

**Replication: Consumer Decision-making Style of Gen Z: A Generational
Cohort Analysis**

Activity 2: Academic Article

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Abstract

The focus in the media and consumer research has been on Generation Y. However, Generation Z and their consumption habits also deserve some investigation. This research analyzes the shopping orientation of online shoppers from Generation Z while using the Generational Cohort Theory as a framework. The study is beneficial to e-retailers seeking information on how this generation approaches online shopping. This can be of great value, due to the increasing importance of online shopping and the high penetration of the internet. In the study, diverse shopping orientation factors are investigated. Lastly, the study ends with a list of consequences for marketing professionals and internet retailers.

Introduction

Understanding how people make decisions is at the heart of successful marketing, and no group is reshaping the consumer landscape quite like Generation Z. Born into a digital-first world, Gen Z brings fresh perspectives, unique behaviors, and new challenges for businesses trying to connect with them. This assignment dives into these decision-making styles by revisiting and building on the findings of a recent research article from a top-tier journal.

The goal is simple but impactful: to replicate the original study's key results and then take things a step further by exploring new angles or insights. By doing this, we not only validate existing research but also deepen our understanding of how Gen Z approaches choices in the marketplace—and what that means for marketers trying to capture their attention.

This project is a chance to bridge the gap between academic research and real-world marketing strategy, helping us see how theory translates into practice in today's fast-changing consumer environment.

Review of literature

Generational Cohort theory

In this study, Gen Z's online buying habits will be examined by combining the two fields of shopping orientation and the Generational Cohort Theory. According to Ivanova et al. (2018), a generational cohort is a collection of individuals born in the same time period

and have comparable social traits and life experiences. These shared experiences affect their beliefs, attitudes, and values, and, consequently, their behaviors and decision-making processes. Although studies of generations are frequently seen as solely reflecting the middle class and lacking to represent society as a whole, recent evidence suggests that technological developments appear to have helped to reduce socioeconomic differences.

According to Statista (2024), the amount of internet users has been increasing, as a result of improvements in mobile technology and the modernization of regions that used to be underdeveloped. Based on these statistics, it can be stated that the internet is becoming increasingly accessible across various socioeconomic backgrounds. Specifically, 95 % of Generation Z individuals possess a smartphone (Dancor, 2024), which reflects a high level of digital connectivity. This aligns with their preference for online shopping, as 32 % of Generation Z state that they search for new products online at least once a day (Tinuiti Team, 2024).

Generation Z

Generation Z, the generation following the millennials, Generation Y, consists of people born between 1995 and 2012 (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). This generation is often referred to as iGen or the Internet Generation since they are digital natives who have grown up with constant access to mobile devices and the internet. This has led to strong skills in navigating the digital landscape, specifically social media platforms, which they use more than any other generation. Consequently, Generation Z succeeds in creatively constructing and expressing their digital identities (Elkatmış, 2024).

Generation Z's proficiency in the world of technology has led to a strong sense of social connectivity and has influenced people's communication styles (Kahawandala et al., 2020). They effortlessly navigate through multiple social media platforms, adapting to the unique cultures of the platforms.

Unlike the millennials, who prefer text-based communication, Generation Z favors visual content, related to their preference for engaging content (Djafarova & Bowes, 2020). Moreover, Generation Z is known for being more innovative, independent, open to new ideas, and conscious of global concerns (Elkatmış, 2024). Besides that, diversity is a norm to the generation, instead of being valued. They notice its absence instead of its presence, due to the age in which they grew up (Kahawandala et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Harahap et

al. (2023), consumptive behavior, a behavior prioritizing pleasure over needs, plays a relevant role in Generation Z's lives, serving as a way of realizing pleasure and satisfaction.

Shopping Orientation or Purchase Decision-Making Style

The concept of shopping orientation refers to a consumer's attitudes during the shopping process (Murray et al., 2022). It is a shopping style that includes desires, opinions regarding the shopping processes, and actions (Suprpto et al., 2021). Another way of referring to this phenomenon is the purchase decision-making style.

Consumers' purchasing decisions are directly affected by diverse elements, for instance, convenience, gender, socioeconomic status, trust, brand, time, prior shopping experiences, and impulsive buying (Pardeshi & Khanna, 2021).

Recent research demonstrates that consumers' impulsive buying behaviors, especially those of students, are predicted by their shopping orientation and trust in online shops (Adriansyah & Rahman, 2022). These two factors both independently affect the probability of impulse buying.

Research conducted in India by Thangavel et al. (2021) suggests that both Generation Z and Generation Y are not focused on sticking with one brand when purchasing online. Remarkable is that Gen Z is less brand loyal than Gen Y, also known as the millennials (Wijerathne & Peter, 2023). This lack of brand loyalty relates to the rise of e-commerce, due to the excessive amount of brands that can be purchased from. Furthermore, the enormous amount of choices that can be picked from does not lead to annoyance or overwhelm among both generations. Especially Generation Z does not mind, as they grew up in an era of excessive information due to access to technology.

Despite these findings, a lack of research on the topic of purchasing behavior among Generation Z exists, especially in the Western world. Therefore, this will be further examined in this research.

Online Shopping

Online shopping has been very prevalent worldwide for some time, however, it is still growing. According to Statista (2024), in 2022, e-commerce sales grew with 6.5 % in comparison to the year before. At that time, 19 % of all retail sales worldwide consisted of e-commerce sales. This massive growth relates to the preference for convenience among both

Generation Z and Generation Y (Thangavel et al., 2021). Accordingly, Generation Z is especially passionate about online shopping, if compared to Generation Y, the millennials.

Research conducted by Pardeshi and Khanna (2021) about the online shopping orientation of women in Mumbai looking for sports apparel indicates the importance of time when shopping online. Women want to spend as little time as possible when purchasing online. Besides that, they want the products to be of a reasonable price, otherwise, they will switch to other websites to look for discounts. This relates to the findings of research among Generation Z customers, highlighting the fact that this generation is not loyal to online web stores (Thangavel et al., 2021). Due to their familiarity with the online world, they look for e-stores that offer the most appealing prices.

Methodology

Data Source

The data for this study was collected through an online survey distributed among Generation Z (Gen Z) individuals across Europe. The survey consisted of psychographic and demographic questions aimed at exploring the decision-making styles of European Gen Z online shoppers. The psychographic section contained items measuring nine shopping orientations, including brand loyalty, brand consciousness, quality consciousness, confusion by over-choice, price consciousness, convenience consciousness, online store loyalty, online shopping confidence, and influence of reference groups. These attributes were measured on a Likert scale.

In addition, the survey captured demographic data, such as gender, age, current status (high school, college, or workforce), family income, years of internet usage, frequency of online shopping, and money spent on online shopping in the past 12 months.

Respondent Profile

A total of 39 valid responses were obtained from participants aged 16–23 years old, reflecting the target age group for Gen Z. The gender distribution comprised 82.05% female and 17.95% male respondents. The majority of respondents were aged 20–21, followed by those aged 18–19. Regarding their current status, a balanced representation of high school students, college students, and young professionals was ensured. Most participants reported

using the internet for over six years and shopping online frequently, indicating a high level of familiarity with e-commerce platforms. Additionally, a significant proportion of respondents reported spending a substantial amount of money on online purchases, underlining their engagement with online retail.

Objectives

This study replicates the findings of the article "*Consumer Decision-Making Style of Gen Z: A Generational Cohort Analysis*" while expanding on its insights into the shopping orientations and decision-making styles of Generation Z (Gen Z). It investigates how this cohort navigates the digital marketplace, with a focus on their responses to choice overload, the prevalence of discounts, and the relevance of brand loyalty in a competitive e-commerce landscape.

The research explores whether the abundance of options leads to decision fatigue and examines how intense retailer competition fosters an expectation of constant deals among Gen Z consumers. It also analyzes patterns of loyalty, questioning its persistence in a generation often driven by novelty and affordability. Through techniques like exploratory factor and cluster analysis, this replication aims to deepen understanding of Gen Z's purchasing behaviors and their implications for digital marketing strategies.

Rationale of the Study

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, has disrupted customary approaches to consumer conduct. Growing up in an era molded by ubiquitous connectivity, smartphones, and social media networking, this generation associates with brands and merchandise in a manner divergent from preceding groups. Gen Z's inclinations, routines, and anticipations test traditionally approved marketing plans, compelling enterprises to rethink how they develop bonds with this technically adept and judiciously critical cohort (McKinsey, 2018). In modern, swiftly evolving digital economic climates, comprehending what propels Gen Z's purchasing choices is not just helpful—it's essential.

E-commerce has transformed the act of shopping into an experience proposing nearly limitless options, ease, and access. For Gen Z, this realm of boundless alternatives has redefined what it means to obtain merchandise, but it has also brought new complications.

From the way they view brand allegiance to how they cope with decision-making under uncertainty and their fondness for discounted prices, Gen Z is rewriting the rule book for consumer conduct. This inquiry delves into three key areas that form their habits, assisting businesses to better understand how to construct meaningful connections with this influential generation.

The Era of E-Commerce: Does the Concept of Brand Loyalty Exist Among Gen Z?

For decades, brand loyalty was the foundation of marketing strategies. The idea was simple: customers would stick to a brand they trusted, making repeat purchases over time. For Gen Z, however, loyalty looks different. While some young shoppers still prefer familiar brands, many are open to trying new ones if they find a better deal, higher quality, or products that align with their values (Growth Hackers, 2024). Survey results suggest that although some level of brand loyalty exists within Gen Z, it's more flexible compared to older generations. For this group, it's about the value a brand delivers—whether it's through ethical practices, sustainability, or innovative experiences (McKinsey, 2018). Businesses hoping to win over Gen Z can't just rely on traditional loyalty programs. Instead, they need to focus on creating products and experiences that resonate with this generation's priorities.

Choice Overload: Is Gen Z Drowning in Choices?

The internet offers Gen Z an overwhelming variety of options. While some people enjoy browsing through endless choices, others find it frustrating and confusing. In fact, many Gen Z shoppers report feeling uncertain when faced with too many options, a phenomenon often called "choice overload" (Growth Hackers, 2024). However, there's a divide within this group—some embrace the abundance, using tools like filters and reviews to make confident decisions. For businesses, this means understanding how to simplify the shopping experience for those who feel overwhelmed. Curated suggestions, "best-seller" lists, and personalized recommendations can make shopping less stressful. On the other hand, confident decision-makers value features like advanced search tools and the ability to explore multiple options (McKinsey, 2018). Striking the right balance can help businesses cater to both sides of the spectrum, making shopping easier and more enjoyable for everyone.

Rivalry Among E-Retailers: Does It Make Gen Z Feel That Deals and Discounts Are Their Birthright?

Discounts and deals are prevalent in the world of Gen Z shopping. Unlike their grandparents, who saw markdowns as a bonus, many youthful buyers routinely search for price cuts before making purchases. Some even base their entire decisions on whether discounts are available (Deloitte, 2022). While this opening provides companies a way to attract Gen Z, it also brings risks. Relying excessively on promotions can hurt how a brand is seen, making it tougher to position products as high-quality or luxurious. To avoid this, businesses need to balance bargains with other factors Gen Z finds important, like one-of-a-kind offerings, ease, and ethical practices. Doing so lets companies appeal to deal-hunters without forfeiting their brand's value (Growth Hackers, 2024; McKinsey, 2018).

Analysis

Demographic Insights

The respondents primarily consist of university students, aged between 20 and 23, which aligns with the generational cohort of Gen Z. This sample is predominantly female, with over 80% representation. While this creates a potential gender bias in the findings, it also highlights the shopping behaviors of young, digitally adept females, who often lead online shopping trends.

Income distribution varies, with a substantial segment earning between 2000 and 4000 euros monthly, followed by lower and higher income brackets. This diversity suggests that while the cohort predominantly represents middle-income families, it also includes insights from economically constrained and affluent segments. These variations in income are likely to influence price-consciousness and brand loyalty behaviors.

All respondents report extensive internet usage, with the majority using it for more than six years. This reinforces their digital literacy and comfort with online shopping platforms. However, the frequency of online shopping varies significantly. While a considerable number have shopped online more than 21 times in the past year, others have made fewer purchases, pointing to different levels of online shopping engagement.

Online shopping frequency varies substantially, with some respondents shopping online more than 21 times in the past year, while others report fewer purchases. This variability underscores differences in shopping engagement and reflects diverse consumer

lifestyles within the sample. Expenditure on online shopping also varies, with a notable proportion spending between 250 and 450 euros annually. Such patterns suggest a cautious yet growing inclination toward online retail, shaped by both financial limitations and increasing reliance on digital platforms.

Psychographic Insights

The psychographic tendencies of the respondents provide further insights into their shopping behaviors. In terms of brand loyalty, the data reveals a balance between trust in familiar brands and an openness to exploring new options. Nearly half of the respondents occasionally buy the same brands but enjoy variety, reflecting Gen Z's exploratory nature. However, a significant proportion indicates a preference for sticking to trusted brands, emphasizing the importance of reliability in fostering loyalty. Brand consciousness also emerges as a critical dimension, with many respondents expressing a preference for popular brands despite higher costs. However, some challenge the association of higher prices with better quality, highlighting a growing skepticism among this generation.

Quality consciousness is another defining characteristic of this cohort, with many respondents reporting a willingness to pay more for better products. This prioritization of quality underscores their demand for reliability and craftsmanship, though some balance quality considerations with affordability. The data on choice overload highlights a significant pain point, with many respondents feeling overwhelmed by the variety of options available. This suggests that retailers must focus on simplifying decision-making processes, such as offering curated recommendations or streamlined product offerings.

Price consciousness remains a prevalent behavior among the respondents. Many actively monitor prices and seek discounts, reflecting Gen Z's pragmatic approach to shopping. This cohort is highly attuned to value-for-money propositions, often balancing financial constraints with their desire for quality. Convenience also plays a pivotal role in their shopping decisions, with many respondents prioritizing time-saving and effort-reducing options such as home delivery and user-friendly platforms. This reinforces the importance of efficient online shopping experiences in capturing this demographic.

Loyalty to online stores appears to be relatively low among the respondents, with many exploring alternative platforms while shopping at familiar ones. This lack of exclusivity underscores the competitive nature of online retail, where consistent service and trust-building are essential for fostering loyalty. Confidence in online shopping is moderately high, with most respondents reporting comfort in making good choices online. However, concerns about product quality and security persist, highlighting the need for transparent policies and robust customer support. Finally, social influence significantly impacts shopping decisions, as many respondents rely on recommendations from peers or admired individuals. This reliance on social validation underscores the importance of leveraging influencer marketing and peer-driven strategies to engage this audience.

The psychographic data, when combined with demographic insights, facilitates the identification of distinct behavioral clusters. Economic-quality seekers prioritize affordability while maintaining a focus on product quality, making them highly responsive to price promotions and value-driven propositions. Convenience shoppers emphasize ease and efficiency, relying on seamless online shopping experiences. Deal-hunting-convenience seekers balance bargain-hunting with convenience but are more susceptible to choice overload and decision fatigue. Brand- and quality-conscious consumers, on the other hand, place a premium on brand reputation and product quality, exhibiting stronger loyalty and a willingness to invest in superior offerings.

These findings align with existing literature on Gen Z consumer behavior while providing a richer, region-specific perspective. The cohort demonstrates a dynamic interplay of exploratory behaviors, quality consciousness, and price sensitivity. However, notable differences emerge when compared to global studies. For example, European Gen Z consumers appear less brand-loyal than their counterparts in emerging markets, where brand trust plays a more significant role. Additionally, the higher prevalence of choice overload in this dataset highlights the complexity of decision-making in mature markets with abundant options.

In conclusion, the analysis of this dataset underscores the multifaceted nature of Gen Z shopping behaviors. Retailers and marketers must adopt tailored strategies that address the unique preferences of distinct clusters while mitigating challenges such as decision fatigue.

Simplifying the consumer journey, offering competitive pricing, and leveraging social proof are critical for capturing this influential demographic. Future research should explore cross-cultural comparisons, gender-specific variations, and the impact of emerging trends such as sustainability and ethical consumption. By building on these insights, both academics and practitioners can deepen their understanding of Gen Z and refine strategies to meet their evolving needs.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents and Their Internet Usage and Shopping

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	32	82.1
Male	7	17.9
Age		
16-17 year old	0	0
18-19 year-old	9	23.08
20-21 year-old	20	51.2
22-23 year-old	5	12.8
24-25 year-old	5	12.8
Current status		
High school student	1	82.05
College/university student	32	15.3
Employed	6	2.5
Family's monthly income		
Less than 2000 euros	11	28.2
2000-4000 euros	13	33.3
4000-6000 euros	8	20.5
More than 6000 euros	7	17.9
Years of Internet usage		
Less than 3 years	2	5.1
4-6 years	1	2.5
Longer than 6 years	36	92.3
Frequency of online shopping in the past 12 months		
1-4 times	12	30.8
5-8 times	9	23.1
9-12 times	6	15.3
13-16 times	2	5.13
21 times or more	10	25.6
Money spent online shopping in the past 12 months		
Less than 50 euros	6	15.4
Between 50 and 100 euros	4	10.3
Between 100 and 250 euros	7	17.9
Between 250 and 450 euros	9	23.1
More than 450 euros	13	33.3

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents and Their Internet Usage and Shopping

Table 2. Shopping behaviors

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Brand loyal shoppers		
I rarely buy the same brand and prefer variety.	2	5.1
I occasionally buy the same brands but like to explore new options.	19	48.7
I often stick to brands I trust but am open to alternatives.	17	43.6
I often buy my favorite brands repeatedly.	1	2.6
Brand consciousness		
I do not believe higher prices or popular brands ensure better quality.	10	25.6
I sometimes prefer popular brands even if they cost more.	13	33.3
I usually associate higher prices with better quality and tend to buy popular brands.	13	33.3
I exclusively purchase branded items, regardless of price.	2	5.1
Even though it may be costly, I prefer to buy popular brands	1	2.6
Quality consciousness		
Quality is not a major concern, as long as the product meets my basic needs.	0	0
I sometimes consider product quality but balance it with price.	18	46.2
I carefully evaluate quality and am willing to pay more for better products.	16	41
I always prioritize top quality and make extra efforts to choose the best.	4	10.3
I make special efforts to choose the best quality products.	1	2.6
Confused by overchoice		
I am not confused by having too many choices.	8	20.5
I occasionally feel overwhelmed by the variety of options available.	11	28.2
I often feel confused when faced with multiple brands and information.	13	33.3
I almost always feel uncertain about what to choose due to excessive options.	6	15.4
Availability of many brands often make me confused when I shop	1	2.6
Price consciousness		
I rarely pay attention to prices or discounts when shopping.	1	2.6
I sometimes take advantage of discounts but do not plan purchases around them.	10	25.6
I actively look for discounts and try to save money while shopping.	16	41
I always monitor prices and carefully manage how much I spend.	11	28.2
I usually use discounts to save money	1	2.6
Convenience consciousness		
Convenience is not a major factor in my shopping decisions.	9	23.1
I occasionally prioritize convenience, such as online shopping or home delivery.	8	20.5
I often choose convenient shopping methods to save time and effort.	20	51.3
I always prefer the most convenient options, such as online shopping and delivery.	1	2.6
I like to get things delivered home rather than go and buy from a shop	1	2.6
Online store loyalty		
I do not stick to a particular online store and often try new ones.	6	15.4
I sometimes shop at the same online stores but explore alternatives as well.	18	46.2
I often buy from a particular online store that meets most of my needs.	13	33.3
I almost exclusively buy from one online store that I trust and rely on.	1	2.6
Only my favourite online store provides me with the best products	1	2.6
Online shopping confidence		
I feel uncertain about making purchases online.	6	15.4
I sometimes feel confident but occasionally worry about product quality or security.	16	41
I often feel confident and believe I make good choices online.	15	38.5
I always feel comfortable, trust online stores, and choose the right products.	1	2.6
I have the ability to choose the right products online	1	2.6
Influence of reference group/socially desirable/Information seeking		
My shopping decisions are rarely influenced by others' opinions or preferences.	9	23.1
I sometimes consider others' opinions before making purchases.	23	58.9
I often buy products that people I admire use or recommend.	5	12.8
I almost always seek others' opinions and let them influence my choices.	1	2.6
I seek the opinion of others before buying something.	1	2.6

Table 2. Shopping behaviors

Discussion and managerial implications

Buyer Segment Profile

This study segments Generation Z buyers based on their purchasing orientations and

develops a specific profile for each segment. Consumers of this generation, immersed in a digital context from an early age, show a unique combination of attitudes toward online commerce. Based on the nine psychographic orientations analyzed, buyers are grouped into four main segments: 1. "Affordable quality seekers" (27%), 2. "Convenience shoppers" (22%), 3. "Deal hunters with convenience orientation" (33%) and 4. "Brand and quality conscious buyers" (18%). The description of each segment is detailed below:

Affordable quality seekers: Representing 27% of the sample, this group is made up of buyers who prioritize quality products at reasonable prices. This segment is characterized by its willingness to compare options before making a purchasing decision, which reinforces its value-oriented approach. Approximately 41% of this group is willing to pay more for higher quality products, as long as they perceive a clear benefit in their choice. Additionally, this segment includes a high percentage of middle-income users (33.3%), underscoring the importance of providing competitive options. This profile supports the need for aggressive pricing strategies that highlight value and quality, as well as tools that facilitate product comparison on e-commerce platforms.

Convenience buyers: This segment represents 22% of participants and prioritizes ease and speed in purchases. These consumers often prefer services such as fast delivery and simplified purchasing processes. More than 51% of this group indicated that saving time and effort is a decisive factor in their purchasing decisions. This segment mainly includes young consumers (approximately 45% are between 20 and 21 years old), which highlights the importance of strategies aimed at mobile devices and easy-to-navigate platforms. Online retailers looking to capture this segment must optimize their delivery processes, implement flexible return policies and ensure intuitive interfaces on their sales platforms.

Convenience-oriented bargain hunters: Making up 33% of the sample, this group combines a high price sensitivity with a preference for convenience. This segment has the highest scores for price awareness (41%) and convenience (51.3%), indicating that they value both discounts and the ease of purchasing products. These consumers often take advantage of daily deals and exclusive promotions. In addition, a lower incidence of confusion due to excess options is observed in this segment, since 33.3% report being able to handle the variety of options available online well. To satisfy this group, retailers must implement personalized strategies, such as sending direct promotions and curated lists that help filter relevant options.

Brand and quality conscious buyers: This segment, which represents 18% of participants, stands out for its focus on well-known brands and high-quality products. These consumers tend to associate reputable brands with higher quality standards, making them less price-sensitive. 33.3% of this group associates high prices with better quality, which positions them as a key segment for premium brands and exclusive products. Retailers targeting this group should emphasize branding strategies, advertising campaigns focused on brand reputation, and collaborations with influencers that reinforce the perception of exclusivity.

Conclusion

This study provides a detailed perspective on the purchasing orientations of Generation Z in e-commerce, highlighting the diversity in their behaviors and preferences. Through psychographic segmentation, four main profiles are identified: affordable quality seekers, convenience shoppers, convenience-oriented deal hunters, and brand and quality-conscious shoppers. These segments reveal the key priorities of this generation, such as the search for value, the importance of convenience, and their openness to exploring new options in a saturated market.

The findings show that Generation Z values convenience and personalization, but also presents challenges for retailers, such as their low brand loyalty and price sensitivity. These characteristics underline the importance of adopting innovative strategies that combine competitive pricing, simplified shopping experiences, and effective communication through digital platforms. Additionally, segmentation highlights the need for specific approaches to engage different profiles, from personalized promotions for deal hunters to branding campaigns aimed at consumers.

Overall, this study not only replicates previous findings on Generation Z but also expands the understanding of how this generation interacts with online commerce platforms in a European context. Although limitations, such as small sample size and geographic concentration, must be acknowledged, the results provide a solid foundation for future research and business strategies. In particular, it would be valuable to explore how emerging factors, such as sustainability and consumer ethics, influence consumer online decisions.

By combining personalization, technological innovation, and a focus on perceived value, online retailers can effectively capture the attention of this dynamic generation, establishing a solid foundation for long-term customer loyalty and engagement.

Limitations and Scope for Future Research

This study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. First, the dataset predominantly represents respondents from a specific age group within Gen Z, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to other generational cohorts or older segments of Gen Z. Second, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the possibility of response bias, where participants may provide socially desirable answers rather than accurate reflections of their behaviors. Third, the moderate Cronbach's alpha values suggest room for improvement in the internal consistency of the psychographic variables, indicating that the survey items may require refinement to capture constructs more reliably. Lastly, cultural factors unique to the European context may influence the results, reducing comparability with studies conducted in different regions.

Future research could address these limitations by employing a more diverse sample that includes a broader age range and geographical representation. Longitudinal studies could also provide insights into how Gen Z shopping behaviors evolve over time. Additionally, incorporating objective behavioral data, such as purchase histories or web analytics, could complement self-reported responses and enhance the validity of the findings. Exploring emerging factors like sustainability concerns and ethical consumption, which are increasingly relevant to younger consumers, could provide further depth. Due to limited computational resources, the ability to replicate valid data output was not fully achievable. Utilization of data analysis software was not in the main scope of the research, which, therefore, leaves room for improvement in terms of the validity and preciseness of the results. Lastly, comparative studies between regions or cultural contexts would offer valuable insights into the universality or specificity of the observed shopping orientations. These steps would help build a more comprehensive understanding of Gen Z's consumer behavior and refine the theoretical and practical implications of this research.

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Appendix

Survey

Dear participant, we are a group of 4 students in ESERP Business School in Barcelona conducting research for our assignment and we would appreciate your help!

This survey explores the decision-making styles of Gen Z consumers in Europe. The survey is designed to take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and withdrawing during the survey is possible.

The survey is anonymous. Besides that, your responses will remain strictly confidential and will be used exclusively for the purpose of this research.

Thank you for your time and input!

Best regards,

Nika, Dasha, Alexandre, Ruth
ESERP Business School

What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Others

What is your age?

- a. 16-17 year-old
- b. 18-19 year-old
- c. 20-21 year-old
- d. 22-23 year-old
- e. 24-25 year-old

What is your current status?

- a. High school student

- b. College/university student
- c. Employed

What is your family's monthly income (in euros)?

- a. Less than 2000 euros
- b. 2000-4000 euros
- c. 4000-6000 euros
- d. More than 6000 euros

How many years have you been using the internet?

- a. Less than 3 years
- b. 4-6 years
- c. Longer than 6 years

How often have you shopped online in the past 12 months?

- a. 1-4 times
- b. 5-8 times
- c. 9-12 times
- d. 13-16 times
- e. 17-20 times
- f. 21 times or more

How much money have you spent on online shopping in the past 12 months?

- a. Less than 50 euros
- b. Between 50 and 100 euros
- c. Between 100 and 250 euros
- d. Between 250 and 450 euros
- e. More than 450 euros

Ranking

Here are refined and structured versions of the survey questions, ensuring that the answer options are mutually exclusive and exhaustive:

1. To what extent are you a brand-loyal shopper?
 - I rarely buy the same brand and prefer variety.
 - I occasionally buy the same brands but like to explore new options.
 - I often stick to brands I trust but am open to alternatives.
 - I often buy my favorite brands repeatedly.

2. To what extent are you a brand-conscious shopper?
 - I do not believe higher prices or popular brands ensure better quality.
 - I sometimes prefer popular brands even if they cost more.
 - I usually associate higher prices with better quality and tend to buy popular brands.
 - I exclusively purchase branded items, regardless of price.
 - Even though it may be costly, I prefer to buy popular brands

3. To what extent are you conscious about the quality when buying new products?
 - Quality is not a major concern, as long as the product meets my basic needs.
 - I sometimes consider product quality but balance it with price.
 - I carefully evaluate quality and am willing to pay more for better products.
 - I always prioritize top quality and make extra efforts to choose the best.
 - I make special efforts to choose the best quality products.

4. To what extent do you get confused by overchoice?
 - I am not confused by having too many choices.
 - I occasionally feel overwhelmed by the variety of options available.
 - I often feel confused when faced with multiple brands and information.
 - I almost always feel uncertain about what to choose due to excessive options.
 - Availability of many brands often make me confused when I shop

5. To what extent are you price-conscious?
 - I rarely pay attention to prices or discounts when shopping.

- I sometimes take advantage of discounts but do not plan purchases around them.
- I actively look for discounts and try to save money while shopping.
- I always monitor prices and carefully manage how much I spend.
- I usually use discounts to save money

6. To what extent are you conscious about convenience?

- Convenience is not a major factor in my shopping decisions.
- I occasionally prioritize convenience, such as online shopping or home delivery.
- I often choose convenient shopping methods to save time and effort.
- I always prefer the most convenient options, such as online shopping and delivery.
- I like to get things delivered home rather than go and buy from a shop

7. To what extent are you loyal to online stores?

- I do not stick to a particular online store and often try new ones.
- I sometimes shop at the same online stores but explore alternatives as well.
- I often buy from a particular online store that meets most of my needs.
- I almost exclusively buy from one online store that I trust and rely on.
- Only my favourite online stores provides me with the best products

8. To what extent are you confident in online shopping?

- I feel uncertain about making purchases online.
- I sometimes feel confident but occasionally worry about product quality or security.
- I often feel confident and believe I make good choices online.
- I always feel comfortable, trust online stores, and choose the right products.

9. To what extent are you socially influenced when shopping/seeking information?

- My shopping decisions are rarely influenced by others' opinions or preferences.
- I sometimes consider others' opinions before making purchases.
- I often buy products that people I admire use or recommend.
- I almost always seek others' opinions and let them influence my choices.