technological convenience.

From a practical perspective, this study highlights the importance of strengthening digital literacy among students, particularly in developing critical awareness toward influencer content, peer pressure, and algorithm-driven promotions. Universities can play a strategic role by integrating financial literacy and responsible consumption education into student development programs. In addition, students themselves are encouraged to be more reflective in their consumption decisions, so that purchasing behavior is based not only on trends or social influence, but also on actual needs and priorities.

In conclusion, influencers, peers, and ease of access to online shopping collectively contribute to the formation of consumptive behavior among Generation Z students. Therefore, efforts to manage consumptive tendencies need to address not only individual factors, but also the social and digital structures that shape them.

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