

## THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL PREFERENCES ON HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION DECISIONS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

**Ginna Novarianti Dwi Putri Pramesti**  
Universitas Kuningan, Indonesia  
Correspondent: ginnanovariyanti@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

The digital age has altered household consumption patterns, where social norms play a significant role in consumption decision-making, particularly for products that reflect lifestyle and social status. This study employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the extent to which social preferences influence household consumption in Indonesia. The results showed that fashion and culinary products were most influenced by social norms, with the highest levels of conformity occurring in young age groups. Social media, particularly through influencers and friend recommendations, significantly reinforces these social norms. The implications of this study highlight the importance of a community-based marketing approach and digital literacy education, enabling more informed household consumption.

**Keywords:** Social preferences; social norms; consumption decisions; social media.

### **A. Introduction**

The digital era has fundamentally transformed global household consumption patterns. The rapid dissemination of product information and consumer trends through internet technology and social media platforms has made purchasing decisions increasingly shaped by online interactions and peer recommendations (Indragiri et al., 2025). In Indonesia, this phenomenon is particularly evident among the millennial generation, who tend to favor online shopping, influenced by influencer content, and prioritize experiences over accumulating assets (Alamsyah & Entrepreneurship, 2024; Dewi, 2024; Lesmana et al., 2024). Through digital networks, preferences from family, friends, and online communities significantly influence individual consumption choices, often leading to suboptimal decisions driven by social conformity (Shah & Heliyon, 2023).

This increasing social influence underscores the importance of examining social preferences—encompassing social norms and environmental pressures—as key drivers in shaping contemporary

household consumption behaviors. In the Indonesian context, where social media use is widespread, these preferences manifest in daily purchasing patterns and lifestyle choices.

Social preferences are conceptualized as environmental norms and pressures that shape individual behaviors and preferences (Anggriani Saputri et al., 2023; Hakiki, 2024; Syauki & Avina, 2020). These influences may originate from family, peers, or broader communities, and are further amplified through social media, which fosters the need for social validation. (MD Pratama, 2024). Individuals often adopt prevailing consumption trends to remain relevant, while deviating from group norms may result in social sanctions or pressure to conform.

Despite growing awareness of these dynamics, research on the comprehensive impact of social preferences on household consumption in Indonesia remains limited. Prior studies tend to focus on specific groups or product categories—for example, Erwin et al., (2023) explored the influence of influencers on Gen Z, while Anggriani et al., (2023) Focused on social norms in sustainable fashion. Although informative, such studies offer fragmented insights; for instance, they examined fast-food consumption but did not extend to broader household behaviors.

This research gap underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into how social preferences shape diverse household consumption decisions in Indonesia's digital landscape. Without this understanding, households may continue to be influenced by social factors unconsciously, resulting in irrational or unsustainable consumption patterns.

The urgency of this study stems from the fact that household consumption is a primary driver of Indonesia's economy, contributing more than half of the national GDP. In this context, the growing influence of social media and digital interactions could significantly reshape national consumption behavior. Moreover, studies have shown that excessive social media use can promote unhealthy eating habits, particularly among young people (Al-Samarraie et al., 2022). These patterns not only affect individual decision-making but also pose macroeconomic and societal challenges that conflict with long-term sustainability goals (Shah & Heliyon, 2023).

Empirical evidence further supports the significance of social influence. Erwin et al., (2023) Noted that 85% of Gen Z respondents in Indonesia base their purchases on influencer recommendations. Similarly, Anggriani Saputri et al., (2023) Found that social norms strongly predict consumer decisions sustainably. At the household level, Azzam et al., (2023) Demonstrated that social exposure—both online and offline—impacts fast-food purchasing behaviors. Collectively, these studies affirm

the central role of social preferences in consumption, thereby strengthening the foundation for further research.

This study offers several novel contributions. Unlike Lesmana et al., (2024), which was qualitative and focused on millennials, this study uses a quantitative approach with broader household sampling. Furthermore, it extends beyond specific product types, such as fast food, and incorporates various household consumption categories. By explicitly analyzing social preferences in decision-making, this study addresses a significant gap in consumer behavior research in Indonesia.

In line with these objectives, this study investigates the extent to which social preferences—shaped by digital platforms and peer norms— influence household consumption decisions. It explores dominant sources of social influence (family, peers, or social media), assesses the role of digital platforms in amplifying or mitigating these effects, and contextualizes findings within Indonesian socio-cultural realities. Ultimately, the research seeks to generate empirical insights to inform consumer literacy initiatives and support more mindful, sustainable household decision-making in the digital age.

## **B. Research Method**

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey method, aiming to elucidate the relationship between social preferences, in the form of social norms, and household consumption decisions in Indonesia. The population in this study is all households that actively use social media and e-commerce in Indonesia. The sampling technique employed is probability sampling, specifically cluster random sampling, which involves selecting various large cities that represent different socio-economic and cultural characteristics, with a minimum sample size of 385 respondents calculated using the Slovin formula (Sugiyono, 2021). The research instrument used was a closed questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability, consisting of question items that utilized the Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of social norms and consumption decisions (Ghozali, 2018).

The data collection technique was carried out online (online survey) through the Google Form platform, which was shared through social media networks (WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook) to speed up and facilitate respondents' access to fill in the data. The research procedure begins with the pre-survey stage, instrument validation, main survey data collection, and digital processing of statistical data. The data analysis technique employed multiple linear regression analysis, utilizing SPSS statistical software version 25.0, to test the hypothesis of the relationship between social preferences and household consumption decisions.

In addition to the quantitative method, this study also employs a qualitative approach to enhance the interpretation of the quantitative

findings, focusing on households that are active on social media and their influence on daily consumption patterns. The research data were obtained from in-depth interviews with key informants selected through purposive sampling based on specific characteristics, including the frequency of social media use and the influence of the social environment on consumption decisions.

The population in the qualitative stage consists of households that are active users of social media, with a sample of 20 informants from various cities, including Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Medan, and Makassar, to obtain geographically diverse representations. The research techniques and tools employed in the qualitative method include semi-structured interviews guided by interview guidelines, digital voice recording tools, and field notes to record observations during the interview. Qualitative data analysis techniques are employed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification to identify patterns, themes, and categories relevant to social norm phenomena in digital consumption (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings is expected to provide an in-depth picture of the role of social preferences in determining household consumption decisions in the digital era.

## C. Results and Discussion

### 1. The Influence of Social Norms on Household Digital Consumption Patterns

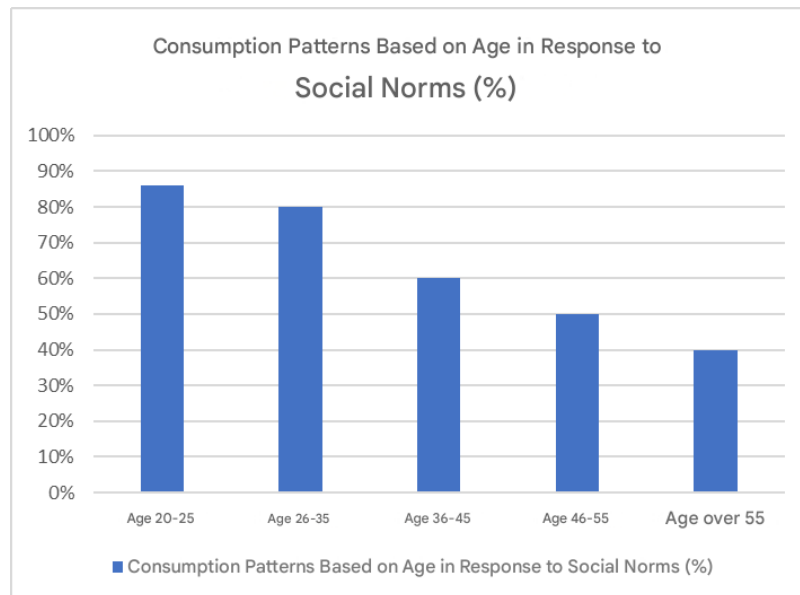
This study found that social norms play a significant role in household digital consumption decisions in Indonesia, especially on products that reflect lifestyle and social status. The survey results show that fashion (78%) and culinary (74%) products are the product categories with the highest level of influence of social norms. This data shows that the majority of consumers consider social views more when choosing products to consume.

**Table 1.** The Degree of Influence of Social Norms on Consumption by Product Type

| Product Type  | Influence of Social Norms (%) |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Fashion       | 78%                           |
| Culinary      | 74%                           |
| Cosmetics     | 72%                           |
| Electronic    | 69%                           |
| Home Supplies | 66%                           |

Additionally, the interview results revealed that some respondents tended to follow consumption trends popularized through social media to be socially accepted. However, some respondents remained selective and took financial conditions into account when making purchasing decisions. This indicates the need for an educational approach in managing social influences on household digital consumption decisions.

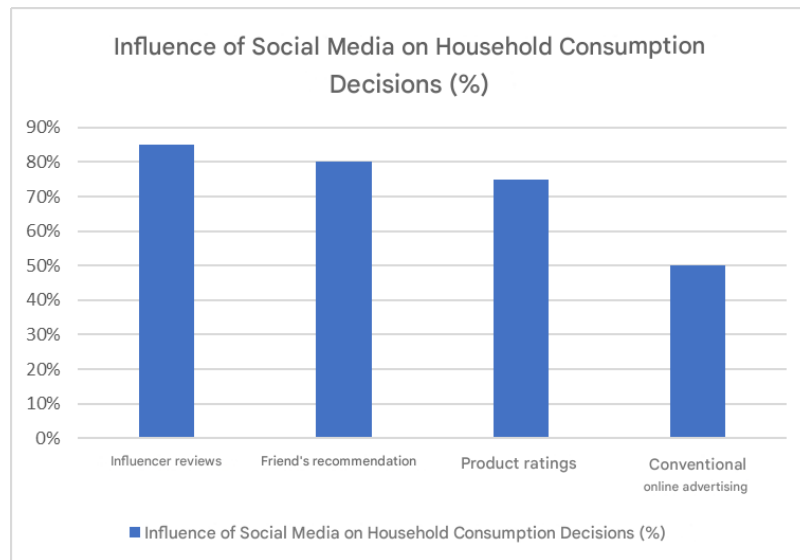
## 2. Consumption Patterns Based on Demographic Factors



**Graph 1.** Consumption Patterns by Age in Response to Social Norms (%)

Based on the graph above, the younger age group shows a higher level of conformity to social norms than the older age group. Income factors are also determinants, where respondents with upper-middle-income levels are more likely to follow social norms than those with lower incomes. Geographical differences also influence consumption decisions, with consumers in urban areas being more responsive to social trends than in semi-urban or rural areas.

### 3. The Role of Social Media in Strengthening Social Norms



**Graph 2.** The Influence of Social Media on Household Consumption Decisions (%)

The graph indicates that social media, particularly influencer recommendations and friend suggestions, plays a significant role in shaping household consumption decisions. This creates stronger social pressures, encouraging consumers to be more active in following trends. Qualitative interviews also confirm that influencers are considered a reliable source of reference in the consumption decision-making process.

### 4. Comparison with Previous Research

The findings of this study support and expand on previous findings regarding the importance of social norms in consumption behavior. Unlike prior studies that focused on specific products or demographic segments, this study presents a broader analysis encompassing a wide range of products and more diverse demographics. The study also corroborates previous arguments that social media significantly increases social influence in household consumption.

### 5. Practical Implications and Research Limitations

The practical implications of this research highlight the importance of companies adopting a community-based marketing approach and leveraging digital social influence. On the other hand, policymakers need to implement educational interventions that encourage more rational consumption. However, this study has limitations, including the predominantly urban respondent coverage and the use of online survey methods, which are less inclusive of households without internet access.

Further research should consider longitudinal approaches and broader geographic coverage to gain a comprehensive understanding of long-term changes in consumption patterns.

### E. Conclusion

This study concludes that social preferences, in the form of social norms, have a strong influence on household consumption patterns in the digital era, especially in product categories closely related to lifestyle and social identity, such as fashion and culinary products. Demographic factors, such as age, income, and geographic location, significantly determine the extent to which households respond to social pressures when making consumption decisions. Social media amplifies this social influence, particularly through influencer figures and recommendations from friends, thereby creating consumption patterns that prioritize trends over essential needs. However, the findings also reveal the critical awareness of some consumers in balancing their adherence to social norms with their economic capabilities. Therefore, effective digital literacy education is necessary so that households can make more informed, wise, and sustainable consumption decisions in the future.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alamsyah, N., & Entrepreneurship, M. F. (2024). The Influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions: The Mediating Role of Consumer Behavior. *Journal.Umg. Ac.IdNA Alamsyah, MA Fikri, Journal of Entrepreneurship Research, journal. Umg. Ac.Id*, 7(2), 128–144. <https://doi.org/10.30587/jre.v7i2.8250>
- Al-Samarraie, H., Bello, K. A., Alzahrani, A. I., Smith, A. P., & Emele, C. (2022). Young Users' Social Media Addiction: Causes, Consequences, and Prevention. *Emerald.Com*, 35(7), 2314–2343. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ITP-11-2020-0753/FULL/HTML>
- Anggriani Saputri, S., Berliana, I., Nasrida, M., Economics and Business, F., & Palangka Raya, U. (2023). The Role of Marketplaces in Increasing the Competitiveness of MSMEs in Indonesia. *Knowledge: Journal of Research and Development Innovation*, 3(1), 69–75. <https://doi.org/10.51878/Knowledge.V3I1.2199>
- Azzam, Z. A., Hamdan, A., Ali, N., & Aggad, K. (2023). Impact of digital advertising via social media tools on the buying behavior of fast food consumers. A case of Jordan. *Springer*, 488, 461–472. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-39158-3\\_44](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-39158-3_44)
- Creswell, J., & Creswell, J. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*.



- Dewi, N. (2024). *The Influence of Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing, and Electronic Word of Mouth on Esteh Indonesia's Purchase Decision in Denpasar*. <http://eprints.unmas.ac.id/id/eprint/5721/>
- Erwin, E., Saununu, S., & Science, A. R. (2023). The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Consumer Behavior of Generation Z in Indonesia. *Researchgate.Net* Erwin, SJ Saununu, A.Y. RukmanaWest Science Interdisciplinary Studies, 2023•researchgate.Net.
- Ghozali, I. (2018). *Multivariate Analysis Application*.
- Hakiki, H. , & P. A. (2024). *The Influence of Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Religiosity on Halal Preferences in Cosmetic Products among Gen Z*.
- Indragiri, Kirana, R. C., Astuti, S., & Ramli, M. (2025). The Influence of Social Media on Consumer Purchase Decisions. *Bajangjournal.Com*, 1(1).  
<https://www.bajangjournal.com/index.php/JCI/article/view/9984>
- Lesmana, T., Rohimah, I., & International, D. S. (2024). Fried Chicken's Small Micro-Venture Revenue Increase Strategy Through Digital Media.
- MD Pratama. (2024). The Dynamics of the Relationship Between Social Values and Law Enforcement in the Digital Era. *Rumah-Jurnal.Com*.  
<http://rumah-jurnal.com/index.php/lpj/article/view/312>
- Shah, S., & Heliyon, Z. A. (2023). Dynamics of social influence on consumption choices: A social network representation. *Cell.ComSS* Shah, Z. Asghar. Hell.
- Sugiyono. (2021). *Quantitative, qualitative, and R&D research methods*.
- Syauki, W., & DAA Avina. (2020). Perception and preferences of skincare use in millennial women in the perspective of marketing communication. *Academia.EduWR* Syauki, DAA AvinaJournal of Communication Management, academia.Edu.  
<https://www.academia.edu/download/72910261/pdf.pdf>