

The influence of social media marketing on Generation Z's buying behavior of livestock products

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Abstract. *Burhanuddin ANM, Hastang, Munir AR. 2025. The influence of social media marketing on Generation Z's buying behavior of livestock products. Asian J Agric 9: 898-905.* This study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The background of this study lies in the increasing use of social media as a primary source of information, interaction, and product evaluation among Generation Z, particularly in the context of e-commerce for processed broiler-based livestock products. The research was conducted in November 2024 using purposive sampling, targeting respondents aged 18-27 years who actively use social media and have purchased processed livestock products through online platforms. The questionnaire consisted of eight measurement items—four indicators of social media marketing and four indicators of purchase decision—evaluated using a five-point Likert scale. A descriptive and quantitative research approach was employed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method and processed with SmartPLS version 4 software. The measurement model demonstrated good reliability and validity, as reflected by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, Composite Reliability exceeding 0.70, and a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value within the acceptable threshold. The findings indicate that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, supported by the statistical results: an original sample (path coefficient) of 0.651, a t-statistic of 10.712—which exceeds the critical value of 1.96—and a p-value of 0.000. These results suggest that the more effective and engaging social media marketing activities are—such as informative content, consistent brand presentation, interactive communication, and accessible product information—the higher the likelihood that Generation Z consumers will purchase processed livestock products through e-commerce platforms. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening digital marketing strategies for livestock-based SMEs and agribusiness actors seeking to compete in online food markets.

Keywords: E-commerce, Generation Z, purchase decisions, social media marketing

INTRODUCTION

The outlook for the livestock sector in Indonesia is increasingly bright as the population grows, leading to an increase in demand for livestock products as a source of animal protein. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) (2023) for 2022 and 2023, beef and buffalo meat consumption reached 1.4 kilograms per capita per year, while chicken meat consumption increased from 21.88 kilograms in 2022 to 22.57 kilograms in 2023. This increase in consumption shows that public awareness of the importance of animal nutrition is increasing (Hadita et al. 2021). Livestock products such as meat, eggs, and milk are strategic commodities because they play an important role in meeting the food and nutritional needs of the community (Zhao et al. 2021).

In the context of urban communities, the consumption of livestock products is not only influenced by basic needs, but also by changes in lifestyle and ease of access to products promoted through digital media. This phenomenon shows that psychological and social factors also influence purchasing decisions, especially when products are easily accessible through various e-commerce

platforms and social media. Marlinda (2010) explains that the food needs of modern society are not only functional but also reflect a practical and comfort-oriented lifestyle.

Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2012, is a group of people who are very familiar with the development of digital technology (Utama and Komara 2022). Based on data from Central Statistics Agency (BPS) (2023) about 2023 population census, there are 506,160 Gen Zers in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, out of a total population of 1.45 million. This group is known to have consumption behaviors influenced by digital content, social trends, and social media activities. Therefore, Gen Z is an important segment for businesses in developing effective digital marketing strategies, including in the sale of livestock products through e-commerce.

Social media has now become the main tool for digital economic activities. Based on a report from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Kominfo 2021), the number of internet users in Indonesia has reached 202.6 million, with 170 million of them actively using social media. Makassar City is an area with a high internet penetration rate and a population that is adaptive to digital technology. This condition opens up great

opportunities for livestock businesses to expand their market through interactive and informative social media marketing strategies.

Theoretically, this study draws on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen 1991), which explains that purchasing behavior is driven by intentions shaped through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of this research, social media marketing is understood as a strategic stimulus capable of forming positive attitudes and strengthening behavioral intentions among Generation Z, thereby influencing their decisions to purchase processed livestock products online.

This study also adopts the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework (Mehrabian and Russell 1974), where social media marketing activities—such as branding, interactive communication, information sharing, and accessibility—serve as stimuli that shape consumers' cognitive and emotional evaluations. These internal evaluations (the organism) ultimately generate a response in the form of purchase decisions on e-commerce platforms. Integrating these two theories helps clarify how specific components of social media marketing can directly support the study's objective of understanding the purchasing behavior of Generation Z in the context of processed livestock products.

Previous studies have shown that social media marketing has a significant effect on purchasing decisions and brand trust (Hanaysha 2022; Alnaser et al. 2024). In addition, Hu and Zhu (2022) found that the use of social media can increase consumer purchase intent in a cross-cultural context, while Jie et al. (2022) confirmed that internet use has a positive effect on impulsive purchasing behavior for agricultural products, with personality and emotional intelligence as moderators. However, most of these studies focus on the fast food, cosmetics, and other general product industries, rather than livestock products, which have different characteristics in terms of perceived value, trust, and purchase frequency.

This research gap highlights the need to examine how specific elements of social media marketing—management image, interaction, link sharing, and accessibility—shape Generation Z's purchasing decisions for livestock products, particularly processed broiler-based items such as sausages, nuggets, and ready-to-eat foods that are increasingly consumed in urban areas. Using a quantitative approach with the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method, this study aims to contribute theoretically to understanding digital consumer behavior and practically to strengthening e-commerce marketing strategies in the livestock sector. Accordingly, the study hypothesizes that social media marketing, represented by these four digital marketing indicators, has a positive and significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z in Makassar City.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

Research on customer purchasing decisions regarding livestock products through e-commerce in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia (Figure 1) was conducted in November 2024. This location was chosen deliberately (purposely), considering that Generation Z in Makassar City has been greatly influenced by technology and uses e-commerce.

This study uses two main variables, namely social media marketing as the independent variable (X) and Purchase Decision as the dependent variable (Y). Social media marketing is a digital marketing approach that utilizes social media as a means of promotion and communication with consumers. Meanwhile, Purchase Decision measures how Generation Z determines their choice of livestock products through e-commerce. Data was obtained through a Google Form-based questionnaire distributed online through social media such as Instagram (posts, stories), WhatsApp groups, and private messages.

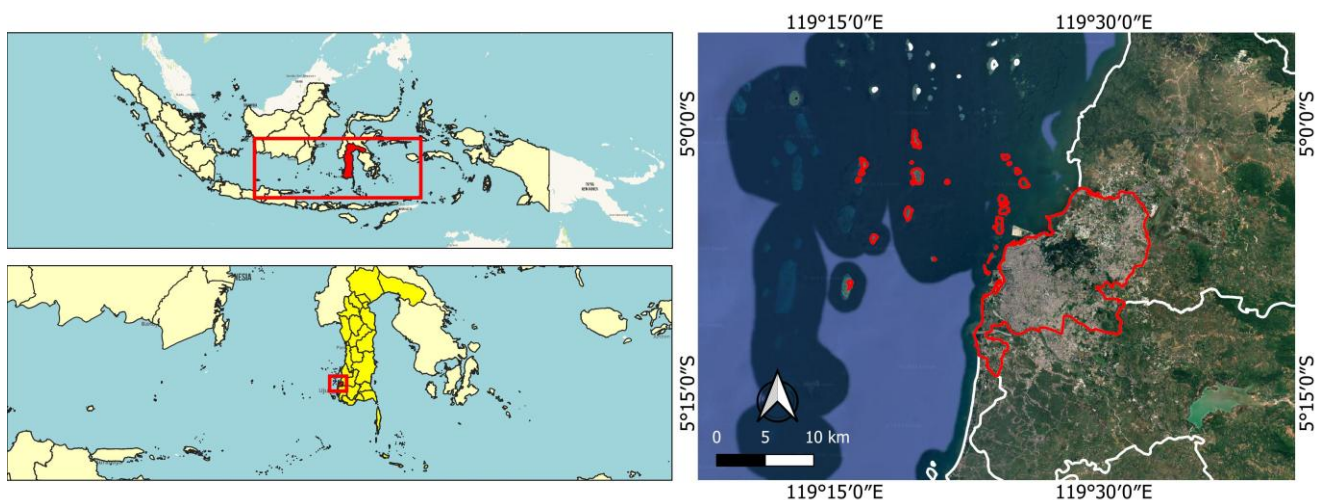


Figure 1. Research location in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

To increase respondent participation, a giveaway activity was included with a pamphlet containing links and questionnaire completion requirements. In conducting the research, each participant was given a research ethics statement at the beginning of the questionnaire. The statement explained that participation was voluntary, respondent data would be kept confidential, and would only be used for academic purposes. Respondents also had the right to withdraw from participation at any time without any consequences. In terms of model analysis, this study used a reflective approach to measure the constructs of social media marketing and purchase decisions, as the indicators were assumed to be manifestations of the underlying latent variables (Hair et al. 2021).

To clarify the geographical context of the study, the research location is mapped based on its administrative position and boundary areas in Makassar. As shown in Figure 1, the study area covers both coastal and inland regions that represent the core of local community activities. The visualization in Figure 1 also helps illustrate the spatial scope of the analysis in relation to the social and environmental characteristics of the area. Makassar City was selected as the research location because it is one of the fastest-growing digital hubs in Eastern Indonesia, with a high level of e-commerce and social media adoption among Generation Z. In addition, the rising consumption of processed broiler products in the city makes it a relevant context for analyzing the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions. In this study, the social media marketing variable is treated as a single construct measured through four main indicators that describe digital marketing activities on social media. This approach provides a clear picture of how social media marketing contributes to Generation Z's purchasing decisions through e-commerce, without breaking down the variable into additional model structures.

In this study, purposive sampling was applied using clear inclusion criteria to ensure that the selected respondents accurately represented the target population. The sample consisted of Generation Z individuals (aged 18-27 years) who actively use social media, reside in Makassar City, and have purchased processed livestock products through e-commerce platforms at least once. Respondents were screened using preliminary questions to confirm their eligibility, and invalid or incomplete responses were excluded. This mechanism ensures that the final sample aligns with the study's objectives and accurately reflects the purchasing behavior relevant to digital livestock product consumption.

The sample determination in this study did not use the Lemeshow formula because the approach used was Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which does not require sample calculations based on prevalence. To ensure sample adequacy, this study followed two PLS-SEM guidelines, namely the 10-times rule (10 times the number of indicators in one construct) and the recommendation of Hair et al. (2021), which suggests a minimum of 100-150 respondents for a model of moderate complexity. The construct with the most indicators had four items, so the minimum sample

requirement was 40 respondents. In practice, this study successfully collected 487 respondents, and all data were declared valid, so this number (N=487) was used in the analysis. This number is well above the recommended minimum limit and therefore very adequate for PLS-SEM analysis.

Procedures

This study was conducted in several stages: (i) Preparation, including literature review, problem formulation, development of a Likert scale-based questionnaire, and initial validity and reliability testing. (ii) Data collection, conducted in November 2024 in Makassar City through online questionnaires (Google Forms) using social media platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, with purposive sampling according to the inclusion criteria of Generation Z individuals who had purchased livestock products through e-commerce. (iii) Data analysis, using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach with a reflective measurement model to test the relationship between variables. (iv) Drawing conclusions and reporting, including interpretation of analysis results, implications, and preparation of the research report.

Data analysis

This study uses quantitative analysis with the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method using SmartPLS version 4 software. The PLS-SEM approach was used to analyze the causal relationships between latent variables in a reflective measurement model and is suitable for models with moderate complexity, medium to small sample sizes, and data that does not have to be normally distributed. The stages of analysis in this study included: (i) Validity testing, conducted through Convergent Validity (AVE value > 0.5) and Discriminant Validity to ensure that each indicator is able to explain the construct being measured. (ii) Reliability Test, using Composite Reliability (≥ 0.7) to assess internal consistency in reflective constructs (Ghozali and Latan 2015). (iii) Path Analysis, used to assess the strength and direction of relationships between latent variables in the structural model. (iv) Q² Test (Predictive Relevance), used to measure the model's ability to predict dependent variables with categories: low (0-0.25), moderate (0.25-0.5), and high (>0.5) (Hair et al. 2019).

The PLS-SEM approach in this study uses a first-order reflective measurement model, in which the variables of social media marketing and purchase decision are measured directly through their indicators without using additional construct structures. To provide a clear overview of the constructs used in this study, the variables and their respective indicators are summarized systematically.

As presented in Table 1, each variable is measured using several indicators that reflect its conceptual definition. The structure in Table 1 also ensures consistency in the operationalization of the social media marketing and purchase decision variables.

Table 1. Variables and their indicators

Variable	Indicator	Measurement Scale	Source
Social media marketing (X)	Brand image (X_1)	Likert scale (1-5)	Narayana and Rahanatha (2020)
	Engagement (X_2)		
	Sharing of links (X_3)		
	Ease of access (X_4)		
Purchase decision (Y)	Product brand selection (Y_1)	Likert scale (1-5)	Marlinda (2010)
	Purchase amount (Y_2)		
	Payment method (Y_3)		
	Distributor selection (Y_4)		

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multivariate analysis

The influence of more than two variables in this study can be determined by processing the data using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS software. The testing consists of three stages: Outer Model Testing, Inner Model Testing, and Model Fit Testing.

Outer model testing

The outer model testing showed reliability and validity results. Based on Table 2, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for the social media marketing variable is 0.714 and Purchase Decision is 0.642, both of which are above the minimum limit of 0.50. This indicates that each variable is able to explain more than 50% of the variance in its indicator, thus meeting the criteria for convergent validity. Thus, the indicators for both variables can be declared valid and capable of adequately representing the constructs being measured.

Based on Table 3, the Cronbach's Alpha values for the variables social media marketing (0.865) and purchase decision (0.814) are both above the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator has good internal consistency in measuring its construct. In addition, the Composite Reliability values for both variables are also high, 0.880 and 0.883, respectively, exceeding the minimum standard of 0.70, thus reinforcing the conclusion that the instruments used are reliable. Thus, all indicators for both variables can be declared reliable and consistent in measuring the constructs under study.

Structural model evaluation (Inner model)

After evaluating the measurement model, an Inner VIF or Collinearity statistic test was conducted to check for multicollinearity before performing the structural model. Based on Table 4, Generation Z who make purchases through e-commerce are known to have VIF values below 5.000 for all models, indicating that there is no indication of multicollinearity between independent variables in the model. These VIF values are also well below the general tolerance limit, so the regression model can be declared valid and unaffected by multicollinearity issues. The VIF values for social media marketing on Purchase Decision has a VIF value of 1.000. The VIF value of 1.000 indicates

the absence of multicollinearity because the model includes only one exogenous construct, making the VIF naturally low and well within acceptable limits.

Hypothesis testing or structural modeling

To determine the relationship between variables, bootstrapping was performed on the measurement model. This study used two-tailed bootstrapping and t-values with a significance level of 5%. The relationship between variables was considered to be “significant” if the t-statistic was >1.96 and the p-value was <0.05.”

The original sample in SEM-PLS is the direct influence value of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. This value can be negative or positive. A positive value means that if a variable value increases, the variable it influences will also increase in accordance with the path coefficient value. This is different from a negative value, where if a variable value increases, the variable it influences will decrease in accordance with the path coefficient value.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value

Variable	AVE	Validity
Social media marketing	0.714	Valid
Purchase decision	0.642	Valid

Table 3. Reliability test results

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Reliability
Social media marketing	0.865	0.880	Reliabel
Purchase decision	0.814	0.883	Reliabel

Table 4. Inner Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values

Variabel	Inner VIF	Criteria	Description
Social media marketing → Purchase decision	1,000	<5,000	Good

Table 5. Hypothesis testing for Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who make purchases through e-commerce

Variable Effect	Original sample	T-statistic	p-value
Social media marketing → Purchase decision	0.651	10.712	0.000

Based on Table 5, social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision, with a path coefficient of 0.651, a t-statistic of 10.712 (>1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). The coefficient value of 0.651 reflects a large effect size, indicating that improvements in social media marketing activities contribute substantially to strengthening Generation Z’s purchasing decisions when shopping for livestock products through e-commerce platforms. This strong effect demonstrates that social media marketing is a key determinant in shaping consumer behavior within this demographic.

Goodness evaluation

After testing the structural model (inner model), the model suitability and goodness evaluation is conducted. The model suitability and goodness evaluation test is intended to assess how strong a model is and predict changes that occur. Therefore, several measures were developed to test whether the proposed model was acceptable, such as F-Square, R-Square, Model Fit, and Q-Square, as follows:

F-square

The F-Square statistic describes the magnitude of an effect at the structural level in a model. The F-Square results are shown in Table 6. Based on Table 6, Generation Z in Makassar City who made purchases through e-commerce obtained the results of Hypothesis Testing and a 95% Confidence Interval Value. The F-Square value of 0.737 indicates that the social media marketing variable has a strong influence on the purchase decisions of Generation Z in Makassar City who shop through e-commerce. This means that changes or improvements in social media marketing strategies can significantly increase consumer purchasing decisions.

R-square

The R-Square statistical measure is used to show how much the independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable, as can be seen in Table 7. Based on Table 7, Generation Z in Makassar City who make purchases through e-commerce obtained an R-square value of 0.424 indicates that the social media marketing variable is able to explain 42.4% of the variation in purchase decisions among Generation Z in Makassar City who make purchases through e-commerce. Meanwhile, the Adjusted R-square value of 0.423 shows stable results that are not significantly different, indicating that the model has good fit. Thus, the remaining 57.6% is influenced by other factors outside the scope of this research model.

Q-square

The Q-Square value is used in measuring the accuracy of model predictions, by assessing the extent to which exogenous variables are able to influence and predict endogenous variables. Based on Table 8, Generation Z in Makassar City who make purchases through e-commerce obtained “the results of the data processing above” with a Q²predict value of 0.265 indicates that the model has good predictive ability in explaining the Purchase Decision variable among Generation Z in Makassar City who make purchases through e-commerce. This value is above 0.05, so the model is declared to have predictive relevance and is able to estimate purchasing decision behavior quite accurately.

Figure 2 presents the results of structural equation modeling analysis showing the relationship between the latent variables of social media marketing (X) and purchase decision (Y). Each indicator in these variables has a loading factor value that describes the strength of its contribution to each construct.

Based on Figure 2, all indicators in the social media marketing ($X_1 - X_4$) and Purchase Decision ($Y_1 - Y_4$) variables show loading factor values above 0.7, which means that all indicators have good convergent validity. The value of the relationship between latent variables of 0.651 indicates a strong positive influence of social media marketing on purchase decision, which means that the more effective the marketing strategy through social media, the higher the consumer's purchase decision. The R^2 value of 0.424 on the purchase decision variable indicates that approximately 42.4% of the variation in purchase decisions can be explained by the social media marketing factor, while the rest is influenced by other factors outside the model. Thus, these results confirm the importance of social media as one of the main factors in shaping consumer purchase decisions.

Table 6. F-square value of Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who make purchases through e-commerce

Variable	F square
Social media marketing → Purchase decisions	0.737

Table 7. R square value or coefficient of determination of Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who make purchases through e-commerce

Variabel”	R-square”	R-square adjusted
Purchase decisions	0.424	0.423

Table 8. Q-square values of Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who make purchases through e-commerce

Variabel	Q ² predict
Purchase decision	0.265

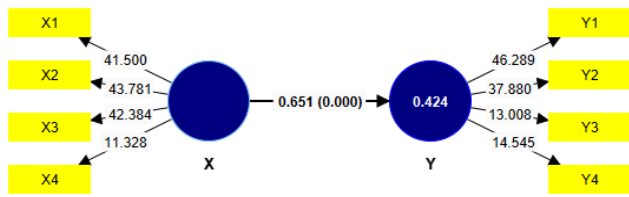


Figure 2. Path analysis

Table 9. Generation Z in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, who make purchases through e-commerce

Model fit ^a	Saturated model ^b	Estimated model ^c
SRMR ^d	0.070	0.070

Note: SRMR: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

Model fit

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is used as a measure of model fit, by measuring the extent to which the correlation matrix of observations differs from the correlation matrix predicted by the model. Based on Table 9, the SRMR value of 0.070 for both the Saturated Model and Estimated Model indicates that the model achieves an acceptable level of fit, as Hair et al. (2021) state that SRMR values below 0.08 reflect a good and acceptable model fit. The identical SRMR values across both models also demonstrate consistency and stability in capturing the relationships between variables. Therefore, the structural model in this study can be considered appropriate for explaining the purchasing behavior of Generation Z in Makassar City through e-commerce platforms.

Discussion

This study was conducted by analyzing the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions among Generation Z in Makassar City who make transactions through e-commerce platforms. The data in this study were obtained by distributing questionnaires to Generation Z respondents in Makassar City who actively make purchases through e-commerce platforms, then processed using SmartPLS software for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. The results of the research on the variable effect aspect show that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on the purchase decision of Generation Z in Makassar City who shop through e-commerce. The Original Sample (O) value of 0.651 indicates that an increase in the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies will increase purchasing decisions by 65.1%. Additionally, the t-statistic value of 10.712 > 1.96 and p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 prove that this effect is statistically significant.

This means that the more active and attractive the marketing strategies carried out through social media—such as interactions with consumers, product link sharing, and informative and engaging content—the higher the tendency for Generation Z to decide to make a purchase. These results confirm that social media plays a major role

in shaping the digital consumption behavior of the younger generation, while also being a strategic factor for e-commerce players in increasing purchase conversions (Zaenudin and Harto 2024).

The findings of this study show that social media marketing plays a substantial role in shaping Generation Z’s purchasing decisions for processed livestock products, particularly broiler-based items commonly marketed through e-commerce platforms. These results suggest that Gen Z consumers are highly responsive to digital cues such as brand presentation, product information clarity, and interactive content, reflecting their preference for transparency and convenience when purchasing ready-to-eat or processed animal-based foods. This pattern aligns with previous studies on food consumption behavior, which emphasize that youth consumers tend to value digital familiarity, ease of comparison, and rapid decision-making when interacting with online food retailers, especially for perishable or processed livestock products.

The results of this study support the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains that individual behavior, including purchasing decisions, is influenced by intentions formed from positive attitudes, social norms, and perceptions of behavioral control (Ridha et al. 2025). In this context, social media marketing strategies have proven to be effective in shaping positive consumer attitudes and intentions through promotional content that is engaging, interactive, and easily accessible. Social media has become an effective tool for building trust and a positive image of products, thereby strengthening consumers' motivation to make purchases (Udayana 2024). Thus, the research results reinforce the view that well-designed digital marketing can influence consumer behavior by shaping positive perceptions and intentions.

In addition, the results of this study are also in line with the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Theory, which emphasizes that external stimuli such as marketing activities on social media can influence consumers' internal processes (organism) in the form of emotions, perceptions, and judgments, which ultimately result in responses in the form of purchasing actions (Isti’anah et al. 2025). In this study, engaging and interactive marketing content acts as a stimulus that generates interest and trust among consumers. This shows that the more effective the stimulus provided through social media, the greater the likelihood that consumers will respond by making a purchase (Samudra et al. 2024).

The integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model helps deepen the interpretation of these results. From the TPB perspective, the indicators of social media marketing—management image, interaction, link sharing, and accessibility—contribute to shaping positive attitudes and strengthening perceived behavioral control by making livestock products appear trustworthy, easy to access, and socially endorsed. Meanwhile, through the S-O-R lens, these digital marketing activities function as stimuli that shape cognitive and emotional evaluations (the organism), particularly trust in food quality, perceived safety, and brand credibility, which ultimately lead to a purchase

response. These interpretations are consistent with studies in food safety and livestock product marketing, which show that consumer trust in product origin, hygiene, and processing practices strongly influences their willingness to purchase digitally marketed animal-based foods.

Furthermore, the results of this study are empirically relevant to the findings of a number of previous studies that examined the relationship between social media marketing and purchasing behavior. Research by Sudirjo et al. (2023) and Haris and Azhar (2025) shows that quality digital interactions can increase consumer trust and strengthen purchase intent. Another study by Mranani and Lastianti (2022) also found that perceptions of value and authenticity of communication on social media play an important role in shaping purchasing decisions. Thus, the results of this study not only enrich the empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of digital marketing, but also expand the theoretical understanding of how social, psychological, and technological factors interact in shaping modern consumer behavior.

This study also strengthens the theoretical foundation by linking empirical results to two major consumer behavior theories, namely the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R), thereby producing a more integrative understanding of the psychological processes of consumers in the context of digital marketing (Rijali 2025). However, this study has limitations in terms of its relatively limited sample scope—focusing only on Generation Z consumers in a specific region—so the generalization of its results still needs to be tested on a broader population and geographical context. Furthermore, this study has not examined mediating or moderating factors, such as brand trust or digital experience, which could potentially provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of consumer purchasing decisions in the era of social media.

The policy implications of this study indicate the importance for businesses and digital marketers to strengthen their social media marketing strategies by emphasizing more personal interactions, improving information accessibility, and maintaining consistent brand image across various social media platforms in order to shape positive consumer perceptions and increase purchasing decisions. For future research, it is recommended that the scope of the study be expanded beyond Generation Z in one region to include different age groups and regions in order to obtain a more representative picture of digital consumer behavior in Indonesia. In addition, further research could consider mediating variables such as consumer trust, online shopping experience, or brand loyalty to understand the cause-and-effect relationship more comprehensively. The limitations of this study lie in its narrow geographical scope and limited focus on variables, so the results do not fully describe the complexity of psychological and social factors in purchasing decisions in the dynamic digital economy era.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z

consumers in Makassar City who shop through e-commerce platforms. Each key dimension, management image, interaction, link sharing, and accessibility, was proven to contribute to shaping positive brand perceptions and enhancing consumers' purchase intentions. The research model demonstrated high levels of validity and reliability, with R^2 and Q^2 values indicating strong predictive capability. These findings reinforce the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework, suggesting that social media marketing strategies act as a stimulus that shapes consumer attitudes, perceptions, and intentions before leading to purchasing decisions. Thus, this study underscores that the effectiveness of digital marketing, particularly through social media, serves as a strategic factor in enhancing product appeal and fostering consumer purchasing behavior in the digital era.

Despite these insights, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the data rely on self-reported responses, which may introduce bias related to memory recall or social desirability. Second, sampling was conducted entirely online and limited to a single urban area—Makassar City—so the findings may not fully represent Generation Z consumers in rural or culturally diverse regions. Third, the study did not test potential mediating or moderating variables, such as trust in food safety, perceived risk, or digital literacy, which may influence the relationship between social media marketing and purchase decisions. Future research should consider incorporating these variables and expanding the geographic scope to strengthen the generalizability and explanatory power of the model.

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