

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON BUYING INTEREST AMONG GENERATION Z IN TIKTOK SHOP

Leticia Helena Soares Gusmão^{1*}

¹Widyatama University

*Correspondence email: leticia.gusmao@widyatama.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The advancement of digital technology has reshaped the way businesses conduct marketing activities and interact with consumers. The widespread adoption of social media has provided organizations with new opportunities to communicate with target markets through engaging and interactive content. Among the growing number of digital platforms, TikTok Shop has gained considerable popularity as a social commerce platform, especially among Generation Z, a demographic group known for its intensive use of social media and online shopping applications. As a result, social media marketing has become a key element that may affect consumers' intentions to purchase products offered through digital channels. This study investigates the effect of social media marketing on the buying interest of Generation Z consumers using TikTok Shop. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a survey as the primary data collection method. Data were obtained through questionnaires administered to Generation Z users of TikTok Shop. Respondents were selected through purposive sampling based on predetermined criteria, and the proposed relationship between variables was analyzed using simple linear regression. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for companies and digital marketing practitioners regarding the effectiveness of social media marketing in stimulating consumer buying interest within social commerce environments. In addition, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in marketing management, particularly in the fields of digital marketing, social commerce, and consumer behavior in the digital age.

Keywords: buying interest, digital marketing, Generation Z, social media marketing, TikTok Shop

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the way businesses operate and interact with consumers. The widespread adoption of the internet, smartphones, and digital platforms has created a highly connected environment where consumers can access information, communicate, and conduct transactions anytime and anywhere. rapid advancement of digital technology has prompted organizations to move

beyond conventional marketing practices and adopt digital-oriented strategies that prioritize consumer interaction, personalized communication, and active engagement (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Yadav et al., 2023). In today's highly competitive business environment, digital marketing has evolved into a critical instrument for maintaining and enhancing organizational competitiveness.

Among the numerous digital marketing platforms available, social media has become a particularly powerful medium for facilitating communication between businesses and consumers. Social media marketing involves leveraging social networking platforms to deliver value, disseminate information, and engage customers through interactive and user-oriented content. Compared with traditional forms of advertising, this approach encourages direct and continuous interaction between firms and consumers, allowing businesses to strengthen customer relationships, improve brand visibility, and shape consumer perceptions more effectively (Alalwan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the broad reach and cost efficiency offered by social media platforms have motivated organizations, regardless of size, to incorporate social media marketing into their overall marketing efforts.

The increasing sophistication of social media platforms has also given rise to social commerce, which combines social networking functions with online purchasing activities. Through social commerce, consumers can search for products, compare alternatives, communicate with sellers, and finalize transactions within the same digital environment. This integration has transformed the purchasing process by providing a more seamless, engaging, and convenient shopping experience for users (Hajli et al., 2023). Consequently, social commerce has emerged as one of the most rapidly expanding segments of the digital marketplace.

One of the most prominent social commerce platforms in recent years is TikTok Shop. Initially recognized as a short-video entertainment platform, TikTok has evolved into a powerful commercial ecosystem through the introduction of TikTok Shop, which integrates content creation, influencer marketing, live-streaming commerce, and in-app purchasing features. This unique combination of entertainment and commerce enables businesses to engage consumers more effectively while simplifying the purchasing process. Consequently, TikTok Shop has experienced substantial growth and has become one of the most popular social commerce platforms globally, including in Indonesia (Purwaningrum & Pramono, 2024).

The rapid growth of TikTok Shop is strongly associated with the active participation of Generation Z consumers. Generation Z, generally defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, represents the first generation to grow up entirely in a digital environment. This generation is characterized by intensive internet usage, high social media engagement, and strong dependence on digital technologies for communication, entertainment, information seeking, and purchasing decisions (Priporas et al., 2023). Compared to previous generations, Generation Z consumers are more likely to be influenced by digital content, online reviews, influencer recommendations, and social media interactions when evaluating products and making purchase decisions (Kim & Hall, 2023). Therefore, understanding the factors that

influence Generation Z's buying interest has become increasingly important for businesses operating in digital marketplaces.

Purchase intention is widely recognized as a key concept in consumer behavior studies because it represents an individual's tendency or readiness to acquire a particular product or service. This construct is frequently used as an indicator of future purchasing behavior, as consumers with stronger purchase intentions are generally more likely to complete actual transactions. Therefore, understanding the factors that shape purchase intention is essential for organizations aiming to enhance the effectiveness of their marketing activities and achieve better sales performance.

Numerous empirical studies have highlighted the significant contribution of social media marketing to the development of consumer purchase intentions. For instance, Rahmayani et al. (2022) reported that marketing activities implemented through Instagram had a positive and significant impact on students' buying interest, suggesting that social media platforms can effectively encourage consumers to consider purchasing products. Consistent with these findings, Utari and Yulida (2023) demonstrated that Instagram-based marketing activities not only increased consumer purchase intentions but also contributed to strengthening brand image. These results indicate that social media marketing serves as an important mechanism for influencing consumer perceptions and stimulating interest in products or services.

Additional support for this relationship was found by Sophia and Muslichah (2024), who showed that social media marketing activities were able to enhance buying interest by fostering stronger consumer engagement and improving communication quality. Similarly, Purwaningrum and Pramono (2024) found that both digital marketing content and social media marketing exerted positive and significant effects on the purchase intentions of TikTok Shop users. Their findings further revealed that these variables accounted for a considerable proportion of the variation in consumers' online buying interest. Collectively, these studies underscore the crucial role of social media marketing in driving purchase intentions within contemporary digital commerce settings.

Research specifically related to TikTok Shop has also highlighted the importance of social media marketing features in attracting consumers. Hikmah and Abdillah (2024) found that product quality, competitive pricing, promotional activities, and shopping convenience available on TikTok Shop successfully increased consumer buying interest. Their study revealed that promotional programs such as discounts and free shipping were among the most influential factors encouraging consumers to purchase products through the platform. These findings indicate that TikTok Shop has successfully implemented social media marketing strategies that positively influence consumer purchase intentions.

Despite the growing body of literature examining social media marketing and buying interest, several research gaps remain. First, many previous studies focused on social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and general e-commerce environments, while studies specifically examining TikTok Shop remain relatively limited despite its rapid growth and

increasing popularity (Rahmayani et al., 2022; Utari & Yulida, 2023). Second, previous research often incorporates multiple independent variables such as brand image, product innovation, digital marketing content, and brand equity, making it difficult to isolate and understand the direct influence of social media marketing on buying interest (Ardiansyah & Nilowardono, 2019; Purwaningrum & Pramono, 2024). Third, empirical studies focusing specifically on Generation Z consumers within the TikTok Shop ecosystem remain scarce, even though Generation Z represents the dominant user segment and one of the most influential consumer groups in digital commerce.

Several unresolved issues identified in previous studies indicate the need for further research on the effectiveness of social media marketing in shaping consumer purchase intentions. Such investigation is particularly relevant in the context of Generation Z users of TikTok Shop, considering the rapid evolution of digital technologies, social commerce platforms, and consumer purchasing patterns. As digital environments continue to develop, obtaining updated empirical evidence is essential to better understand how marketing activities conducted through social media influence consumer decision-making processes.

In light of these considerations, the present study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing on the buying interest of Generation Z consumers using TikTok Shop. From a theoretical perspective, this research seeks to enrich the body of knowledge related to digital marketing, social commerce, and consumer behavior by offering empirical insights into the role of social media marketing in stimulating purchase intentions. From a practical standpoint, the findings are expected to assist businesses, digital marketers, content creators, and platform administrators in formulating more effective marketing initiatives that can strengthen consumer interest and improve competitiveness within increasingly dynamic digital markets.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research question: *How does social media marketing affect the buying interest of Generation Z consumers on the TikTok Shop platform?*

The distinctive contribution of this research lies in its specific examination of the direct association between social media marketing and buying interest within the TikTok Shop environment. While many previous studies have incorporated multiple predictors, mediating factors, or different social media platforms, this study concentrates exclusively on the direct influence of social media marketing in one of the fastest-expanding social commerce ecosystems. By adopting this focused approach, the study provides a more contemporary understanding of Generation Z consumer behavior and adds to the growing scholarly discussion on social commerce and digital consumer engagement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review presents a systematic discussion of previous studies related to social media marketing and buying interest, particularly within the context of TikTok Shop and Generation Z consumers. This section also discusses the theoretical foundations that support the research model and identifies gaps in the existing literature that justify the need for this study.

2.1 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing can be defined as the strategic utilization of social networking platforms to engage consumers, communicate value, and establish long-term relationships through interactive and participatory content. In contrast to conventional marketing approaches, social media marketing facilitates direct and continuous interaction between organizations and consumers, creating opportunities for businesses to strengthen customer relationships and enhance communication effectiveness (Alalwan et al., 2022).

The widespread adoption of social media has significantly reshaped contemporary marketing practices across various sectors. Businesses increasingly rely on diverse forms of digital content, including short videos, images, live broadcasts, influencer collaborations, and user-generated content, to attract consumer attention and stimulate engagement. These activities contribute to the enhancement of brand recognition, customer involvement, and purchase intention. As noted by Yadav et al. (2023), social media marketing has evolved into a fundamental element of digital marketing strategies because it allows firms to connect with their target audiences more effectively while simultaneously improving customer experiences and strengthening brand presence in digital environments.

Within social commerce environments such as TikTok Shop, social media marketing plays an even more strategic role because marketing activities and purchasing transactions occur within the same platform. This integration allows consumers to move directly from content consumption to product purchase, thereby increasing the effectiveness of marketing efforts and influencing consumers' buying interest.

2.2 Buying Interest

Buying interest can be described as a consumer's inclination or readiness to purchase a particular product or service after considering available information and developing a positive perception of the offering. Within the consumer decision-making framework, buying interest occupies a crucial position because it is commonly viewed as a precursor to actual purchasing behavior (Kotler et al., 2021).

Consumer buying interest can be influenced by various internal and external factors, including product quality, price, promotional activities, brand image, trust, and marketing communication. In digital environments, buying interest is increasingly shaped by online content, electronic word-of-mouth, social influence, and interactive marketing experiences available through social media platforms.

According to Schiffman and Wisenblit (2019), consumers who exhibit higher levels of purchase intention are generally more likely to proceed to actual purchasing decisions. Therefore, understanding the factors that stimulate buying interest is crucial for businesses seeking to improve marketing effectiveness and sales performance.

2.3 Generation Z and Digital Consumer Behavior

Generation Z refers to individuals born approximately between 1997 and 2012 who have grown up in an environment characterized by advanced digital technology and widespread internet accessibility. As digital natives, Generation Z consumers are highly engaged with social media platforms and rely heavily on digital technologies for communication, information gathering, entertainment, and shopping activities (Priporas et al., 2023).

Compared to previous generations, Generation Z demonstrates a stronger tendency to seek product information through social media, follow influencer recommendations, and participate in online communities before making purchasing decisions. Their buying behavior is significantly influenced by digital content, peer reviews, social interactions, and online trends (Kim & Hall, 2023).

Given their high level of digital engagement, Generation Z has become one of the most important target markets for businesses utilizing social media marketing strategies. Understanding how social media marketing influences buying interest among Generation Z is therefore essential for developing effective marketing approaches in digital commerce environments.

2.4 Empirical Evidence on Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest

A considerable body of research has investigated the role of social media marketing in shaping consumers' purchase intentions. Evidence provided by Rahmayani et al. (2022) showed that marketing activities conducted through Instagram had a significant positive effect on university students' buying interest, suggesting that social media platforms are effective channels for stimulating consumers' intentions to purchase products. Consistent with this finding, Utari and Yulida (2023) reported that Instagram-based marketing efforts not only enhanced consumer buying interest but also contributed to the development of a stronger brand image. These results indicate that social media marketing influences both consumers' purchasing intentions and their overall perceptions of brands.

Further support was offered by Sophia and Muslichah (2024), who found that social media marketing positively affected buying interest by fostering greater consumer engagement and improving communication quality between businesses and consumers. Their findings underscore the value of interactive content and active consumer participation in encouraging purchase intentions. Similar conclusions have been reported in studies focusing on TikTok Shop. Hikmah and Abdillah (2024) demonstrated that several social media marketing attributes, including product presentation quality, competitive pricing, promotional campaigns, and ease of shopping, significantly increased consumers' buying interest. Among these factors, promotional incentives such as discounts and free shipping emerged as particularly influential drivers of purchase intention. In addition, Purwaningrum and Pramono (2024) revealed that both digital marketing content and social media marketing exerted significant positive effects on online buying interest among TikTok Shop users. Their study highlights the importance of delivering high-quality content and implementing effective social media marketing strategies to encourage consumer purchase intentions within social commerce environments.

Although previous studies consistently demonstrate positive relationships between social media marketing and buying interest, many of them incorporate additional variables such as brand image, digital marketing content, brand equity, or product innovation. Consequently, the direct influence of social media marketing on buying interest remains insufficiently explored, particularly among Generation Z consumers within TikTok Shop.

2.5 Research Gap

Based on the reviewed literature, several research gaps can be identified. First, previous studies have predominantly focused on social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, while empirical studies specifically examining TikTok Shop remain relatively limited despite its rapid growth and increasing popularity among consumers (Rahmayani et al., 2022; Utari & Yulida, 2023). Second, many studies investigate social media marketing together with other variables such as brand image, product innovation, digital marketing content, and brand equity (Ardiansyah & Nilowardono, 2019; Purwaningrum & Pramono, 2024). As a result, the direct influence of social media marketing on buying interest has not been thoroughly examined. Third, empirical studies focusing specifically on Generation Z consumers within the TikTok Shop ecosystem remain scarce, even though Generation Z represents one of the largest and most active user groups on social commerce platforms.

Therefore, further research is necessary to provide updated empirical evidence regarding the direct relationship between social media marketing and buying interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop.

2.6 Theoretical Foundation

This research is based on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Theory developed by Albert Mehrabian and James A. Russell (1974). The theory proposes that environmental stimuli influence individuals' internal psychological processes, which subsequently shape their behavioral reactions. Through this framework, consumer responses can be understood as outcomes of interactions between external factors and internal evaluations.

Within the scope of this study, social media marketing functions as the external stimulus by exposing consumers to promotional messages, product-related information, marketing content, and interactive communication activities. These stimuli are then processed cognitively and emotionally by consumers, representing the organism component of the model. The outcomes of these internal evaluations are reflected in behavioral responses, particularly consumers' buying interest toward products offered through TikTok Shop.

This study is also supported by Consumer Behavior Theory, which examines the processes through which individuals select, purchase, use, and evaluate products or services (Kotler et al., 2021). The theory suggests that consumers' purchase intentions are shaped by various factors, including perceptions, attitudes, information processing, and exposure to marketing activities encountered throughout the decision-making process.

By combining the perspectives of the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework and Consumer Behavior Theory, this research establishes a comprehensive conceptual foundation for explaining how social media marketing activities influence the buying interest of Generation Z consumers within social commerce platforms. The integration of these theories provides a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which digital marketing stimuli affect consumer decision-making in contemporary online environments.

2.7 Conceptual Direction and Hypothesis Development

Based on the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence discussed above, social media marketing is consistently identified as an important factor influencing consumer buying interest. Through engaging content, interactive communication, promotional activities, and social influence, social media marketing can shape consumer perceptions and encourage favorable purchase intentions.

From the perspective of the Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) model, social media marketing represents an external stimulus capable of shaping consumers' perceptions and emotional reactions, which in turn influence their behavioral intentions. Empirical evidence from prior studies further supports this proposition by demonstrating that social media marketing is positively associated with consumers' buying interest across a range of digital commerce platforms. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant influence on Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop.

3. METHODS

This research adopted a quantitative methodology to investigate the effect of social media marketing on the buying interest of Generation Z consumers who utilize TikTok Shop. The quantitative approach was selected because it allows relationships between variables to be examined systematically through statistical procedures, thereby generating empirical evidence regarding the extent to which social media marketing contributes to consumers' purchase intentions in social commerce settings.

The study examined two primary variables: social media marketing as the independent variable and buying interest as the dependent variable. The measurement of social media marketing was based on the framework developed by Gunelius (2011), which encompasses four key dimensions, namely content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building. Each dimension was operationalized through two questionnaire items, resulting in eight indicators used to assess the social media marketing construct.

Buying interest was measured using the conceptual framework proposed by Ferdinand (2014), consisting of four dimensions: transactional interest, referential interest, preferential interest, and explorative interest. Similar to the independent variable, each dimension was represented by two measurement items, producing a total of eight indicators for the buying interest construct.

Overall, the research instrument contained sixteen statement items designed to capture respondents' perceptions of the studied variables. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1, indicating strong disagreement, to 5, indicating strong agreement.

The population of this study comprised Generation Z consumers who actively use TikTok Shop as a social commerce platform. Since the exact population size could not be identified, a purposive sampling technique was employed to select respondents who met specific criteria, namely: (1) belonging to the Generation Z age category, (2) actively using TikTok Shop, and (3) having experience viewing or purchasing products through TikTok Shop. The determination of the sample size in this study followed the guideline proposed by Hair et al. (2019), which suggests that the minimum number of respondents should be five times the total number of indicators included in the research instrument. Since this study utilized sixteen indicators, the minimum required sample size was calculated to be 80 respondents (16×5). Based on this criterion, a total of 80 participants were involved in the research.

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire distributed to selected respondents. The instrument was developed to measure respondents' perceptions of social media marketing activities on TikTok Shop as well as their buying interest toward products promoted on the platform. Before proceeding to hypothesis testing, the collected data were evaluated through validity and reliability tests to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the measurement instrument.

To analyze the relationship between social media marketing and buying interest, a simple linear regression model was applied, expressed as follows:

$$Y = a + bX + e$$

In this model, Y represents buying interest, X denotes social media marketing, a refers to the constant term, b indicates the regression coefficient, and e represents the error term.

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26 through several stages, including descriptive analysis, classical assumption testing, and simple linear regression. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize respondents' evaluations of each variable. Subsequently, classical assumption tests were conducted to verify the suitability of the regression model. The normality assumption was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test in combination with normal probability plots to examine whether the residuals followed a normal distribution. In addition, heteroscedasticity was tested using a scatterplot approach to determine whether the residual variance remained constant across observations.

After all classical assumptions were satisfied, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the effect of social media marketing on buying interest among Generation Z consumers of TikTok Shop. The significance of the relationship was tested using the t-test and p-value with a 5% significance level (0.05). The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also used to assess the extent to which social media marketing explains variations in buying interest. The hypothesis was considered supported when the significance value was below 0.05,

indicating that social media marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on buying interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions regarding Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables		
Variable	Mean	Category
Social Media Marketing	4.05	High
Buying Interest	3.88	High

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results presented in Table 1, the Social Media Marketing variable recorded an average score of 4.05, which reflects a high level of positive perception among respondents toward social media marketing activities on TikTok Shop. This result indicates that Generation Z consumers view activities such as content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building as both effective and engaging. It also implies that social media marketing plays a significant role as a communication medium for delivering product information, enhancing consumer engagement, and supporting interaction between sellers and buyers.

In addition, the Buying Interest variable achieved a mean value of 3.88, which is also classified within the high category. This suggests that Generation Z consumers exhibit a relatively strong inclination to purchase products promoted through TikTok Shop. Their responses indicate positive tendencies across transactional, referential, preferential, and explorative interest dimensions. Overall, the findings demonstrate that both social media marketing and buying interest are perceived at a high level among Generation Z users of TikTok Shop.

4.2 Classical Assumption Tests

4.2.1 Normality Test

The assessment of normality was carried out using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test to examine whether the residuals from the regression model follow a normal distribution. The test outcomes are reported in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality Test Results	
Indicator	Value
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	0.094
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.076
Conclusion	Normally Distributed

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Referring to Table 2, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.076, which exceeds the significance threshold of 0.05. This indicates that the residuals are normally distributed. Accordingly, the assumption of normality is satisfied, and the regression model can be considered suitable for subsequent analysis.

Furthermore, the Normal P-P Plot shown in Figure 1 demonstrates that the residual points are distributed relatively close to the diagonal line and generally follow its direction. Although there are slight deviations at several points, the overall pattern indicates that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. Thus, the graphical analysis supports the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and confirms that the normality assumption has been satisfied.

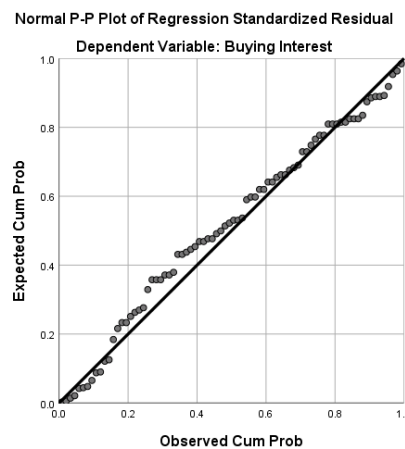


Figure 1. Normal Probability Plot
Source: Processed Data (2026)

4.2.2 Heteroscedasticity Test

The presence of heteroscedasticity was examined using a scatterplot analysis of standardized residuals versus predicted values. This procedure was applied to assess whether the variance of the residuals remained stable across different levels of the independent variable.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the residual points are spread randomly both above and below the horizontal axis (zero line) and do not exhibit any clear pattern, such as funnel-shaped dispersion, cyclical movement, or systematic clustering. The relatively random distribution of points suggests that the variance of the residuals is constant. Based on these observations, it can be concluded that the regression model does not suffer from heteroscedasticity, indicating that the assumption of homoscedasticity has been met and the model is appropriate for further analysis.

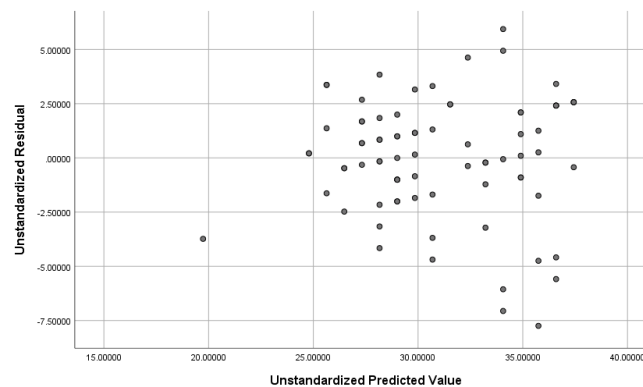


Figure 1. Scatterplot of Residuals and Predicted Values

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Overall, the results of the classical assumption tests indicate that the regression model satisfies both the normality and homoscedasticity requirements. Consequently, the model is considered appropriate for use in simple linear regression analysis to examine the effect of Social Media Marketing on Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression was applied to investigate the influence of Social Media Marketing on Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.723	2.184	-	1.705	0.092
1 Social Media Marketing	0.843	0.067	0.820	12.632	0.000

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results presented in Table 3, the regression model can be expressed as follows:

$$Y = 3.723 + 0.843X$$

where:

- Y = Buying Interest
- X = Social Media Marketing

The positive regression coefficient for Social Media Marketing (0.843) indicates that an improvement in social media marketing activities is associated with an increase in consumers' buying interest. This suggests that well-executed social media marketing strategies such as content creation, content dissemination, interaction building, and community engagement can strengthen consumers' intention to purchase products offered through TikTok Shop.

In addition, the t-statistic for Social Media Marketing is 12.632 with a significance level of 0.000, which is below 0.05. This confirms that Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on Buying Interest among Generation Z users of TikTok Shop. These results highlight the crucial role of social media marketing in shaping consumer purchase intentions within social commerce platforms

4.4 Coefficient of Determination

Table 4. Coefficient of Determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.820	0.627	0.667

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on Table 4, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is reported at 0.672. This means that 67.2% of the variation in Buying Interest can be explained by Social Media Marketing, while the remaining 32.8% is influenced by other variables not included in the model, such as brand image, product quality, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencer marketing, trust, perceived value, promotional strategies, and other behavioral factors. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.820$) indicates a strong positive relationship between Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest. This finding implies that higher levels of social media marketing activity are likely to be followed by increased buying interest among Generation Z consumers on TikTok Shop. Furthermore, the ANOVA results show an F-value of 159.556 with a significance level of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that the regression model is statistically significant and appropriate for explaining the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

Table 6. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	t-value	Sig.	Decision
Social Media Marketing → Buying Interest	12.632	0.000	Supported

Source: Processed Data (2026)

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant effect on Buying Interest, as reflected by a significance value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold. Accordingly, the proposed hypothesis is supported.

These findings imply that an increase in the effectiveness of social media marketing activities on TikTok Shop is associated with higher levels of consumer buying interest. In particular, Generation Z consumers tend to show stronger purchase intentions when they are exposed to engaging content, relevant product information, interactive communication, and active online community engagement facilitated through social media marketing strategies.

4.6 Discussion

The results of this study reveal that Social Media Marketing exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on Buying Interest among Generation Z users of TikTok Shop. This is evidenced by the positive regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.843$) as well as the significance value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 threshold. These results indicate that enhancements in social media marketing activities are closely associated with an increase in consumers' purchase intentions. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.672$) shows that Social Media Marketing accounts for 67.2% of the variance in Buying Interest. This finding suggests that social media marketing plays a substantial role as a key determinant influencing purchase intention among Generation Z consumers within the TikTok Shop ecosystem.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support the concept of Social Media Marketing proposed by Gunelius (2011), which emphasizes that effective social media marketing is built upon four key dimensions: content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building. These dimensions enable businesses to create meaningful interactions with consumers rather than merely delivering promotional messages. In the context of TikTok Shop, attractive content, interactive communication, and active online communities create a more engaging shopping experience, which ultimately stimulates consumers' interest in purchasing products. The high mean score of Social Media Marketing (4.05) further indicates that respondents perceive TikTok Shop's marketing activities positively, suggesting that the platform successfully utilizes social media features to attract and retain consumer attention.

The findings can also be explained through Consumer Behavior Theory, which argues that consumer purchase decisions are influenced by both informational and psychological stimuli (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Social media platforms provide consumers with product information, reviews, recommendations, demonstrations, and user-generated content that reduce uncertainty and increase confidence toward products. As a result, consumers become more interested in purchasing products that are frequently promoted and discussed within their social networks. For Generation Z consumers, who are highly connected to digital technologies and social media, these stimuli play a particularly important role in shaping purchase intentions.

Moreover, these findings are in line with the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Theory introduced by Albert Mehrabian and James A. Russell (1974). From this perspective, social media marketing activities are viewed as external stimuli that shape consumers' internal cognitive evaluations as well as their emotional reactions. Content displayed on TikTok Shop, such as short videos, product demonstrations, promotional campaigns, and consumer reviews, serves as a stimulus that generates positive perceptions and interest toward products. These internal responses subsequently lead to behavioral outcomes in the form of buying interest. Therefore, the stronger the marketing stimuli delivered through TikTok Shop, the greater the likelihood that consumers will develop intentions to purchase the promoted products.

The strong relationship identified in this study is reflected by the correlation coefficient ($R = 0.820$), which indicates a strong positive association between Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest. This finding suggests that social media marketing has become more than a promotional tool; it has evolved into a strategic mechanism that shapes consumer perceptions,

attitudes, and purchase intentions. The ability of TikTok Shop to integrate entertainment, information, and shopping experiences within a single platform appears to be particularly effective in attracting Generation Z consumers, who generally prefer interactive and visually engaging digital content.

The findings of this study are consistent with Hikmah and Abdillah (2024), who found that social media marketing activities implemented through TikTok Shop significantly increase consumer buying interest. Their study highlighted that product quality information, attractive pricing, promotional offers, and ease of shopping provided through TikTok Shop positively influence consumers' willingness to purchase products. Similarly, Purwaningrum and Pramono (2024) reported that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on online buying interest among TikTok Shop users in Bandung. Their findings suggest that effective social media content enhances consumer engagement and strengthens purchase intention, supporting the results obtained in the present study.

In addition, the findings are consistent with the study conducted by Rahmayani et al. (2022), which reported that the use of social media has a significant effect on consumers' buying interest. Their research highlighted that social media is not limited to being a communication channel, but also serves as an effective marketing tool that can shape consumer perceptions and stimulate purchase intentions. Similarly, Utari and Yulida (2023) revealed that social media marketing activities on Instagram have a significant impact on consumer buying interest. Their results suggest that social media platforms enable firms to build stronger relationships with consumers while simultaneously enhancing consumers' motivation to make purchases.

Furthermore, the findings are in line with Sophia and Muslichah (2024), who revealed that social media marketing activities positively and significantly influence buying interest through enhanced consumer engagement and brand-related interactions. Their research suggests that social media marketing enables businesses to create stronger emotional connections with consumers, which ultimately encourages purchase intentions. This argument is particularly relevant to TikTok Shop, where interactive content, live streaming features, and user participation create immersive shopping experiences that strengthen consumer interest in products.

The strong explanatory capability of the regression model suggests that Social Media Marketing plays an important role in shaping Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers. However, around 32.8% of the variation in Buying Interest is not accounted for by the model, indicating the presence of other influencing factors beyond the scope of this study. These factors may include brand image, consumer trust, perceived value, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencer credibility, product quality, attractiveness of promotional activities, and overall consumer experience. Accordingly, future research is encouraged to include these variables in order to develop a more comprehensive explanation of buying interest within social commerce contexts.

From a practical perspective, the findings imply that businesses operating on TikTok Shop should prioritize the development of effective social media marketing strategies. Marketers should focus on producing creative and informative content, encouraging content sharing, strengthening interactions with consumers, and fostering online communities around their brands. Such strategies can increase consumer engagement, improve perceptions of products, and ultimately stimulate buying interest. Given the strong influence identified in this study, social media marketing should be viewed as a strategic investment rather than merely a promotional activity.

Overall, this study demonstrates that Social Media Marketing plays a crucial role in shaping Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop. The findings confirm that purchase intentions in social commerce environments are not solely influenced by product attributes but are also significantly shaped by digital interactions, content quality, and social engagement facilitated through social media platforms. Therefore, understanding and optimizing social media marketing activities is essential for businesses seeking to enhance consumer buying interest in the increasingly competitive digital marketplace.

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

This study was conducted to analyze the effect of Social Media Marketing on Buying Interest among Generation Z users of TikTok Shop. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that Social Media Marketing has a positive and statistically significant influence on Buying Interest. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of social media marketing activities is directly associated with an increase in consumers' intention to purchase products offered through TikTok Shop. Respondents responded positively to the dimensions of content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building, which collectively contributed to strengthening their purchasing interest. This indicates that social media marketing plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase intentions within social commerce settings.

In addition, the results show that Social Media Marketing accounts for 67.2% of the variation in Buying Interest, reflecting a relatively strong relationship between the two variables. This implies that Generation Z consumers are highly responsive to marketing efforts delivered through social media platforms. Elements such as engaging content, interactive communication, dissemination of product information, and active online communities are able to enhance consumer involvement and stimulate purchase intentions. As individuals who are highly familiar with digital technology, Generation Z tends to rely on social media as a primary reference source in evaluating products prior to making purchase decisions. Therefore, social media marketing plays a strategic role in influencing consumer behavior in digital marketplaces.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research contributes to the existing literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior by providing empirical evidence on the direct impact of Social Media Marketing on Buying Interest among Generation Z consumers in TikTok Shop. The findings reinforce the idea that social media platforms function not only as communication

channels but also as effective marketing instruments that shape consumer perceptions and purchasing intentions. From a practical perspective, the results indicate that businesses and digital marketers should prioritize the development of creative content, encourage content sharing, enhance consumer interaction, and build engaged online communities in order to increase buying interest and improve overall marketing effectiveness.

However, this study is subject to several limitations. First, it only focuses on Social Media Marketing as the independent variable, while Buying Interest may also be affected by other determinants such as brand image, product quality, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), influencer marketing, trust, perceived value, promotional appeal, and consumer experience. Second, the scope of the study is limited to Generation Z consumers who use TikTok Shop, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other age groups or different social commerce platforms. Third, the study applies a simple linear regression approach that only captures the direct relationship between Social Media Marketing and Buying Interest. Therefore, future research is recommended to include additional variables, explore mediating or moderating effects, and employ more advanced analytical methods such as multiple regression or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in social commerce environments

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