

# Generational Differences in Smartphone Purchase Behavior: A Comparative Analysis of Social Media Marketing Strategies

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**Received:**  
05/08/2025  
**Revised:**  
16/08/2025  
**Accepted:**  
08/09/2025  
**Published:**  
15/09/2025

## ABSTRACT

The rise of social media marketing (SMM) has notably influenced consumer behavior, especially in the smartphone industry, as brands increasingly use digital platforms to shape purchase decisions. This study aims to examine the comparative impact of SMM strategies—such as influencer marketing, content creation, and paid advertisements—on smartphone purchasing intentions across three generational cohorts: Generation X (born 1965–1977), Generation Y (Millennials, born 1977–1994), and Generation Z (born after 1994). A comparative research methodology was employed to assess differences in content preferences, platform usage, and engagement with social media influencers across these generational groups. Data was collected from 381 respondents through an online self-administered questionnaire, focusing on variables such as purchase intention, brand loyalty, and consumer engagement. The analysis employed descriptive statistics, Multiple Linear Regression, and ANOVA to test the research hypotheses and examine generational differences. Findings suggest that while social media marketing significantly influences Generation Z's purchase behavior, Millennials respond to personalized content and brand interactions, whereas Generation X remains more skeptical, relying on traditional media for purchasing decisions. The study contributes valuable insights into the generational differences in social media engagement and provides actionable recommendations for marketers to tailor their strategies according to generational preferences.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Smartphone Purchase Behavior, Generational Differences, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, Influencer Marketing, Consumer Engagement.



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## INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital marketing, especially social media marketing (SMM), has significantly altered consumer behavior in recent years, particularly in the smartphone industry. Smartphones, now integral to daily life, have become a key product in global consumer markets, and their purchase decisions are increasingly shaped by social media content (Arachchi & Mendis, 2021; Bläse et al., 2024). With the vast amount of digital content available on social media platforms, brands are leveraging these spaces to reach specific target audiences through tailored marketing strategies. These strategies, ranging from influencer endorsements to interactive advertisements, aim to influence consumer perceptions and ultimately drive purchasing behavior. However, the impact of such strategies is not uniform across all consumers, as different generations exhibit varied responses to digital marketing (Arifin & Syah, 2023; Fadhila & Adiwijaya, 2025).

Social media engagement and its subsequent impact on purchasing decisions are often shaped by generational differences. Generation X (born 1965-1977), known for its adaptation to technology rather than being digital natives, approaches digital marketing with a more cautious, skeptical mindset (Ngo et al., 2024). Millennials (Generation Y, born 1977-1994), on the other hand, are characterized by their high levels of online engagement and brand loyalty, often driven by convenience and personalization (Samarasinghe & Lakchan, 2021). Generation Z (born after 1994), the first true generation of digital natives, displays unique preferences in how they interact with brands online, showing a preference for influencer-led, authentic content and often prioritizing brand transparency and social responsibility (Vijaya et al., 2023).

Despite these broad characterizations, there remains a notable lack of comparative research examining how these generational groups interact with smartphone

brands through social media marketing (Çelik & Divanoğlu, 2025). While some studies suggest that younger generations, particularly Generation Z, are highly influenced by social media marketing (Ninan et al., 2020; Azmi et al., 2025), others argue that older generations, such as Generation X, are less likely to make purchase decisions based solely on social media content (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022). This research aims to address this gap by exploring how social media marketing strategies, including influencer marketing, content creation, and paid ads, impact smartphone purchase intentions across these generational cohorts. The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of social media marketing on the smartphone purchasing intentions of Generation X, Y, and Z. By employing a comparative research methodology, this study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of how these generational groups engage with and respond to social media content. Specifically, the study focuses on several key variables: the role of influencer marketing, content style preferences (visual vs. informational), platform usage (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook), and the impact of user-generated content and gamification (e.g., interactive polls and quizzes) in shaping purchase behaviors (Chen & Lin, 2024; Sun & Xing, 2022).

This research is situated within the broader discourse on digital marketing's role in shaping consumer behavior, contributing to a growing body of literature on the intersection of technology, consumer psychology, and social media marketing (Gurunathan & Lakshmi, 2023). By comparing the responses of different generations to these marketing strategies, the study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of social media marketing across age groups, helping marketers and brands refine their strategies to better cater to generational preferences and behaviors.

**Objective:** To examine the impact of social media marketing on the purchase intentions of Generation X, Y, and Z.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Behavior

Social media marketing (SMM) has become an indispensable tool in influencing consumer behavior. With platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter becoming mainstream in everyday life, they offer brands the opportunity to interact directly with consumers, making social media a critical space for shaping purchasing decisions (Arachchi & Mendis, 2021). Studies have shown that SMM campaigns leverage several strategies—such as influencer marketing, user-generated content, paid ads, and content creation—to drive engagement and influence brand loyalty and purchase intention (Gurunathan & Lakshmi, 2023). Social media has allowed brands to create targeted, personalized advertisements that resonate with specific consumer segments, which is crucial in the highly competitive smartphone industry (Bläse et al., 2024). Research suggests that SMM has

a significant impact on purchase intentions. When consumers are exposed to persuasive advertisements on social media, their likelihood of purchasing a product increases, particularly if the advertisements reflect a sense of trustworthiness or familiarity (Vijaya et al., 2023). This trend is especially prominent among younger generations, such as Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z, who are more likely to engage with social media and view it as a source of product recommendations and reviews (Ninan et al., 2020). For instance, influencer marketing, where influencers endorse a product on social media, has been proven to increase trust in a product and subsequently influence purchase behavior, particularly among Generation Z consumers (Azmi et al., 2025).

### Generational Differences in Social Media Marketing Engagement

The effectiveness of social media marketing strategies varies significantly across generations. Generation X (born 1965–1977) is often described as less digitally engaged compared to their younger counterparts. Despite the prevalence of social media, members of Generation X are more cautious when interacting with digital advertisements. They tend to value authenticity and rely on traditional media for purchasing decisions rather than social media content (Ngo et al., 2024). While they engage with social media platforms, their levels of trust in influencer recommendations and online advertisements are lower than that of younger generations (Fadhila & Adiwijaya, 2025). Millennials (Generation Y, born 1977–1994), however, display a different pattern. As digital pioneers, Millennials engage more frequently with social media and are more likely to trust digital content, including product reviews, influencer recommendations, and branded advertisements. This generation places a high premium on personalization and seeks out brands that align with their values (Samarasinghe & Lakchan, 2021). Millennials also tend to be loyal to brands they engage with on social media, making them a critical demographic for social media marketers aiming to influence smartphone purchase decisions (Chen & Lin, 2024). In contrast, Generation Z (born after 1994) is considered the most engaged and influential demographic when it comes to social media and digital content. As the first generation of true digital natives, Generation Z has grown up in an environment saturated with digital media and is highly responsive to social media marketing tactics. They are particularly influenced by influencer marketing and user-generated content (Vijaya et al., 2023). For Generation Z, purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by what they see on social media, particularly when it comes from peers or influencers they trust (Sun & Xing, 2022). This generation is also known for valuing social responsibility, with many making purchase decisions based on ethical considerations, such as a brand's stance on sustainability or social issues (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022). These differences in generational responses to social media marketing are crucial for understanding how brands should tailor their marketing efforts to suit the preferences and behaviors

of each cohort. Previous studies have highlighted that targeting Generation Z with influencer-led campaigns or user-generated content can be highly effective, while Generation X may respond better to content that emphasizes traditional values like quality and trust (Gurunathan & Lakshmi, 2023). Understanding these generational preferences can help brands maximize their marketing strategies across different age groups.

### **Social Media Marketing Strategies and Smartphone Purchases**

Smartphones are a prime product category heavily influenced by social media marketing. According to Azmi et al. (2025), smartphone brands, particularly in the emerging markets, have shifted a significant portion of their marketing budgets to digital and social media advertising to capture the attention of younger consumers. Influencer marketing has proven particularly effective in this context, as consumers are more likely to purchase products that are endorsed by influencers they trust (Arachchi & Mendis, 2021). These influencers often share personal experiences with smartphones, which creates a sense of relatability and trust that traditional advertising cannot replicate. User-generated content (UGC) also plays a crucial role in smartphone marketing. UGC, which includes customer reviews, photos, and videos shared by users on social media platforms, provides a form of social proof that is highly valued by potential consumers (Fadhila & Adiwijaya, 2025). When smartphone users share their experiences with a product, it influences others in their social circle to consider purchasing the same product, particularly when the content appears authentic and unscripted (Bläse et al., 2024). Paid advertisements on social media platforms are another widely used strategy in the smartphone market. Research has shown that targeted ads, when personalized to the specific preferences of consumers, are effective in driving purchase intentions. For example, Generation Z is particularly receptive to ads that are visually appealing and interactive, such as those seen on platforms like TikTok and Instagram (Vijaya et al., 2023). These platforms allow smartphone brands to reach younger audiences with short, engaging content that can drive immediate action, such as making a purchase or visiting a brand's website. Despite the success of these strategies, the overall effectiveness of social media marketing in driving smartphone purchases varies across generational cohorts. While Generation Z is highly responsive to social media ads, Millennials tend to rely more on online reviews and brand interactions. On the other hand, Generation X may be more skeptical of these tactics and may require a combination of both online and offline touchpoints to be convinced to purchase (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022).

### **Research Gaps and Theoretical Contributions**

While the body of literature on social media marketing's impact on consumer behavior is extensive, there remains a gap in understanding the comparative effects across different generational cohorts, particularly in the smartphone industry. Most

studies have focused on either individual generational responses or the general impact of digital marketing, but few have directly compared how different generations engage with smartphone marketing strategies (Çelik & Divanoğlu, 2025). This research aims to address this gap by exploring how social media marketing influences smartphone purchase intentions across three generational groups: Generation X, Y, and Z. By analyzing the different preferences and behaviors of each generation, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between social media marketing strategies and consumer decision-making processes. Moreover, it will offer practical insights for marketers in the smartphone industry, helping them tailor their campaigns more effectively to different demographic segments.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

A comparative research methodology was employed to assess differences in smartphone purchase behaviors between Generation X (born 1965–1977), Generation Y (Millennials) (born 1977–1994), and Generation Z (born after 1994). This approach was selected to examine how social media marketing strategies impact each generational cohort differently. It allowed for an in-depth comparison of content preferences, platform usage, and engagement with social media influencers, which are all crucial factors influencing how each generation interacts with smartphone brands online.

### **Variables**

The study defines both dependent and independent variables to analyze the effectiveness of SMM on smartphone purchasing behaviors across generational cohorts:

**Dependent Variables:** These include purchase intention, brand loyalty, and consumer engagement, which measure how different generational groups are influenced by social media marketing in terms of their likelihood to buy a smartphone, their loyalty to brands, and their level of interaction with brands on social media.

**Independent Variables:** These consist of SMM strategies (e.g., influencer marketing, paid advertisements, content creation), generational dynamics (differences in values, behaviors, and media consumption), content styles (e.g., visual vs. informative content), platform usage (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, TikTok), user-generated content, and gamification (interactive elements like polls and quizzes). These variables were used to assess which factors most effectively drive consumer behavior within each generational group.

### **Study Area**

The study was conducted in Delhi, specifically in the areas of South Delhi, Dwarka, and Rohini. These locations were selected to capture a broad range of socio-economic demographics, educational backgrounds, and access to technology. This diversity

allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of how different generational cohorts interact with social media marketing across varied environments. The participants' varying levels of tech-savviness ensured that the findings were representative of a wide spectrum of social media usage behaviors.

### Sample Size and Selection

The sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Cochran's formula, with an adjusted final sample size of 381 respondents after applying the finite population correction. To ensure that each generational group was fairly represented, a stratified random sampling method was employed. This resulted in an even distribution of 133 respondents from Generation X, 133 from Generation Y, and 134 from Generation Z. This sampling approach ensured that the study accurately reflected the diversity of attitudes and behaviors within each generational cohort.

### Data Collection

Data collection was conducted via a self-administered questionnaire that was distributed online through platforms like Google Forms and SurveyMonkey. The questionnaire included Likert scale questions designed to measure brand awareness, product perception, brand loyalty, and purchase intention. Additionally, the survey included demographic questions (age, gender, income) and inquiries regarding social media usage

patterns (e.g., frequency of use, preferred platforms, content engagement) to gain insights into how social media behaviors influence consumer decisions.

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS and Excel. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic and usage data, while Multiple Linear Regression and ANOVA were employed to test the research hypotheses and examine the relationships between social media marketing strategies and consumer behavior. These statistical methods enabled the researchers to assess the significance of generational differences in responses to various SMM tactics. Graphical tools, including bar charts and scatter plots, were used to visually represent the findings and highlight key trends.

### Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the research ethics committee, ensuring compliance with ethical standards. Participants were fully informed about the research objectives, and their informed consent was obtained prior to participation. The study guaranteed the privacy and confidentiality of all respondents, with personal data securely stored and used exclusively for academic purposes. Participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences.

## Data Analysis

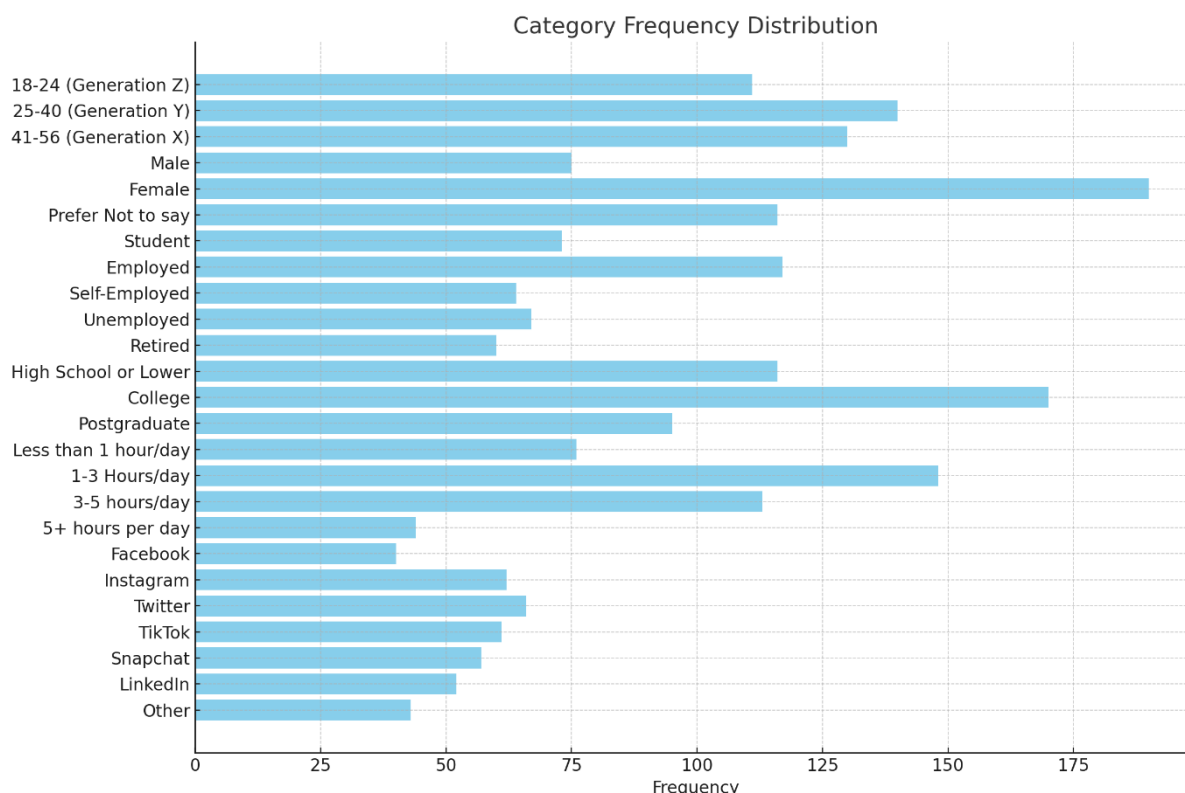
### Demographic Profile

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age Group				
18-24 (Generation Z)	111	29.1%	29.1%	29.1%
25-40 (Generation Y)	140	36.7%	36.7%	65.9%
41-56 (Generation X)	130	34.1%	34.1%	100.0%
Gender				
Male	75	19.7%	19.7%	19.7%
Female	190	49.9%	49.9%	69.6%
Prefer Not to say	116	30.4%	30.4%	100.0%
Occupation				
Student	73	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%
Employed	117	30.7%	30.7%	49.9%
Self-Employed	64	16.8%	16.8%	66.7%
Unemployed	67	17.6%	17.6%	84.3%
Retired	60	15.7%	15.7%	100.0%
Level of Education				
High School or Lower	116	30.4%	30.4%	30.4%
College	170	44.6%	44.6%	75.1%
Postgraduate	95	24.9%	24.9%	100.0%
Social Media Usage				
Less than 1 hour/day	76	19.9%	19.9%	19.9%
1-3 Hours/day	148	38.8%	38.8%	58.8%
3-5 hours/day	113	29.7%	29.7%	88.5%
5+ hours per day	44	11.5%	11.5%	100.0%



Preferred Social Media Platforms for Smartphone-Related Content				
Facebook	40	10.5%	10.5%	10.5%
Instagram	62	16.3%	16.3%	26.8%
Twitter	66	17.3%	17.3%	44.1%
TikTok	61	16.0%	16.0%	60.1%
Snapchat	57	15.0%	15.0%	75.1%
LinkedIn	52	13.6%	13.6%	88.7%
Other	43	11.3%	11.3%	100.0%



**Graph 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

The data collected for this study provides a detailed demographic and behavioral profile of the respondents. A balanced representation of age groups was achieved, with Generation Y (25-40 years) comprising the largest segment at 36.7%, followed by Generation Z (18-24 years) at 29.1%, and Generation X (41-56 years) at 34.1%. Gender distribution shows a predominance of females, who make up 49.9% of the respondents, with males representing 19.7%, and 30.4% choosing not to disclose their gender. The occupational makeup indicates that most respondents are employed (30.7%), followed by students (19.2%), self-employed individuals (16.8%), and those who are unemployed (17.6%) or retired (15.7%). Educationally, the majority of respondents have attained at least some level of higher education, with 44.6% holding a college degree and 24.9% having completed postgraduate education. When it comes to social media usage, a significant portion of respondents (38.8%) spend 1-3 hours daily on social media, with 29.7% engaging for 3-5 hours, and only 11.5% spending more than 5 hours a day on these platforms. The preferred platforms for smartphone-related content are varied, with Twitter (17.3%), Instagram (16.3%), and TikTok (16.0%) emerging as the most popular choices, while Facebook (10.5%) and LinkedIn (13.6%) have a lower share in this context. This data highlights the diverse demographic and usage patterns of the respondents, providing valuable insights into the characteristics of the sample population in relation to social media engagement, occupation, and educational background.

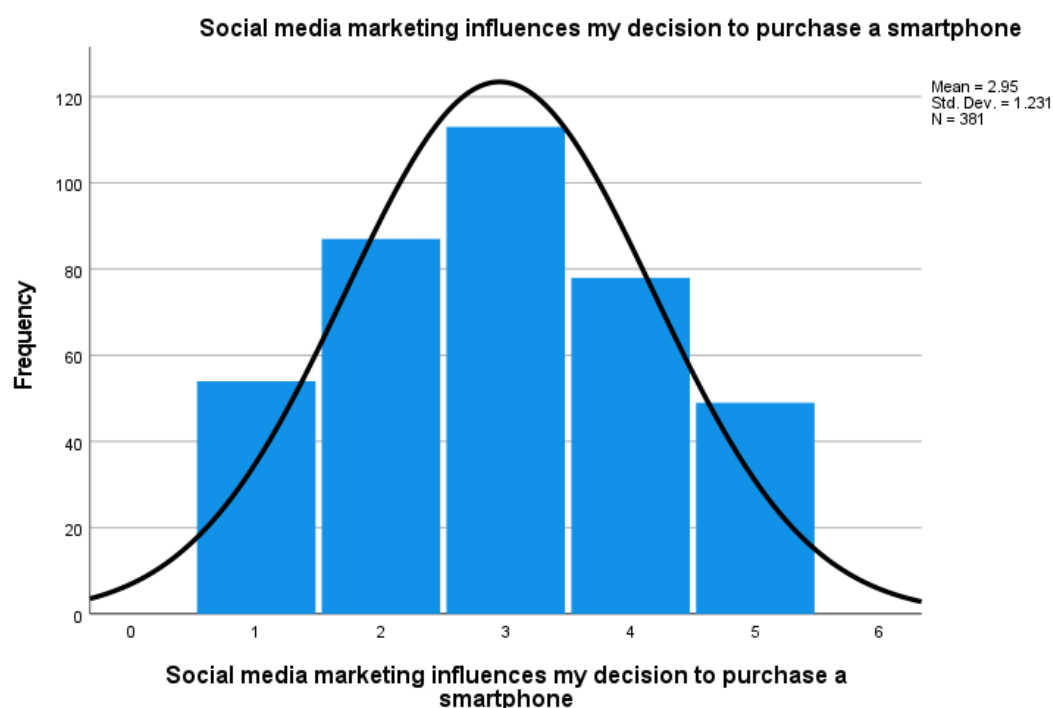
### Descriptive Analysis

This objective aims to explore how social media marketing influences the smartphone purchase decisions of different generational groups. Social media marketing is a powerful tool that has reshaped consumer behavior across various industries, particularly in the tech sector. By understanding how Generation X, Y, and Z respond to social media marketing, the study can provide insights into the effectiveness of these marketing efforts across age groups. It is important to examine the various aspects of social media marketing, including content types, advertising strategies, and platform-specific campaigns, to assess their influence on purchase intentions. Each generation has distinct preferences

and levels of trust toward digital advertising, making it crucial to explore how these factors shape their decision-making process in the context of purchasing smartphones.

**Table 2: Influence of Social Media Marketing on Smartphone Purchase Decisions**

ZZ					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	54	14.2	14.2	14.2
	Disagree	87	22.8	22.8	37.0
	Neutral	113	29.7	29.7	66.7
	Agree	78	20.5	20.5	87.1
	Strongly Agree	49	12.9	12.9	100.0
	Total	381	100.0	100.0	



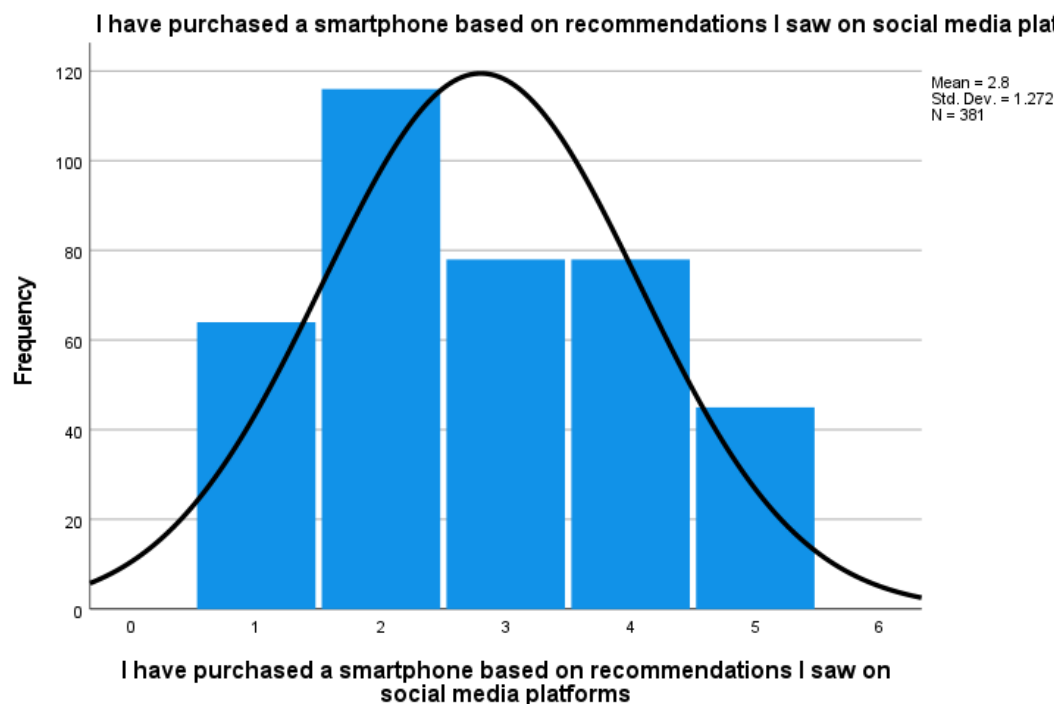
**Graph 2: Influence of Social Media Marketing on Smartphone Purchase Decisions**

The influence of social media marketing on smartphone purchase decisions reveals mixed responses. A significant portion of respondents, 29.7%, remain neutral, indicating they are neither strongly affected nor unaffected by social media marketing when making a purchase decision. However, 14.2% strongly disagree with the statement, and 22.8% disagree, suggesting that a considerable number of respondents do not believe social media marketing impacts their decision to buy a smartphone. On the other hand, 20.5% agree, and 12.9% strongly agree, suggesting that a portion of the sample does find social media marketing to play a role in their smartphone purchase decisions. This indicates that while social media marketing has some influence, it may not be a decisive factor for all individuals, and its impact varies across the population.

**Table 3: Impact of Social Media Recommendations on Smartphone Purchases**

I have purchased a smartphone based on recommendations I saw on social media platforms					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	64	16.8	16.8	16.8
	Disagree	116	30.4	30.4	47.2
	Neutral	78	20.5	20.5	67.7
	Agree	78	20.5	20.5	88.2

	Strongly Agree	45	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	381	100.0	100.0	

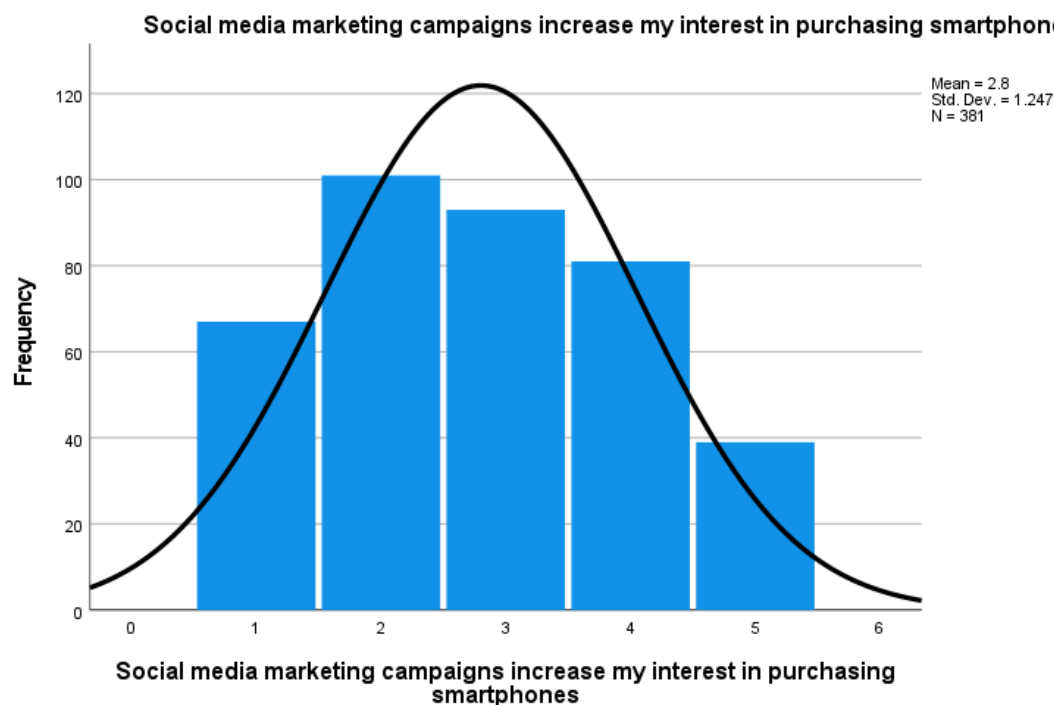


**Graph 3: Impact of Social Media Recommendations on Smartphone Purchases**

In terms of the impact of social media recommendations on smartphone purchases, the data shows a similar trend. A larger percentage of respondents (30.4%) disagree with purchasing smartphones based on social media recommendations, followed by 16.8% who strongly disagree. However, 20.5% agree, and 11.8% strongly agree, suggesting that while recommendations can influence some individuals, they are not a universally impactful factor in smartphone purchasing decisions. This shows that while social media may offer recommendations, it doesn't always translate into actual purchases, with many consumers possibly relying on other sources for their decisions.

**Table 4: Influence of Social Media Marketing Campaigns on Smartphone Interest**

Social media marketing campaigns increase my interest in purchasing smartphones					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	67	17.6	17.6	17.6
	Disagree	101	26.5	26.5	44.1
	Neutral	93	24.4	24.4	68.5
	Agree	81	21.3	21.3	89.8
	Strongly Agree	39	10.2	10.2	100.0
	Total	381	100.0	100.0	



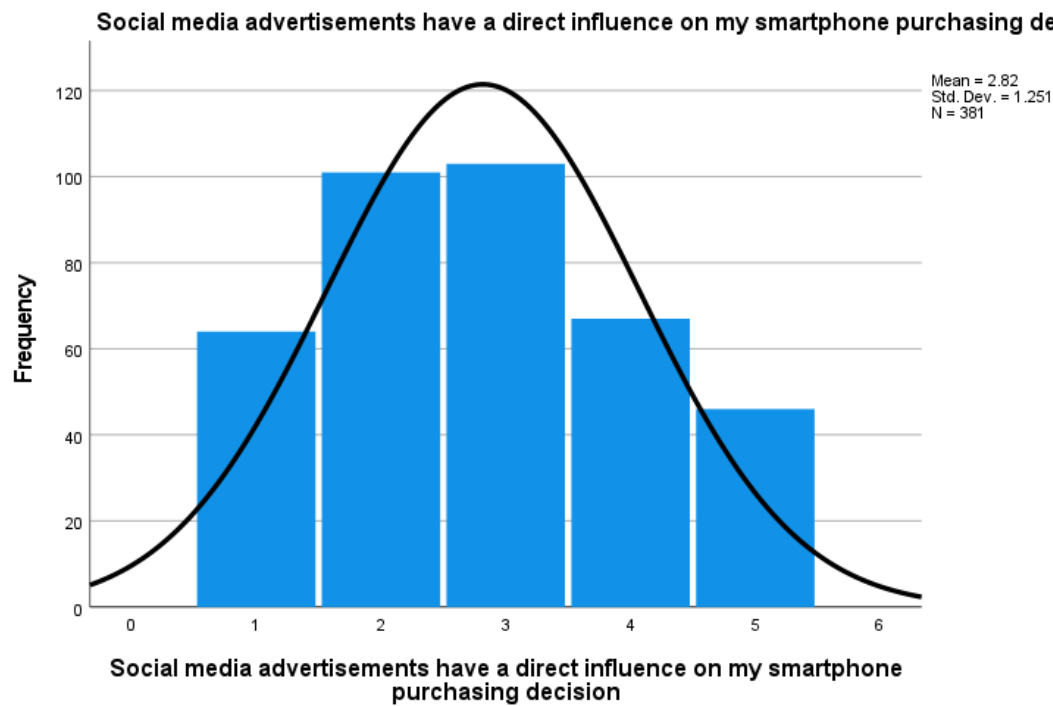
**Graph 4: Influence of Social Media Marketing Campaigns on Smartphone Interest**

The influence of social media marketing campaigns on smartphone interest is reflected in varied responses. A significant 26.5% of respondents disagree with the notion that marketing campaigns increase their interest in purchasing smartphones, while 17.6% strongly disagree. Despite this, 21.3% agree, and 10.2% strongly agree, indicating that social media marketing campaigns do have some impact on interest, although the overall response shows that campaigns alone do not universally increase interest among all respondents. The variability suggests that while social media marketing may be effective for some, it does not necessarily generate significant interest for all consumers.

**Table 5: Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Smartphone Purchasing Decisions**

Social media advertisements have a direct influence on my smartphone purchasing decision					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	64	16.8	16.8	16.8
	Disagree	101	26.5	26.5	43.3
	Neutral	103	27.0	27.0	70.3
	Agree	67	17.6	17.6	87.9
	Strongly Agree	46	12.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	381	100.0	100.0	





**Graph 5: Influence of Social Media Advertisements on Smartphone Purchasing Decisions**

When examining the direct influence of social media advertisements on smartphone purchasing decisions, the data highlights a similar divide. While 16.8% strongly disagree and 26.5% disagree that advertisements directly influence their smartphone purchases, 27% of respondents are neutral. However, a notable 17.6% agree, and 12.1% strongly agree, implying that social media advertisements do have a direct influence on the decision-making process for some individuals. The neutral responses suggest that while some people are influenced by ads, many remain unaffected or are undecided, reinforcing the idea that advertisements have a more variable impact across different consumers.

### Hypothesis Testing

#### *Hypothesis 1: Purchase Intention*

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): There is no significant difference in purchase intention across the three age groups.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): There is a significant difference in purchase intention across the three age groups.

**Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention by Age Group**

Descriptives purchase intention					
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
					95% Confidence Interval for Mean
					Lower Bound
18-24 (Generation Z)		111	13.5225	2.57557	.24446
25-40 (Generation Y)		140	13.5929	2.59744	.21952
41-56 (Generation X)		130	13.7462	2.78231	.24402
Total		381	13.6247	2.65039	.13578
Model	Fixed Effects			2.65579	.13606
	Random Effects				.13606a

The descriptive statistics show that Generation Z has a mean purchase intention score of 13.52, Generation Y scores 13.59, and Generation X scores 13.75. The standard deviations are relatively consistent, ranging from 2.57 to 2.78, indicating some variability within each group. The confidence intervals for the mean suggest that Generation Z's true mean for purchase intention lies between 13.04 and 14.01, Generation Y's between 13.16 and 14.03, and Generation X's between 13.26 and 14.23. The overall mean for the sample is 13.62, with a standard deviation of 2.65, indicating that there are no extreme differences in purchase intention across the age groups.

**Table 6 (a): Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention: Confidence Intervals and Variance Analysis**

Descriptives					
purchase intention					
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Between-Component Variance
		Upper Bound			
18-24 (Generation Z)		14.0070	7.00	20.00	
25-40 (Generation Y)		14.0269	8.00	20.00	
41-56 (Generation X)		14.2290	7.00	20.00	
Total		13.8917	7.00	20.00	
Model	Fixed Effects	13.8922			
	Random Effects	14.2101a			-.04306

This table provides additional details on the confidence intervals and variance for purchase intention scores. The minimum and maximum values for each group show a similar range, with Generation Z scoring between 7 and 20, Generation Y between 8 and 20, and Generation X between 7 and 20. The variance analysis shows a between-component variance of 14.21, which is moderate. Despite the overlap in the confidence intervals, the overall variance indicates that purchase intention is quite similar across all age groups, suggesting that age does not have a significant effect on consumers' likelihood to make a purchase.

**Table 6 (b): ANOVA Results for Purchase Intention by Age Group**

ANOVA					
purchase intention					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.218	2	1.609	.228	.796
Within Groups	2666.110	378	7.053		
Total	2669.328	380			

The ANOVA results for purchase intention yield a p-value of 0.796, which is much higher than the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that there is no significant difference in purchase intention across the three age groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that age does not play a significant role in determining a consumer's intention to purchase a product, and other factors such as product availability, personal preferences, and marketing efforts might be more influential in shaping purchase intentions.

Interpretation: When considering purchase intention, the analysis again shows no significant differences between the age groups, as evidenced by a p-value of 0.796, which is greater than 0.05. This supports the null hypothesis, which suggests that there is no significant difference in purchase intention between the age groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that age is not a strong predictor of a consumer's intent to purchase a product, and factors like individual needs, marketing strategies, or product availability might be more influential in shaping a person's purchase decisions.

## DISCUSSION

This study explored how social media marketing (SMM) influences smartphone purchase intentions across three generational cohorts: Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation Z. The findings highlight that SMM has a varying degree of influence on each generation's purchase behavior. While Generation Z, as digital natives, shows the strongest response to influencer marketing, user-generated content, and visually-driven platforms like Instagram and TikTok, Millennials also engage with social media but place higher importance on product reviews and brand interactions. Generation X, on the other hand, remains more skeptical of social media marketing, relying on traditional information sources and being less influenced by influencer-led content. These generational differences underscore the importance of tailoring social media marketing strategies to each cohort's unique preferences and

consumption habits (Vijaya et al., 2023; Azmi et al., 2025). In terms of effectiveness, the results indicate that social media marketing campaigns are most impactful for Generation Z, who are more receptive to authentic, peer-driven content, and the ethical values promoted by brands (Sun & Xing, 2022). Millennials respond well to personalized content and product recommendations that align with their values, whereas Generation X tends to favor clear and straightforward advertising, emphasizing product quality and trust. The study also revealed that while social media recommendations can influence purchase decisions, this effect is not universal. Many respondents, especially from Generation X, remain neutral or unconvinced by social media marketing, suggesting that other factors, such as personal recommendations and offline touchpoints, may still play a crucial role in their purchasing decisions (Gurunathan & Lakshmi, 2023). For marketers, these insights suggest the need

for a more segmented approach to digital campaigns. Targeting Generation Z requires leveraging influencers and interactive, ethical content, while Millennials may respond better to more informative and personalized ads across social media platforms. For Generation X, a hybrid strategy that combines both traditional and digital marketing approaches could be more effective. As smartphone brands increasingly invest in digital marketing, understanding the nuances of each generation's preferences will be critical in shaping successful campaigns that drive purchase intentions across diverse consumer groups (Çelik & Divanoğlu, 2025; Fadhila & Adiwijaya, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of social media marketing (SMM) on smartphone purchase intentions across three generational cohorts: Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation Z. Using a comparative research methodology, data was gathered from 381 respondents through an online survey, which focused on various aspects of SMM, including influencer marketing, content styles, and platform preferences. The analysis revealed clear generational differences in how SMM affects purchase behavior. Generation Z, as digital natives, exhibited the highest levels of engagement with influencer-driven and user-generated content, making them highly responsive to authentic and transparent brand messages. Millennials also showed strong engagement with personalized content, but their purchasing decisions were more influenced by detailed reviews and brand loyalty. In contrast, Generation X remained less influenced by social media marketing and displayed a preference for traditional media and personal recommendations. These findings suggest that marketers targeting Generation Z should prioritize influencer-led campaigns and emphasize authenticity and social responsibility. For Millennials, a more balanced approach, combining personalized content and product reviews, is most effective. Meanwhile, for Generation X, marketers should blend digital and traditional marketing strategies to ensure their engagement. This research offers valuable insights into the evolving landscape of digital marketing, highlighting the need for tailored strategies that account for the diverse preferences and behaviors of different generational cohorts. Future research could further explore the impact of other external factors, such as economic conditions and peer influence, on the relationship between social media marketing and consumer purchasing decisions.

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