

Comparison of Consumptive Behavior Between The Younger Generation and Housewives in The Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

This study compares consumptive behavior between the younger generation and housewives in the digital era and analyzes how digital culture shapes their shopping patterns. The rapid development of social media, e-commerce platforms, and digital marketing has shifted consumption from fulfilling basic needs toward lifestyle expression, trends, and social identity. This research provides a sociological perspective on how social roles and digital exposure influence differences in consumption behavior. The study uses a small-scale qualitative exploratory approach involving two informants: a college student representing the younger generation and a housewife representing domestic consumers. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and observation, then analyzed using thematic analysis focusing on impulse buying, social media influence, financial management, and shopping motivation. The findings indicate that the younger generation tends to exhibit more impulsive buying behavior, driven by social media trends, influencer content, online promotions, and algorithm-based recommendations. In contrast, housewives demonstrate more controlled consumption patterns, prioritizing household needs, budgeting, and practical considerations, although they also actively use online shopping platforms. Overall, consumptive behavior in the digital era is shaped not only by technological exposure but also by social roles, economic responsibility, and lifestyle orientation. Despite the limited number of participants, this study offers exploratory insights into how digital platforms influence consumption practices and everyday decision-making in different social groups.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Young Generation, Housewives, Digital Era, Social Media

ABSTRAK

Studi ini membandingkan perilaku konsumsi antara generasi muda dan ibu rumah tangga di era digital dan menganalisis bagaimana budaya digital membentuk pola belanja mereka. Perkembangan pesat media sosial, platform e-commerce, dan pemasaran digital telah menggeser konsumsi dari pemenuhan kebutuhan dasar menuju ekspresi gaya hidup, tren, dan identitas sosial. Penelitian ini memberikan perspektif sosiologis tentang bagaimana peran sosial dan paparan digital memengaruhi perbedaan perilaku konsumsi. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan eksplorasi kualitatif skala kecil yang melibatkan dua informan: seorang mahasiswa yang mewakili generasi muda dan seorang ibu rumah tangga yang mewakili konsumen domestik. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan observasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik yang berfokus pada pembelian impulsif, pengaruh media sosial, manajemen keuangan, dan motivasi belanja. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa generasi muda cenderung menunjukkan perilaku pembelian yang lebih impulsif, didorong oleh tren media sosial, konten influencer, promosi online, dan rekomendasi berbasis algoritma. Sebaliknya, ibu rumah tangga menunjukkan



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pola konsumsi yang lebih terkontrol, memprioritaskan kebutuhan rumah tangga, penganggaran, dan pertimbangan praktis, meskipun mereka juga aktif menggunakan platform belanja online. Secara keseluruhan, perilaku konsumsi di era digital dibentuk tidak hanya oleh paparan teknologi tetapi juga oleh peran sosial, tanggung jawab ekonomi, dan orientasi gaya hidup. Meskipun jumlah partisipan terbatas, studi ini menawarkan wawasan eksploratif tentang bagaimana platform digital memengaruhi praktik konsumsi dan pengambilan keputusan sehari-hari di berbagai kelompok sosial.

Kata kunci: Perilaku Konsumtif, Generasi Muda, Ibu Rumah Tangga, Era Digital, Media Sosial

1. Introduction

Currently, the rapid development of technology, social media, and e-commerce platforms has significantly transformed people's lifestyles and consumption patterns. Shopping activities are no longer carried out solely to fulfill basic needs, but also to follow trends, build social identity, and seek personal satisfaction. The emergence of digital platforms such as Shopee, TikTok Shop, and other online marketplaces has created a consumer culture that is increasingly integrated with everyday life. The convenience of online transactions, free shipping promotions, flash sales, and personalized advertisements encourage people to shop more frequently and impulsively.

Research by Husna et al. (2022) explains that the development of e-commerce and digital marketing strategies significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions and encourages impulsive buying behavior. E-commerce systems now cover marketing, transactions, payment methods, and product delivery in a highly efficient digital network. As a result, online shopping has become part of modern society's lifestyle, especially among younger consumers who are highly connected to social media and internet culture (Husna et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Dewi and Prianthara (2025) state that e-commerce platforms apply different promotional strategies to attract consumers. Shopee, for example, utilizes free shipping vouchers, cashback systems, discounts, and flash sales to stimulate purchasing interest. These strategies often encourage consumers to buy products that are not necessarily needed. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as impulse buying, namely unplanned purchasing behavior driven by emotional responses, digital stimulation, and promotional exposure (Dewi & Prianthara, 2025).

The phenomenon of consumptive behavior in the digital era can be analyzed through the concept of consumer society proposed by Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillard argues that in modern society individuals consume goods not only because of their functional value, but also because of their symbolic meanings. Products are consumed as representations of lifestyle, prestige, and social identity. In the context of social media culture, consumers are continuously exposed to trends, influencer content, and visual representations that shape desires and encourage excessive consumption. Therefore, shopping activities increasingly become part of social image construction rather than purely economic necessity.

In addition, the theory of liquid modernity developed by Zygmunt Bauman helps explain how modern society is characterized by instability, rapid change, and temporary satisfaction. Digital platforms constantly produce new trends and consumer desires that quickly replace previous ones. Individuals are encouraged to continuously consume in order to remain connected to contemporary lifestyles and social expectations. This condition is particularly visible among younger generations who actively engage with social media and digital culture.

Consumptive behavior can also be understood through self-control theory. Hasan and Ina (2025) explain that low self-control significantly influences impulsive purchasing behavior among Generation Z consumers. Individuals with weaker self-control are more likely to make emotional and unplanned purchases when exposed to discounts, advertisements, or attractive product displays. In digital environments, this tendency becomes stronger because e-commerce applications are specifically designed to stimulate consumer attention and emotional responses through algorithms and personalized recommendations (Hasan & Ina, 2025).

Several recent studies further support the relationship between digital media and consumptive behavior. Desky et al. (2025) found that digital marketing systems, influencer culture, and hyperreal product displays contribute to impulsive buying behavior among young consumers (Desky et al., 2025). Likewise, Redine et al. (2022) explain that psychological factors, emotional conditions, and situational influences strongly affect online impulse buying behavior. These studies show that consumptive behavior in the digital era is not merely an individual economic activity, but also part of broader social transformations shaped by digital capitalism and media culture.

Research by Luthfi and Ratnasari (2025) also reveals differences in consumption patterns between social groups. Generation Z consumers tend to be more influenced by social media trends, peer groups, and online promotions, while housewives generally prioritize household needs and financial planning. This indicates that social roles, responsibilities, and lifestyle orientations significantly influence consumption behavior in the digital era.

The phenomenon is further strengthened by statistical data. According to We Are Social and DataReportal (2024), around 74.5% of internet users in Indonesia have purchased products online, showing that e-commerce has become deeply integrated into daily activities. Meanwhile, Statista (2023) reports that around 62% of consumers in Southeast Asia make impulse purchases due to discounts, flash sales, and algorithm-based recommendations. Shopee's consumer survey (2023) also found that many consumers purchase products impulsively because of free shipping promotions and digital advertisements.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to compare consumptive behavior between the younger generation and housewives in the digital era. This research focuses on how social media exposure, online shopping platforms, and modern digital lifestyles influence their purchasing behavior, motivations, and financial considerations. Through a sociological perspective, this study also seeks to understand how digital culture and technological developments shape contemporary patterns of consumption in different social groups.

2. Method

This research was designed as a small-scale exploratory case study focusing on two informants representing different social groups: one college student representing the younger generation and one housewife representing domestic consumers. The study does not aim to generalize the behavior of all young people or housewives, but rather to provide preliminary insights into how digital culture influences consumption patterns in everyday life. The selection of informants was conducted purposively based on several criteria. The younger informant was selected because of her active use of social media and e-commerce applications, while the housewife informant was chosen because she regularly manages household shopping activities and utilizes online shopping platforms in daily life.

Data collection was conducted from October 10–14, 2025 through semi-structured interviews and brief observations in the respondents' living environments. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow informants to explain their experiences more openly while still maintaining focus on the main research themes. The interview questions focused on online shopping habits, social media influence, preferred e-commerce platforms, motivations for purchasing products, financial management, and experiences related to impulsive buying behavior. In addition, observations were conducted to understand how respondents interacted with online shopping applications and digital platforms in their daily activities (Lubis, 2025).

To maintain data accuracy and credibility, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. The researcher also compared interview responses with secondary data from previous studies, digital reports, and statistical surveys such as We Are Social, Statista, and Shopee consumer reports. This process functioned as a simple form of data triangulation to strengthen the interpretation of findings. Furthermore, ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research process. Informants voluntarily agreed to participate in the interviews, and their identities were kept anonymous to maintain privacy and confidentiality.

The data analysis process was conducted using thematic analysis techniques. After transcribing the interviews, the researcher repeatedly reread the data to identify recurring themes, patterns, and meanings related to consumptive behavior. The coding process focused on several major themes, including impulse buying, social media influence, financial considerations, shopping motivations, and digital lifestyle patterns.

The findings from each informant were then compared to identify similarities and differences in their consumption behavior.

The analysis also considered sociological factors influencing each group's behavior. For the younger generation, impulsive buying behavior was interpreted through factors such as fear of missing out (FOMO), exposure to social media trends, influencer culture, and limited financial experience. Meanwhile, the consumption behavior of housewives was strongly related to gender roles, domestic responsibilities, and household financial management. Housewives tended to prioritize family needs, price considerations, and practical benefits when making purchasing decisions. This comparative approach helps explain that consumptive behavior in the digital era is shaped not only by technology, but also by social roles, lifestyle orientations, and everyday responsibilities.

Despite these findings, this study has several limitations. The use of only two informants means that the data cannot fully represent broader social groups. Therefore, the results should be understood as exploratory insights rather than comprehensive conclusions about all young consumers and housewives in Indonesia. Future studies are encouraged to involve more participants from diverse backgrounds and apply deeper qualitative analysis techniques to produce richer and more comprehensive findings.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents the findings from interviews and observations conducted with two informants representing different social groups: one college student representing the younger generation and one housewife representing domestic consumers. The study explores how digital culture, social media exposure, and online shopping platforms shape their consumptive behavior in everyday life. Although this research only involves two participants and therefore cannot be generalized to wider society, the findings provide exploratory insights into different patterns of consumption in the digital era.

To clarify the comparison between the two groups, the following table summarizes their shopping behavior, motivations, and experiences related to online consumption.

Tabel 1. Summarizes shopping behavior

Aspect	Younger Generation	Housewives
Main Shopping Motivation	Trends, personal desire, entertainment, social influence	Household needs and family necessities
Influence of Social Media	Very high; influenced by influencers, trends, and advertisements	Moderate; mainly used for practical shopping purposes
Shopping Behavior	More impulsive and emotionally driven	More planned and rational
Frequently Purchased Items	Fashion items, trending products, accessories	Household equipment, kitchen tools, daily necessities
Financial Consideration	Less stable financial planning; purchases often based on mood	Budget-oriented and focused on financial management
Experience of Regret	Frequently regrets unnecessary purchases	Rarely regrets purchases because most are planned
Role of Promotions	Strongly attracted by flash sales and discounts	Interested in promotions but still prioritizes needs
Purpose of Technology Use	Entertainment, trend-following, lifestyle expression	Practicality and efficiency in household shopping

The findings indicate that the younger generation tends to be more influenced by digital consumer culture compared to housewives. This tendency is not simply caused by age differences, but also by social and psychological factors related to digital lifestyles. The younger informant explained that social media strongly affects her desire to shop because online platforms continuously display attractive products, promotions, and influencer recommendations. This finding reflects Baudrillard's concept of consumer society, where products are consumed not only for functional purposes but also for symbolic meanings such as lifestyle, identity, and social belonging. In digital culture, consumption becomes closely connected to self-image and social recognition.

The impulsive behavior shown by the younger informant can also be interpreted through the concept of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). Social media algorithms constantly expose users to trending products, viral content, and personalized advertisements that create feelings of urgency and social pressure. The respondent admitted that she often bought products simply because they looked attractive on social media or were currently trending. This suggests that online shopping behavior is shaped not only by personal desire but also by algorithmic digital systems designed to stimulate emotional responses and continuous consumption.

In addition, limited financial experience may contribute to impulsive purchasing behavior among younger consumers. As a college student, the informant has not yet fully developed long-term financial responsibility compared to adults managing households. Consequently, shopping decisions are more easily influenced by temporary emotional satisfaction, entertainment, and curiosity toward new trends. This finding supports Hasan and Ina's (2025) argument that weaker self-control increases impulsive buying tendencies among Generation Z consumers in digital environments .

The influence of social media and digital marketing is also supported by external statistical data. According to Statista (2023), approximately 62% of consumers in Southeast Asia make impulse purchases because of discounts, flash sales, and algorithm-based recommendations. Similarly, Shopee's consumer survey (2023) found that many users purchase products impulsively due to free shipping promotions and limited-time discounts. These findings strengthen the interview results showing that online shopping platforms encourage emotional and unplanned consumption behavior.

In contrast, the housewife informant demonstrated a more rational and planned consumption pattern. Although she frequently shops online, her purchases are mostly related to household necessities such as kitchen equipment, home accessories, and daily supplies. Unlike the younger informant, shopping activities among housewives are strongly influenced by domestic responsibilities and gender roles within the family structure.

From a sociological perspective, housewives often occupy the role of household financial managers responsible for maintaining family stability and fulfilling daily needs. This responsibility shapes their consumption behavior to become more selective, practical, and budget-oriented. Even when exposed to promotions and discounts, purchasing decisions are generally evaluated based on usefulness, price, and family priorities. This finding suggests that digital consumer culture does not affect all social groups equally because social roles and responsibilities mediate how individuals respond to technological influence.

The findings also relate to Bauman's concept of liquid modernity, where modern society is characterized by rapidly changing desires, unstable trends, and temporary satisfaction. Both informants experience the influence of digital culture, yet they respond differently according to their social positions and everyday responsibilities. The younger generation tends to engage more actively with fast-changing trends and lifestyle consumption, while housewives use technology more pragmatically to simplify domestic activities.

However, this study also has important limitations. Because the research only involves two informants, the findings cannot represent all younger consumers or housewives in Indonesia. Therefore, statements such as "the younger generation tends to be more impulsive" should be understood as exploratory observations rather than universal conclusions. The study relies on small-scale qualitative insights supported by external statistical reports to contextualize the findings. Future studies involving more participants and deeper sociological analysis are needed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of digital consumer behavior across different social groups.

Overall, the findings show that consumptive behavior in the digital era is shaped not only by technology itself but also by social identity, financial experience, gender roles, and everyday responsibilities. Digital platforms encourage consumption through algorithms, promotions, and visual culture, yet individuals interpret and respond to these influences differently depending on their social context and lifestyle orientation.

4. Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the main research question regarding how consumptive behavior differs between the younger generation and housewives in the digital era and how digital culture influences their shopping patterns. Based on the limited qualitative data obtained from interviews and observations, the findings show that both groups are influenced by technological developments and online shopping platforms, but they respond to these influences in different ways according to their social roles, lifestyle orientations, and financial responsibilities.

The younger generation tends to demonstrate more impulsive and emotionally driven consumption behavior. Their purchasing decisions are strongly influenced by social media trends, digital advertisements, influencer culture, flash sales, and algorithm-based recommendations. Shopping activities are not only related to fulfilling practical needs but also connected to lifestyle expression, social identity, entertainment, and the desire to remain connected to current trends. This finding reflects the concept of consumer society proposed by Jean Baudrillard, where consumption increasingly functions as a symbolic activity rather than purely an economic necessity. The study also indicates that digital platforms encourage continuous consumption by creating feelings of urgency and social pressure through personalized algorithms and trend circulation.

In contrast, housewives tend to show more rational and planned consumption patterns. Although they actively use online shopping applications, their purchasing behavior is generally shaped by domestic responsibilities and household financial management. Their shopping decisions are more focused on practicality, usefulness, price comparison, and family needs. This suggests that gender roles and family responsibilities significantly influence how individuals interact with digital consumer culture. Technology is therefore not experienced equally by all social groups, because social position and everyday responsibilities mediate consumption behavior.

From a sociological perspective, this study contributes to discussions about digital consumer culture by showing that online shopping behavior is shaped not only by individual preferences but also by broader social structures, cultural expectations, and technological systems. Digital platforms do not merely function as shopping tools; they also shape social identity, lifestyle aspirations, and patterns of economic behavior in everyday life. Social media algorithms, influencer culture, and promotional systems continuously encourage individuals to consume in order to maintain social relevance and emotional satisfaction in modern digital society.

However, this study has several important limitations. Since the research only involved two informants, the findings cannot be generalized to all younger consumers or housewives in Indonesia. The study should therefore be understood as a small-scale exploratory analysis rather than a comprehensive representation of social behavior. In addition, the research relies heavily on external statistical data to contextualize the findings, which indicates the limited empirical depth of the primary interview data.

Future sociological research is encouraged to involve more participants from different social classes, age groups, occupations, and cultural backgrounds in order to produce richer and more representative findings. Further studies could also explore the relationship between digital consumer culture and issues such as identity formation, financial anxiety, social status, gender expectations, and mental health. In this way, research on consumptive behavior can contribute more critically to understanding how digital capitalism and technological developments transform everyday social life in contemporary society.

Overall, this study demonstrates that consumptive behavior in the digital era is not simply an economic activity, but also a social and cultural phenomenon shaped by technology, media exposure, social identity, and everyday responsibilities. Therefore, increasing financial awareness, digital literacy, and critical understanding of online consumer culture becomes increasingly important in helping individuals navigate modern digital lifestyles more responsibly.

5. Suggestion

Based on the results of research that has been conducted, researchers suggest that the younger generation should be more careful and intelligent in shopping, especially in the digital era which is full of promotions and the influence of social media. The younger generation is expected to be able to resist the impulsive impulse to buy unnecessary items, by distinguishing between needs and desires. Making a financial plan and limiting the time in using social media can help reduce excessive consumptive habits.

For housewives, it is expected that they can continue to adapt to technological developments wisely, such as utilizing online shopping applications to find the best prices and household needs without neglecting the principle of savings and careful financial planning. In addition, the wider community also needs to increase awareness of the negative impact of consumptive behavior on economic and social conditions. Education about financial and digital literacy is very important so that people can become wise consumers, not easily influenced by trends, and be able to manage their finances better in the midst of the rapid flow of modernization and digital culture today.

Future researchers are also encouraged to conduct broader and deeper studies involving more participants from various backgrounds. This will help enrich the understanding of consumer behavior across different generations and provide a more comprehensive view of how digital culture influences people's lifestyles.

6. Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest related to the writing or publication of this research. This study was carried out purely for academic and educational purposes, without any financial support, sponsorship, or influence from any individual, organization, or commercial institution. All findings and conclusions presented in this paper are based solely on the author's own observations and analysis during the research process.

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