

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND ANXIETY ON SELF-REWARD AMONG GENERATION Z

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of social media and anxiety on self-reward among Generation Z. The rapid development of digital technology has made social media an inseparable part of daily life, particularly for Generation Z. On the other hand, excessive social media use is often associated with increased anxiety due to social pressure and social comparison in digital environments. These conditions are believed to influence self-reward behavior as a form of self-appreciation and personal gratification. This research employed a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 103 Generation Z respondents through a questionnaire distributed using a Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using reliability testing and multiple linear regression analysis. The results indicate that social media has a positive and significant effect on self-reward. Meanwhile, anxiety does not have a significant effect on self-reward. Simultaneously, social media and anxiety contribute to self-reward behavior with a coefficient of determination of 16.7%. These findings suggest that social media plays a more substantial role in shaping self-reward behavior among Generation Z compared to anxiety. The study contributes to a better understanding of how digital interactions influence the behavioral patterns of young generations in the modern era.

Keywords: Social Media, Anxiety, Self-Reward, Generation Z, Consumer Behavior.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed various aspects of human life, especially in the way individuals communicate, obtain information, and build social relationships. One of the most influential forms of technological development is social media. Currently, social media has become an important part of the life of modern society, especially Generation Z who is known as the digital native generation. They grew up with the development

of the internet so that the use of social media became an activity that could hardly be separated from daily life.

Social media provides various benefits such as facilitating communication, expanding friendship networks, being a means of entertainment, and providing quick access to information. Various platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, X, YouTube, and Facebook are used by Generation Z for various purposes, ranging from seeking information, sharing experiences, to building self-identity in the digital space. The high intensity of social media use shows that the platform has become one of the factors influencing the behavior and mindset of the younger generation.

Although it has various benefits, the use of social media also has a negative impact. One of the effects that is often discussed in various studies is increased anxiety. Exposure to various content that displays the achievements, lifestyles, and successes of others often encourages individuals to make social comparisons. This condition can cause psychological pressure that leads to insecurity, dissatisfaction with yourself, and anxiety.

Anxiety is an emotional condition characterized by feelings of worry, fear, and discomfort about certain situations. In Generation Z, anxiety can arise due to academic demands, social pressure, future uncertainty, and the influence of the digital environment. High levels of anxiety can affect an individual's behavior in making decisions and in meeting their emotional needs.

One of the behaviors that is increasingly popular among Generation Z is self-reward. Self-reward is a form of appreciation that individuals give to themselves after successfully achieving certain targets or as a form of appreciation for the efforts that have been made. Forms of self-reward can be in the form of buying desired items, enjoying favorite foods, taking a vacation, watching movies, or doing activities that provide personal satisfaction.

The phenomenon of self-reward is growing along with the increasing use of social media. There is a lot of content that features a consumptive lifestyle, self-esteem, and healing concepts that encourage individuals to give gifts to themselves. Social media is not only a means of entertainment but also a source of inspiration in shaping consumption behavior and self-esteem.

In addition to being influenced by social media, self-reward can also be affected by psychological conditions such as anxiety. Individuals who experience emotional distress often use self-reward as a coping mechanism to reduce stress and improve mood. Therefore, it is important to know how social media and anxiety affect self-reward in Generation Z. Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the influence of social media and anxiety on self-reward in Generation Z.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

FRAMEWORK OF THOUGHT AND HYPOTHESIS

The framework of thought in this study is built based on the relationship between social media, anxiety, and self-reward in Generation Z. Social media is a means of digital communication that has a great influence on the mindset, behavior, and lifestyle of the younger generation. The high intensity of social media use can affect consumption behavior and an individual's tendency to reward themselves through self-reward activities.

On the other hand, anxiety is a psychological condition that can arise due to various life pressures, both academic, social, and economic. Individuals who experience anxiety often seek coping mechanisms to reduce perceived pressure. One form of coping that can be done is to give rewards to yourself through self-reward.

Based on previous theories and research, social media and anxiety are thought to have a relationship with self-reward. Therefore, this study examines the influence of the two independent variables on the dependent variables.

Research Framework:

Social Media (X1) → Self-Reward (Y)

Anxiety (X2) → Self-Reward (Y)

Social Media (X1) and Anxiety (X2) → Self-Reward (Y)

Research Hypothesis

H1: Social media affects self-reward in Generation Z.

H2: Anxiety affects self-reward in Generation Z.

H3: Social media and anxiety simultaneously affect self-reward in Generation Z.

3. METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The quantitative approach was chosen because the research aims to test the relationship between variables using statistically analyzed numerical data.

The research population is Generation Z who actively use social media. The research sample was obtained using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling method. The respondent criteria are individuals who fall into the category of Generation Z and actively use social media.

The number of respondents who were successfully collected was 103 people. Primary data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires online using Google Form. The questionnaire was compiled based on the indicators of each research variable. The independent

variables in this study consisted of Social Media (X1) and Anxiety (X2), while the dependent variable was Self-Reward (Y).

The research instrument uses a five-point Likert scale with a choice of answers ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The use of the Likert scale allows researchers to measure respondents' perceptions of each given statement. Before further analysis was carried out, the research instrument was tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. The test results showed a Social Media reliability value of 0.793, Anxiety of 0.883, and Self-Reward of 0.861. All values are above the minimum limit of 0.70 so that the instrument is declared reliable.

Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the influence of Social Media and Anxiety on Self-Reward. In addition, the determination coefficient test and hypothesis test were carried out to determine the level of significance of the relationship between variables.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Respondent Overview

This study involved 103 respondents who were included in the Generation Z category. All respondents were active social media users who had experience in using various digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X. The high use of social media in this age group shows that social media has become an important part of daily life.

Generation Z is known as a group that has wide access to digital technology so that various social, educational, entertainment, and economic activities are carried out through digital media. This condition makes this group relevant to be studied in relation to self-reward behavior.

Example respondent composition

Illustration of respondent gender distribution.



4.2 Reliability Test Results

Reliability testing was carried out using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the consistency of respondents' responses to the research instrument. The test results showed that the Social Media

variable obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.793. The Anxiety variable obtained a value of 0.883, while the Self-Reward variable obtained a value of 0.861.

All of these values are above the minimum limit of 0.70 so that the research instrument is declared reliable. Thus, all indicators used are able to measure research variables consistently.



4.3 Results of Regression Analysis

Based on the results of data processing, regression equations were obtained:

$$Y = 17.817 + 0.481X_1 - 0.147X_2$$

The equation shows that social media has a positive influence on self-reward, while anxiety has a negative influence direction.

The social media coefficient of 0.481 indicates that an increase in the use of social media will increase the individual's tendency to do self-reward. In contrast, an anxiety coefficient of -0.147 suggests that increased anxiety tends to decrease self-reward, although the effect is not statistically significant.

4.4 Discussion of Hypothesis 1: The Influence of Social Media on Self-Reward

The results of the study show that social media has a positive and significant effect on self-reward. These findings show that the higher the intensity of social media use, the higher the individual's tendency to self-reward.

Social media today not only serves as a means of communication, but also as a source of information about lifestyles, consumption trends, and forms of self-esteem. Social media users are constantly exposed to various content that displays shopping experiences, tourist trips, food, beauty products, and entertainment activities that are often associated with the concept of self-reward.

Generation Z is a group that is very active in using social media. Exposure to these various contents can affect an individual's perception of the importance of rewarding oneself. When seeing others share self-rewarding experiences, individuals tend to be motivated to do the same.

The results of this study support the social learning theory that explains that individuals can learn behavior through observation of the behavior of others. Social media is a means that allows the observation process to occur continuously.

In addition, social media can also create new social norms regarding the importance of maintaining mental health and giving self-respect. Various campaigns regarding self-care, healing, and self-love that are widely found on social media also strengthen the tendency of individuals to self-reward.

The findings of this study are in line with previous research showing that social media has an influence on individual consumption behavior and purchasing decisions. The higher the exposure to digital content, the more likely a person is to be motivated to engage in activities related to self-esteem.

4.5 Discussion of Hypothesis 2: The Effect of Anxiety on Self-Reward

The results of the study showed that anxiety did not have a significant effect on self-reward. These findings indicate that the level of anxiety experienced by respondents does not directly determine self-reward behavior.

Theoretically, individuals experiencing anxiety can use self-reward as a coping strategy to reduce emotional distress. However, in this study, this effect was not found significantly.

One possible cause is the variation in the coping mechanism used by respondents. Not all individuals choose self-reward when experiencing anxiety. Some individuals may prefer to talk to friends, do sports, worship, or spend time with family.

In addition, the characteristic of Generation Z that they have extensive access to various sources of information allows them to obtain various alternatives in coping with psychological distress. Therefore, self-reward is not the only option used when experiencing anxiety.

The results of this study also show that self-reward behavior is more influenced by external factors such as social media than internal factors in the form of anxiety.

4.6 Discussion of Hypothesis 3: The Simultaneous Influence of Social Media and Anxiety on Self-Reward

Based on the results of the analysis, the determination coefficient value of 16.7% was obtained. This shows that social media and anxiety together are able to explain the variation in self-reward by 16.7%.

Although the contribution is relatively small, these results suggest that both variables still have a role in explaining self-reward behavior in Generation Z. However, there is still 83.3% of self-reward variations explained by factors outside the study model.

These factors can be in the form of income, lifestyle, social environment, education level, economic conditions, intrinsic motivation, self-control, and popular culture influences. Therefore, further research needs to add other variables so that the research model becomes more comprehensive.

These findings show that self-reward behavior is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be explained through just one or two variables. In the context of Generation Z, the influence of the digital environment has a fairly dominant role compared to the psychological factors studied.

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted on 103 Generation Z respondents, it can be concluded that social media has a positive and significant influence on self-reward. These results show that the higher the use of social media, the higher the individual's tendency to self-reward.

Anxiety has no significant effect on self-reward. Thus, the level of anxiety experienced by respondents is not the main factor that determines self-reward behavior.

Simultaneously, social media and anxiety contributed 16.7% to self-reward, while the rest were influenced by other factors that were not studied. Therefore, further research is recommended to add other relevant variables to be able to explain self-reward behavior more comprehensively.

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