

## DIGITAL PERSONALIZATION AND GEN Z PURCHASE DECISIONS ON TIKTOK SHOP: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN CIAMIS REGENCY

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### ABSTRAK

This study aims to analyze the application of digital personalization, the level of purchasing decisions, and the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions of Generation Z who shop through TikTok Shop in Ciamis Regency. The study used an associative quantitative approach involving 100 respondents selected using a *purposive sampling technique*. The research data consisted of primary and secondary data collected through questionnaires and literature studies. Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression to test the relationship between digital personalization and purchasing decisions. The results showed that the application of digital personalization and purchasing decisions of Generation Z in Ciamis Regency were in the good category. However, the results of statistical tests showed that digital personalization did not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions at TikTok Shop. The coefficient of determination value showed that digital personalization only contributed 1% to purchasing decisions, while the remaining 99% was influenced by other factors outside the variables studied. This finding implies that business actors need to consider factors other than digital personalization in driving Generation Z purchasing decisions.

**Keywords:** Digital personalization, Purchase decisions, TikTok Shop, *Social commerce*, Generation Z, Consumer behavior, *E-commerce*.

### INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought fundamental changes to people's lifestyles and behavior, particularly in economic activities and consumption. The increasingly widespread expansion of internet access is driving a shift in economic activity from conventional to digital systems. According to APJII (2025), the number of internet users in Indonesia will reach approximately 229 million, equivalent to 80.66% of the total population. This high internet penetration demonstrates that digital technology has become an integral part of people's lives, including for searching for information, interacting socially, and conducting online economic transactions.

These changes have also driven the rapid development of digital businesses, one of which is *e-commerce*. *E-commerce* is defined as the online transaction of goods and services through digital platforms utilizing internet technology and social media (Prasetyo, 2023). The existence of e-commerce provides convenience for consumers through a wide selection of products, time efficiency, and a practical purchasing process. Meanwhile, for businesses, e-commerce opens up opportunities to expand market reach, reduce operational costs, and increase promotional effectiveness through digital media.

With the advancement of digitalization, social media is no longer just a means of communication and entertainment, but is also being utilized as a medium for buying and selling transactions, known as *social commerce*. *Social commerce* allows users to interact, access product information, and even make purchases all within a single platform (Ade et al., 2024).

This integration of social content and transactional activities creates a more interactive and personalized shopping experience, potentially influencing consumer behavior and purchasing decisions.

One *social commerce platform* experiencing rapid growth is TikTok. Originally known as a short video sharing platform, the app has successfully integrated social media and e-commerce functions through a collaboration with Tokopedia, resulting in the launch of TikTok Shop. Through TikTok Shop, users can make purchases directly without having to switch to another platform. Consumers not only enjoy entertaining content but also gain shopping inspiration from promotional content appearing on the *For You Page* (FYP), resulting in faster and more impulsive purchasing decisions.

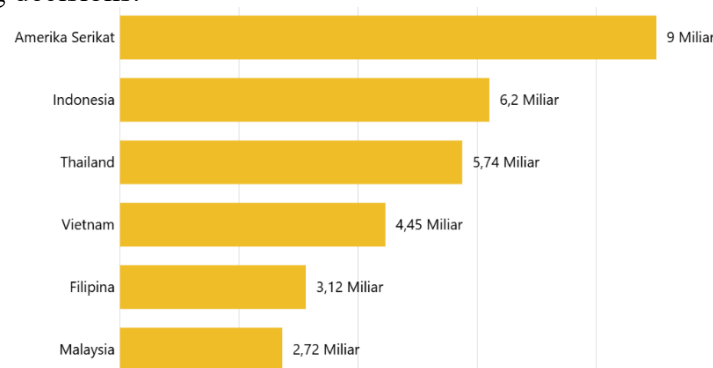


Figure 1. Countries Contributing the Largest GMV to TikTok Shop 2024

Source: Databoks, 2025

The growth of TikTok Shop in Indonesia is significant. According to data from Muhamad (2025), Indonesia ranks second as the largest TikTok Shop market in the world, with a Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of approximately US\$6.2 billion. This achievement positions TikTok Shop as a key player in Indonesia's social commerce ecosystem and demonstrates the strong influence of social media in shaping consumer patterns and shopping behavior.

In the context of consumer behavior, a purchasing decision is the process by which an individual determines whether to purchase a product based on their needs, desires, and the information they receive (Ragatirta & Tiningrum, 2020). On the TikTok Shop platform, purchasing decisions are made easier because consumers can directly view products through video content, user reviews, and visually appealing promotions.

One factor believed to influence purchasing decisions on digital platforms is personalization. Digital personalization is the effort to customize content, services, and product recommendations based on user behavioral data, such as search history, interaction activity, and interest in certain products (Septiani et al., nd). Through personalization, digital platforms strive to create relevant experiences for users to increase interest and drive purchasing decisions. This strategy is highly relevant in the context of *social commerce*, especially for Generation Z, who are known to be responsive to digital content, trends, and algorithm-based recommendation systems.

Generation Z is the most active user group on social media, especially TikTok, for entertainment, information seeking, and online transactions. This age group is in the transition phase from adolescence to adulthood, leading to a high level of dependence on digital technology and social media as a part of their daily lives. Personalized content tailored to user interests makes Generation Z not merely passive consumers but active actors in shaping digital consumption patterns and marketing strategies.

However, despite the continued growth of TikTok Shop, digital personalization doesn't always positively impact purchasing decisions. Some users find that the product recommendations

displayed don't fully align with their needs and interests. This mismatch can lead to dissatisfaction and potentially decrease purchase intention. This demonstrates that the success of personalization depends not only on the system's ability to process data but also on a deep understanding of user preferences.

Furthermore, research related to digital personalization on the TikTok Shop platform is still relatively limited. Most previous studies have focused on *influencer marketing*, *live streaming*, and *content marketing* in influencing purchasing decisions, while studies on the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions are still rare. Research by Aninditiah and Kusumaningrum (2025) and Sangapan et al. (2025) show that personalization influences consumer loyalty on conventional e-commerce platforms, but has not specifically examined the *social commerce context* and purchasing decision variables.

Generation Z in Ciamis Regency was chosen as the research subject because they are a group that actively uses TikTok with a high level of digital engagement and has online shopping habits influenced by social media trends. Therefore, this study is important to understand how digital personalization influences purchasing decisions on the TikTok Shop platform, especially among Generation Z, and to fill the research gap in *social commerce studies*. Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Digital Personalization in Marketing and Social Commerce

Digital personalization is a marketing strategy that tailors content, advertising, and services based on user characteristics, needs, and behavior. Ramadhani and Salisah (2024) define digital personalization as an effort to deliver relevant marketing messages through the use of artificial intelligence (AI)-based technology to process user interaction data, such as usage time, search history, and interaction habits on digital platforms. In the context of e-commerce and social commerce, digital personalization plays a crucial role in building a more relevant and contextual user experience. Septiani et al. (2024) explain that the use of big data in service personalization enables digital platforms to understand user preferences more deeply, so that product recommendations displayed can be tailored to consumer interests and needs. On social commerce platforms like TikTok Shop, digital personalization is realized through an algorithmic system that displays content and products on the For You Page (FYP) based on user behavior. This strategy aims to increase user engagement and encourage direct purchasing decisions within a single platform (Ade et al., 2024).

### Consumer Purchasing Decisions on Digital Platforms

Purchasing decisions are the process consumers undertake to determine whether or not to purchase a product after going through the stages of need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, and final decision (Ragatirta & Tiningrum, 2020). This decision is influenced by various factors, such as information quality, promotions, recommendations, and user experience. On digital platforms like TikTok Shop, purchasing decisions tend to be influenced by visual appearance, ease of information access, and transaction speed. Prasetyo (2023) states that *e-commerce* provides efficiency in the purchasing process compared to conventional commerce, thereby accelerating consumer purchasing decision-making. Furthermore, purchasing decisions in *social commerce* are also influenced by exposure to repeated and relevant content. Content that aligns with user interests can increase interest and encourage consumers to explore products further, ultimately leading to a purchase (Nazwa et al., 2022).

## Generation Z as Digital Consumers

Generation Z is an age group that grew up in a digital environment and has a high level of technological literacy. This generation is known as active users of social media, especially TikTok, for entertainment, information searches, and online shopping activities. Generation Z's adaptive characteristics to trends and content visualization make them a prime target for personalization-based digital marketing strategies. According to Nazwa et al. (2022), consumer interest is formed when individuals are frequently exposed to information that aligns with their preferences and search habits. On digital platforms, this interest is fostered through relevant and recurring content, which ultimately influences purchasing decisions. Therefore, digital personalization plays a strategic role in shaping Generation Z's interests and consumption behavior. However, Generation Z is also known to be critical and selective consumers. A mismatch between product recommendations and user needs can reduce trust and purchase intention, so digital personalization does not always have a positive impact on purchasing decisions.

## Synthesis of Previous Research

Several previous studies have shown that digital personalization influences consumer behavior on digital platforms. Aninditiah and Kusumaningrum (2025) found that AI-based product personalization significantly influences *e-commerce customer loyalty* in Indonesia. Similar results were also shown by Sangapan et al. (2025) who stated that service personalization has a strong influence in increasing customer loyalty on *e-commerce platforms*. However, most of these studies still focus on conventional *e-commerce platforms* and use customer loyalty as the dependent variable. Research that specifically examines the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions in the context of *social commerce*, particularly TikTok Shop, is still limited. In addition, several studies on TikTok Shop emphasize other factors such as *influencer marketing*, *content marketing*, and *emotional triggers* in influencing purchasing decisions (Oktavianes & Hellyani, 2025; Ulfa et al., 2025).

## Research Synthesis and Positioning

Based on the literature review that has been described, it can be concluded that digital personalization has great potential in influencing consumer behavior. However, there is a research gap regarding the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions in the context of *social commerce*, especially on the TikTok Shop platform and in the Generation Z segment. Therefore, this study is positioned to fill this gap by empirically examining the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions of Generation Z in Ciamis Regency. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions in the development of digital marketing and *social commerce studies*, as well as practical contributions for business actors and digital platforms in designing more effective personalization strategies.

## METHOD

### Types and Approaches of Research

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research type, namely research that aims to determine the relationship and influence between independent variables on the dependent variable. The quantitative approach was chosen because this study empirically tests the relationship between variables using numerical data and statistical analysis (Sugiyono, 2025).

### **Location and Time of Research**

The research was conducted in Ciamis Regency, targeting Generation Z users of TikTok Shop. This location was chosen due to the high level of TikTok social media usage and online shopping activity among Generation Z in the area. The research was conducted in 2025.

### **Population and Sample**

The population in this study was all Generation Z in Ciamis Regency who had made purchases through TikTok Shop. Given the large population size and the difficulty of determining precisely, the sample was determined using purposive sampling, a sampling technique based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2025).

The respondent criteria in this study include:

- Aged in the Generation Z range,
- Domiciled in Ciamis Regency,
- Have made a purchase through TikTok Shop at least once.

The number of samples used in this study was 100 respondents, which was considered to have met the minimum requirements for simple and representative linear regression analysis in quantitative research.

### **Data Types and Sources**

The types of data used in this study consist of:

Primary data, namely data obtained directly from respondents through distributing questionnaires. Secondary data, namely supporting data obtained from scientific journals, books, official reports, and online publications that are relevant to the research topic.

### **Data collection technique**

The primary data collection technique in this study was a questionnaire constructed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was distributed online to respondents who met the research criteria. Furthermore, the researchers conducted a literature review to strengthen the theoretical foundation and support the analysis of the research results.

### **Research Variables**

This research involves two variables, namely:

Independent variable (X): Digital Personalization, which is measured through indicators such as product recommendation suitability, content relevance, and user experience.

Dependent variable (Y): Purchase Decision, which is measured through indicators of need recognition, interest in the product, purchasing confidence, and final purchase decision.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression to determine the effect of digital personalization on purchasing decisions in the TikTok Shop. Prior to the regression analysis, the data were tested for validity and reliability to ensure the research instrument was suitable for use.

Next, statistical tests were carried out which included:

- Regression coefficient test to determine the direction and magnitude of the influence of the variables,
- Significance test (t-test) to test the influence of independent variables on dependent variables,



- The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) to determine the contribution of digital personalization variables to purchasing decisions.
- Data processing and analysis is carried out with the help of statistical software.

## RESULTS

### Overview of Research Object

The object of this research is the TikTok Shop platform, a content-based e-commerce feature integrated within the TikTok app. TikTok was developed by ByteDance and launched globally in 2017 as a result of the merger of Douyin and Musical.ly. As the number of users and intensity of use increases, TikTok has evolved not only as an entertainment medium but also as a *social commerce platform* through the launch of TikTok Shop. TikTok Shop allows users to conduct direct buying and selling transactions through videos, *live streaming*, and product showcase features without having to switch apps. This integration of entertainment and shopping makes TikTok Shop one of the fastest-growing *social commerce platforms* in Indonesia, especially among Generation Z.

### Description of Respondent Characteristics

Respondents in this study were 100 Generation Z people in Ciamis Regency aged between 12–28 years and had made purchases through TikTok Shop.

Based on Table 4.1, the respondents were predominantly female (53%), while male respondents accounted for 47%. This indicates that women tend to be more active in online shopping activities through TikTok Shop.

Based on Table 4.2, the majority of respondents were aged 23–28 (43%), followed by those aged 12–17 (33%) and those aged 18–22 (24%). These findings indicate that early adulthood Generation Z is the most active group in following digital trends and making purchases through TikTok Shop.

### Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

#### Digital Personalization (X)

The digital personalization variable is measured using 10 statements that reflect the suitability of recommendations, content relevance, product offerings, and service adjustments based on user activity. Based on the summary of the questionnaire results, a total score of 2,504 was obtained, falling within the range of 2,501–3,250, thus categorized as good. The highest score was for the statement regarding the suitability of product recommendations to user interests and behavior, while the lowest score was for the statement that recommendations did not fully help meet user needs. These results indicate that Generation Z generally considers TikTok Shop's personalization system to be quite effective, although some users still feel that recommendations are inconsistent.

#### Purchase Decision (Y)

The purchasing decision variables were measured using 6 statements that reflect product suitability, product benefits, and accuracy in making purchasing decisions. Based on the questionnaire recapitulation, the total score was 1,513, falling within the 1,501–1,950 range, thus categorizing as good. The highest score was for the statement that purchasing through TikTok Shop was the right decision, while the lowest score was for the statement that the purchasing decision still needed to be reconsidered. These findings indicate that Generation Z's purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop are generally at a good level, although some respondents are still cautious before purchasing.

## Inferential Statistical Analysis Results

### Instrument Test

The validity test results show that all statement items in the digital personalization and purchasing decision variables have a calculated  $r$  value  $> r$  table (0.197), so all items are declared valid. The reliability test results show a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7653 for digital personalization and 0.6072 for purchasing decisions. Both values are greater than 0.60, so the research instrument is declared reliable.

### Classical Assumption Test

The results of the normality test show that the data distribution is in the form of a symmetrical bell curve (Figure 2), so the data is declared to be normally distributed.

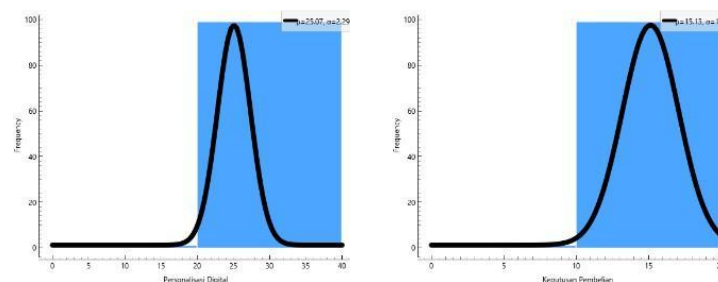


Figure 2. Normality Test Results

Source: Data processed using Orange Data Mining

The results of the linearity test show a relationship that tends to form a straight line between digital personalization and purchasing decisions (Figure 3), so that the relationship between the two variables is stated to be linear.

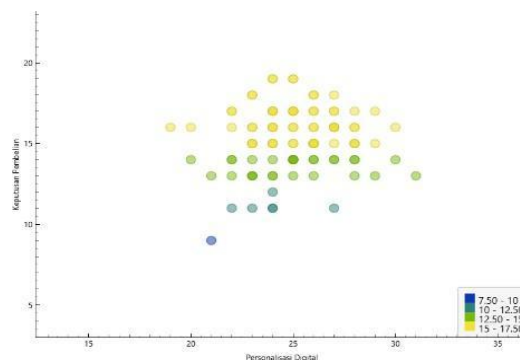


Figure 3. Linearity Test Results

Source: Data processed using Orange Data Mining

### Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The results of the simple linear regression analysis produce the equation:

$$Y = 12.9748 + 0.0859X$$

Table 2 Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

	name	coef
1	intercept	12.9748
2	Personalisasi Digital	0.0859659

*Source: Data processed using Orange Data Mining*

The regression coefficient is positive, indicating that digital personalization has a positive relationship with purchasing decisions. However, this relationship still needs to be tested for significance.

### Hypothesis Testing

The results of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) test showed a value of 0.010, which means that digital personalization is only able to explain 1% of the variation in purchasing decisions, while 99% is influenced by other variables. The results of the t-test (partial) showed a calculated t value = 1.003 with a significance value of  $0.318 > 0.05$ . Thus,  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_1$  is rejected, which means that digital personalization does not have a significant effect on Generation Z's purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop.

## DISCUSSION

This study aims to analyze the influence of digital personalization on purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop among Generation Z in Ciamis Regency. The main focus of the study is to understand the extent to which the implementation of an algorithm-based personalization system on a *social commerce platform* can influence the purchasing behavior of Generation Z, known as the most active group in the digital ecosystem.

Conceptually, this research is important because *social commerce*, specifically TikTok Shop, integrates entertainment, social interaction, and transactions into a single platform. Thus, digital personalization serves not only as a marketing tool but also as a mechanism for shaping user experiences. The primary contribution of this research lies in the empirical examination of digital personalization in the context of TikTok Shop, which to date remains relatively limited compared to research on conventional e-commerce.

### Digital Personalization in Generation Z

The research results show that digital personalization in TikTok Shop is in the good category. This finding indicates that Generation Z generally considers the recommendation system and content displayed in TikTok Shop to be quite relevant to their interests, behaviors, and digital activities. This aligns with the findings of Utami and Ahmadi (2024) and Ulfa et al. (2025), who stated that content and recommendation relevance are important factors in creating a positive shopping experience in TikTok Shop.

However, this study also found inconsistencies in the suitability of product recommendations. Some respondents stated that recommendations did not fully meet their needs. This finding suggests that despite the implementation of personalization, the effectiveness of recommendation algorithms is not perceived equally by all users. Differences in application usage intensity, interaction variations, and dynamic individual preferences are factors that can influence personalization accuracy.

### Generation Z's Purchasing Decisions on TikTok Shop

The research results show that Generation Z's purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop are favorable. The majority of respondents felt that purchasing through TikTok Shop was the right



decision, primarily due to the ease of access, product visualization, and integration of content with the transaction process. These findings support research by Pardede (2025) and Ulfa et al. (2025), which states that purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop are influenced by the quality of product information, user experience, and content clarity. Generation Z is known as rational and critical consumers, so they tend to evaluate a product's benefits and suitability before making a purchase decision. Therefore, even though purchasing decisions are considered good, some respondents still show a cautious attitude when shopping.

### **The Influence of Digital Personalization on Purchasing Decisions**

The main and most crucial finding of this study is that digital personalization does not significantly influence purchasing decisions. Although the direction of the relationship between digital personalization and purchasing decisions is positive, the effect is statistically insignificant, contributing only 1%. This finding contradicts several previous studies on conventional e-commerce, such as Aninditiah and Kusumaningrum (2025) and Sangapan et al. (2025), which found that personalization has a significant influence on customer loyalty. This difference in results can be explained by differences in platform context and user characteristics. TikTok Shop is a *social commerce platform* that emphasizes entertainment and trends, so purchasing decisions are not solely driven by personalization, but also by other factors such as price, discounts, user reviews, trust in influencers, and content virality. Furthermore, these findings align with Hidayat et al. (2025) who stated that digital personalization can raise concerns about data privacy, thereby reducing user trust. For Generation Z, who have high digital literacy, awareness of personal data usage can make them more selective and less influenced by algorithmic recommendations when making purchasing decisions.

### **Managerial Implications**

The results of this study offer important implications for TikTok Shop managers and businesses. First, digital personalization should be positioned as a supporter of the user experience, not as the sole strategy for driving purchasing decisions. Businesses should combine personalization with other strategies, such as competitive pricing, credible product reviews, and information transparency. Second, TikTok Shop needs to improve the accuracy of its recommendation system by taking into account the rapidly changing dynamics of user preferences. Optimizing context-based personalization, not just historical behavior, can help improve the relevance of recommendations.

### **Research Limitations**

This study has several limitations. First, it used only one independent variable, thus failing to comprehensively explain other factors influencing purchasing decisions. Second, the study was conducted in a limited geographic area, namely Ciamis Regency, so generalizing the results to other regions requires caution. Third, data were collected using a *self-report questionnaire*, which could potentially lead to respondent perception bias.

Future research is recommended to expand the research model by adding other variables, such as price, trust, influencer influence, content quality, and emotional factors. Additionally, qualitative or mixed-methods research can be used to delve deeper into Generation Z's perceptions of digital personalization. Cross-regional studies or comparisons between *social commerce platforms* could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of digital personalization in influencing purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSION

This study provides insight into the role of digital personalization in influencing Generation Z purchasing decisions on the TikTok Shop platform. The results indicate that the implementation of digital personalization and the level of purchasing decisions among Generation Z in Ciamis Regency are in the good category. This indicates that the recommendation system and content presentation on TikTok Shop have generally been able to create a positive shopping experience for users. However, the study's main findings indicate that digital personalization does not significantly influence purchasing decisions. The contribution of digital personalization to purchasing decisions is relatively small, thus concluding that Generation Z's purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop are not solely determined by the suitability of product recommendations, but rather are influenced by factors beyond the research variables, such as price, promotions, trust, user reviews, and content trends and virality.

The main limitations of this study lie in the use of a single independent variable and a questionnaire-based quantitative approach, which potentially limit the depth of understanding of the complexities of digital consumer behavior. Furthermore, the study's limited coverage area within Ciamis Regency may impact the study's external validity. These limitations are not methodological flaws, but rather indicate that the results should be interpreted contextually and not broadly generalized without further study. Based on these findings, further research is recommended to develop the research model by adding other relevant variables in the social commerce context, such as trust, influencer influence, content quality, and price perception. A mixed-methods approach can also be used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how digital personalization is perceived and interpreted by Generation Z.

This research is expected to be an initial reference for researchers, academics, and practitioners in understanding the dynamics of digital personalization on social commerce platforms, as well as encouraging the development of more adaptive and user-needs-based digital marketing strategies.

## LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that need to be openly acknowledged so that the results can be understood comprehensively. Acknowledging these limitations is essential for assessing the extent to which the research findings can be interpreted and generalized. First, this study only used one independent variable, digital personalization, to analyze purchasing decisions. This limitation severely limits the research model's ability to explain variations in purchasing decisions. This is reflected in the low coefficient of determination, indicating that most variations in purchasing decisions are influenced by factors outside the research model. Consequently, the finding that digital personalization has no significant effect should be understood within the context of a model that does not comprehensively encompass consumer behavior variables.

Second, the research approach used was quantitative, with data collection using a questionnaire based on respondents' perceptions. This method has the potential to introduce subjective bias, as respondents' answers are highly dependent on their understanding, experience, and psychological state at the time of filling out the questionnaire. This limitation could impact the study's internal validity, particularly in measuring the extent to which digital personalization is truly perceived and understood by TikTok Shop users. Third, the study's limited coverage of Generation Z in Ciamis Regency limits the study's external validity. The social, economic, and cultural characteristics of respondents in that region likely differ from those of Generation Z in

urban areas or other regions in Indonesia. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be broadly generalized without considering the context of the study area.

Fourth, this study is cross -*sectional* , so it only captures consumer behavior within a specific time period. Meanwhile, Generation Z's preferences, interests, and shopping behavior on digital platforms are dynamic and easily change according to trends. This limitation may impact the robustness of the study's findings in explaining the long-term relationship between digital personalization and purchasing decisions. However, these limitations are not methodological flaws, but rather a consequence of the research scope and design. The findings of this study remain academically valuable as an initial overview of the role of digital personalization in the context of TikTok Shop *social commerce* , and can serve as a foundation for further research seeking to develop more comprehensive models and approaches.

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