

USER-GENERATED CONTENT AND PURCHASE INTENTION OF GENERATION Z (A STUDY ON @HALAMANTERAKHIR_)

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined the effect of user-generated content (UGC) on purchase intention among Generation Z users of the Instagram account @halamanterakhir_. UGC was measured through four dimensions: credibility, informativeness, attractiveness, and engagement. Purchase intention was operationalized through interest, intention to purchase, and recommendation willingness. The sample consisted of 120 Generation Z respondents (age 17–28) domiciled in West Java who are active Instagram users and have seen or interacted with @halamanterakhir_ content. Data were collected with a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS v27 with simple linear regression. Results show that UGC significantly predicts purchase intention ($R = .604$, $R^2 = .365$, $F(1,118) = 67.78$, $p < .001$). The regression coefficient indicates that a one-unit increase in UGC score is associated with a 0.472 increase in purchase intention. The study concludes that UGC explains 36.5% of the variance in purchase intention among Generation Z in this sample. Practical implications for social media marketing and limitations are discussed.

Key words: User-Generated Content; Purchase Intention; Generation Z; Digital Marketing; Social Media; Instagram.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of social media has transformed the way consumers interact with brands, products, and fellow users in the digital environment. Among the various forms of social media activity, user-generated content (UGC) has emerged as a dominant force influencing consumer perceptions and behavior. UGC refers to any type of content such as photos, videos, reviews, or comments, created and shared voluntarily by users rather than by official brand representatives. The credibility of such content often surpasses that of traditional advertising because it is perceived as more authentic and unbiased. In the era of participatory culture, consumers have become active contributors to brand narratives. This shift has made UGC an important determinant of purchase intention, particularly among younger consumers who are digitally native and socially connected, such as Generation Z. Members of this generation have grown up surrounded by technology, and their purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by online communities and peer-generated recommendations. For brands operating on platforms like Instagram, where visual engagement and community interaction are central, the impact of UGC is especially powerful (Aini & Dakwah, 2024).

The Instagram account @halamanterakhir_ represents how localized content can resonate with niche audiences through emotional storytelling, aesthetics, and engagement-driven posts. In such spaces, UGC functions as a central component of marketing communication. Generation Z users often rely on user comments, tagged posts, and shared experiences when evaluating a product or service (Jia Xin & Noor, 2025). This reliance stems from the social proof effect individuals tend to trust the opinions and behaviors of others when making decisions under uncertainty. Consequently, UGC becomes a form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) that affects not only awareness but also consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations of products (Anindyantari & Hijrah Hati, 2024). Prior research highlights that the effectiveness of UGC depends on several key dimensions: credibility, informativeness, attractiveness, and engagement (Erkan & Evans, 2016; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006; Muntinga et al., 2011; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016). Together, these dimensions shape consumers' psychological responses and behavioral intentions toward a product or brand.

Purchase intention reflects an individual's likelihood or willingness to buy a product after being exposed to marketing stimuli. It encompasses several stages, including the initial interest in a product, the conscious desire or plan to buy it, and the willingness to recommend it to others (Dodds et al., 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Kotler & Keller, 2016). In social media marketing, high-quality UGC enhances all three stages by building trust and generating emotional connections. For Generation Z, purchase intention often stems from social validation and identity expression.

Despite the growing body of literature on digital marketing, research focusing specifically on the relationship between UGC and purchase intention among Generation Z in Indonesia remains limited (Erwin, Saununu, & Rukmana, 2024). Few studies have focused on localized Instagram accounts such as @halamanterakhir_, which attract audiences through regional humor, lifestyle representation, and community identity. This presents an opportunity to explore how UGC influences the purchasing tendencies of Indonesian Gen Z users within a culturally contextualized digital environment.

However, while previous studies have examined UGC in various contexts, limited attention has been given to localized digital communities in Indonesia such as @halamanterakhir_, where cultural identity and peer engagement play a unique role in shaping purchase decisions.

METHOD

This research adopted a method that relies on numbers to a purposive sampling design explore how user-created content (UGC) affects buying intentions among Generation Z users of the Instagram account @halamanterakhir_. The quantitative method allowed objective measurement of relationships between variables through numerical data analysis, while the cross-sectional design enabled data collection at one point in time to capture participants’ perceptions and behaviors. The population consisted of Generation Z individuals aged 17–28 years who live in West Java, actively use Instagram, and have interacted with @halamanterakhir_. As of the time of data collection, the @halamanterakhir_ account had approximately 4,744 followers, which served as the total population in this study. Based on the Isaac and Michael sampling formula with a 10% margin of error (e = 0.10), the minimum required sample size was 98 respondents. Therefore, the final total of 120 valid responses met and exceeded this requirement, ensuring adequate representativeness for statistical analysis. Using purposive sampling ensured that all respondents met these criteria and had relevant experience with the research object. Data was gathered via an online survey, which a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), focused on two key elements: user-generated content as the factor being studied and purchase intention as the outcome being measured. All measurement items demonstrated acceptable construct validity with item-total correlation values above $r = 0.30$ (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022). Reliability testing showed that all constructs were internally consistent, with Cronbach’s Alpha values of 0.89 for User-Generated Content (UGC) and 0.88 for Purchase Intention (PI) (Taber, 2018). These results indicate that all components are accurate and dependable, and the tools are suitable for further statistical examination using SPSS version 27. The information obtained was then evaluated and analyzed using SPSS version 27, which included descriptive statistics to define the characteristics of respondents and inferential statistics with simple linear regression to test the suggested hypothesis.

H₀: User-Generated Content (UGC) has no significant effect on Purchase Intention among Generation Z Instagram users.

H₁: User-Generated Content (UGC) has a considerable impact on Purchase Intention among Generation Z Instagram users.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the research detail the statistical findings obtained from the quantitative analysis using SPSS version 27. Data were collected from 120 respondents who met the established criteria: Generation Z individuals aged 17–28 years, domiciled in West Java, active on Instagram, and who have interacted with the @halamanterakhir_ account. Prior to hypothesis testing, descriptive analysis confirmed that the data met normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity assumptions, allowing for the application of simple linear regression to test the research hypothesis. The main objective was to determine the effect of User-Generated Content (UGC) on Purchase Intention (PI) among Generation Z users of @halamanterakhir_.

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.604	.365	.359	2.537

Table 1. Model Summary

Source: SPSS 27 Output (processed, 2025)

The findings in Table 1 display a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.604, suggesting a moderate to strong positive link between UGC and purchase intention. The coefficient of determination (R²) stands at 0.365, indicating that 36.5% of the variation in purchase intention can be attributed to UGC, while the other 63.5% is affected by different elements. The adjusted R² value of 0.359 indicates the model's reliability. An ANOVA test was performed to check the significance of the model.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	436.326	1	436.326	67.777	.000
Residual	759.640	118	6.438		
Total	1195.967	119			

Table 2. ANOVA

Source: SPSS 27 Output (processed, 2025)

As shown in Table 2, the F-value is 67.777 with $p < 0.001$, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. Thus, variations in UGC scores significantly predict variations in purchase intention among Generation Z respondents. The regression coefficients illustrating how UGC influences purchase intention can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Coefficients

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	14.976	2.869	—	5.220	.000
User-Generated Content	0.472	0.057	.604	8.233	.000

Source: SPSS 27 Output (processed, 2025)

According to Table 3, the regression formula for the model can be written as follows:

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = 14.976 + 0.472(\text{User-Generated Content})$$

The unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.472$) indicates that for every one-unit increase in UGC, purchase intention increases by 0.472 units, assuming other factors remain constant. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.604$) and t-value (8.233, $p < 0.001$) confirm that UGC significantly predicts purchase intention. These results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a), which states that UGC significantly affects purchase intention among Generation Z users of @halamanterakhir_.

Overall, the findings indicate that UGC contributes substantially to shaping Generation Z's purchase intention on social media. The R^2 value (0.365) suggests that UGC comprising credibility, informativeness, attractiveness, and engagement plays an important role in influencing consumers' desire, interest, and willingness to recommend products. This supports prior research emphasizing the persuasive power of authentic and interactive online content. It also reinforces that Generation Z consumers are highly responsive to peer-created and relatable social media content rather than traditional brand-driven promotions.

The results are consistent with previous studies highlighting the persuasive role of UGC in shaping consumer behavior. UGC functions as a form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which consumers perceive as more trustworthy and authentic than traditional advertising (Putra, 2024; Erkan & Evans, 2016). UGC enhances brand credibility and emotional engagement key antecedents of purchase intention. The findings align with the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) model, where UGC acts as an external stimulus triggering cognitive and emotional responses (trust, interest, engagement), which lead to behavioral responses (purchase intention).

From a behavioral perspective, Generation Z values authenticity, interactivity, and social approval, preferring peer-generated narratives over traditional advertisements. This supports Djafarova and Bowes (2021), who note that peer creators act as opinion leaders in Gen Z's decision-making. Thus, UGC serves not only as a source of information but also as a means of identity validation, social bonding, and symbolic consumption. Respondents who rated UGC more positively also reported higher levels of purchase intention and recommendation willingness.

Finally, the results provide practical implications for digital marketing. Marketers and content managers of @halamanterakhir_ should cultivate authentic UGC that reflects real user experiences, ensure informativeness by providing relevant product details, and enhance visual appeal through emotional storytelling. Encouraging engagement through interactive campaigns such as challenges, polls, or collaborative posts can further strengthen community participation and consumer trust.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this research reveal that User-Generated Content (UGC) has a notable and positive effect on Purchase Intention among Generation Z followers of the Instagram account @halamanterakhir_. The regression analysis indicates that UGC explains 36.5% of the variation in purchase intention, demonstrating that higher levels of credible, informative, attractive, and engaging user content lead to stronger purchase interest and recommendation willingness. These findings confirm that UGC plays an essential role in shaping consumer behavior on social media and should be strategically managed to enhance audience trust and engagement.

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