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THE EFFECT OF PERCEIVED USEFULNESS AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTION IN THE USE OF SOCIAL COMMERCE AMONG GENERATION Z IN LANGSA CITY

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ABSTRACT

Social commerce is expanding quickly across Indonesia, accompanied by the prominent share of Generation Z in both the population and internet use; nevertheless, evidence on how Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence shape Behavioral Intention is still mixed, especially for smaller cities. This study aims to analyze how Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence shape Behavioral Intention, both separately and in combination, among Generation Z users of social commerce in Langsa City. The research follows a quantitative explanatory approach. Responses were collected from 120 Generation Z participants in Langsa City through an online survey, then analyzed with multiple linear regression in SPSS following tests of validity, reliability, and the classical assumptions. The results indicate that Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant impact on Behavioral Intention (β = 0.669; t = 10.593; p = 0.000), Social Influence also shows a positive and significant impact (β = 0.211; t = 3.342; p = 0.001), and both variables jointly have a significant bearing on Behavioral Intention (F = 74.300; p = 0.000), explaining 55.9% of its variance (R2 = 0.559). Perceived Usefulness emerged as the strongest predictor. To conclude, practical benefit is the main reason Generation Z in Langsa City intends to use social commerce, whereas social influence plays a supporting part. These outcomes lend support to the Technology Acceptance Model once it is broadened with the Social Influence construct taken from UTAUT, and offer empirical evidence from a small-city context that contributes to the ongoing academic discussion of social influence in social commerce adoption.

Keywords: *Perceived usefulness, social influence, behavioral intention, social commerce, Generation Z.*

INTRODUCTION

Based on the 2020 Population Census, Generation Z individuals born between 1997 and 2012 numbered 75.49 million people, representing 27.94 percent of Indonesia's population, which makes it the largest generational group in the country (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2021). This demographic size is mirrored in digital participation: at the start of 2024, Generation Z accounted for the biggest share (34.40 percent) of the 221.56 million Indonesians using the internet (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia, 2024). Against this backdrop, social commerce a form of electronic commerce that relies on social media to facilitate social interaction and user involvement in buying decisions (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016) is projected to grow from approximately 66.6 million users

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in 2024 to 79.04 million by 2028 (Statista, 2024). Table 1 presents these supporting data, while Figure 1 depicts the projected growth in social commerce users.

Table 1. Supporting Statistical Data for the Research Background

Indicator	Value	Source
Number of Indonesian Generation Z (born 1997–2012)	75.49 million people (27.94% of population)	BPS, 2020 Population Census
Indonesian internet penetration (2024)	221.56 million people (79.5% of population)	APJII, 2024
Generation Z's contribution to internet users	34.40% (largest contributor)	APJII, 2024
Indonesian social commerce users (2024)	± 66.6 million people	Statista, 2024
Projected Indonesian social commerce users (2028)	79.04 million people (+12.4 million)	Statista, 2024
Age group 15–19 in Langsa City (part of Gen Z)	16,901 people (largest age group)	BPS Aceh, 2020

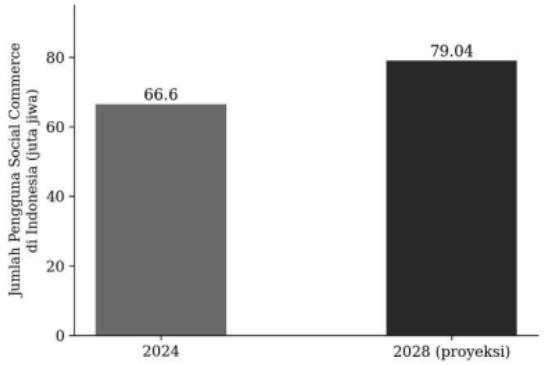


Figure 1. Forecast Increase in the Number of Social Commerce Users in Indonesia
Source: author's processing of data from Statista (2024).

The problem, nonetheless, is that fast growth does not automatically imply that the factors driving social commerce adoption are the same across regions and population groups. Two determinants are most frequently examined in technology-acceptance research: Perceived Usefulness, rooted in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM; Davis, 1989), and Social Influence, derived from the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Perceived Usefulness is understood as an individual's conviction that using a system will improve his or her performance (Davis, 1989), whereas Social Influence is the degree to which an individual senses that important others believe he or she should use the technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). UTAUT2 later broadened the relevance of both constructs to consumer settings (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The outcome variable is Behavioral Intention, understood as an individual's subjective probability of performing a behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975); here it denotes the intention to adopt or continue using social commerce. This is distinct

from Purchase Intention, which concerns the readiness to purchase a specific product (Huwaida et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021).

Existing evidence reveals two gaps. The first is inconsistency regarding Social Influence. Studies in Indonesia report fairly uniform positive effects of Perceived Usefulness on usage intention (Handarkho, 2021; Puspitasari & Baridwan, 2026; Rahmona et al., 2025), but findings on Social Influence diverge: several studies report a significant positive effect (Abdalla, 2024; Khoa, 2025; Pratama, 2024; Rahman et al., 2020), one reports a negative effect (Vatanasakdakul et al., 2023), and another reports no significant effect (Octaviani et al., 2023). Dwivedi et al. (2023) likewise note that research on social commerce has produced mixed results. The second is a geographic gap. Most Indonesian social commerce studies were carried out in large cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Malang, or with national samples (Astriani & Sihite, 2025; Huwaida et al., 2024; Puspitasari & Baridwan, 2026), while Langsa City seldom serves as a research site, despite the fact that its 15–19 age group, which belongs to Generation Z, is the biggest at 16,901 people (Badan Pusat Statistik Aceh, 2020, as cited in Jurnal Sosiohumaniora Kodepena, 2023).

In response to these gaps, the present research examines an integrated TAM–UTAUT model in which Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence together account for Behavioral Intention, using multiple linear regression on survey responses obtained from Generation Z social commerce users in Langsa City. The objective is to evaluate how Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence affect Behavioral Intention, both individually and concurrently, in relation to social commerce use among Generation Z in Langsa City.

Drawing on the theoretical and empirical discussion above, the conceptual framework places Perceived Usefulness (X1) and Social Influence (X2) as independent variables influencing Behavioral Intention (Y), partially and simultaneously, with no mediating or moderating variable involved, as illustrated in Figure 2.

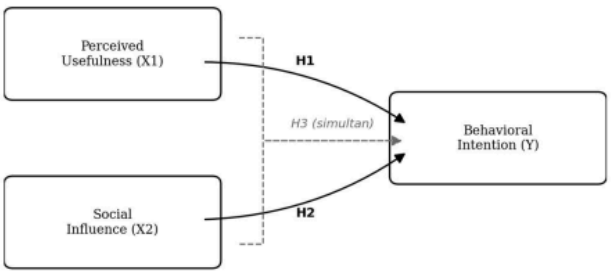


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on TAM (Davis, 1989), a greater perceived benefit of a system builds a more favorable attitude toward using it, and this in turn raises the intention to use it. The fairly consistent empirical results reported by Rahmona et al. (2025), Handarkho (2021), and Puspitasari and Baridwan (2026) in the Indonesian social commerce setting support this reasoning, and hence the first hypothesis is stated as follows:

H1: Perceived Usefulness has a positive and significant impact on Behavioral Intention in using social commerce among Generation Z in Langsa City. In contrast, UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003) holds that people align their behavioral intention with the expectations of significant others around them via normative compliance. Although earlier empirical findings have not converged—several report a positive effect (Rahman et al., 2020; Pratama, 2024; Khoa, 2025), one reports a negative effect (Vatanasakdakul et al., 2023), and another reports no significant effect (Octaviani et al., 2023)—the UTAUT theoretical foundation still anticipates a positive direction as the baseline. Precisely because of this disagreement, retesting the relationship in a population and setting not previously examined becomes pertinent. The second hypothesis is accordingly formulated as follows:

H2: Social Influence has a positive and significant impact on Behavioral Intention in using social commerce among Generation Z in Langsa City. Apart from the separate effect of each variable, the integrated TAM–UTAUT model applied here further assumes that functional benefit and social normative pressure operate together in forming behavioral intention, instead of being mutually exclusive mechanisms (Venkatesh et al., 2003, 2012). Consequently, the two variables taken together are expected to account for a considerable portion of the variance in Behavioral Intention simultaneously, giving rise to the third hypothesis:

H3: Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence together have a significant impact on Behavioral Intention in using social commerce among Generation Z in Langsa City. The originality of this study rests on pairing a geographic context that has received little research attention, namely Langsa City, which has a young demographic profile (Badan Pusat Statistik Aceh, 2020; Huwaida et al., 2024), with a renewed examination of the Social Influence construct, whose direction of effect remains debated in the Indonesian and international social commerce literature (Khoa, 2025; Octaviani et al., 2023; Vatanasakdakul et al., 2023).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a quantitative explanatory design and was carried out in Langsa City, Aceh Province. The target participants were members of Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, who reside in Langsa City and have shopped through social commerce. Generation Z was defined using the classification applied by Statistics Indonesia when releasing the 2020 Population Census, together with the Pew Research Center classification that is widely used internationally.

Data were gathered through an online questionnaire with purposive non-probability sampling, because no definitive sampling frame of Generation Z social commerce users in Langsa City exists in any established population database. A screening section in the questionnaire checked respondent eligibility against three predetermined criteria: (1) being part of Generation Z (born 1997–2012), (2) living in Langsa City, and (3) having experience of shopping via social commerce. Only those meeting all three criteria could continue to the main questionnaire.

Prior to finalizing the dataset for analysis, the responses to the screening items were verified again to ensure that every respondent fulfilled the established criteria. Respondents who did not meet any criterion were excluded from the final dataset, so that only eligible respondents remained in the analysis. The rest of the questionnaire consisted of a demographic section and a main section containing statements scored on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

In total, 120 eligible respondents were analyzed. According to Hair et al. (2014), the smallest acceptable sample for multivariate analysis is obtained by multiplying the number of research indicators by 5 to 10. Since this study uses 12 indicators (6 Perceived Usefulness items, 3 Social Influence items, and 3 Behavioral Intention items), the minimum required sample falls between 60 and 120 respondents. The final sample of 120 therefore satisfies the recommended size for multiple linear regression with two predictors. The operationalization of the research variables is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Operationalization of Research Variables

Research Variable	Construct Definition	Number of Items	Scale	Instrument Source
Perceived Usefulness (X1)	A person's belief that social commerce use enhances how well shopping activities are performed (Davis, 1989)	6	Likert 1–5	Rahmona et al. (2025)
Social Influence (X2)	The degree to which an individual perceives that important others influence his or her intention to use social commerce (Venkatesh et al., 2003)	3	Likert 1–5	Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023), adapted
Behavioral Intention (Y)	A person's subjective likelihood of continuing to use social commerce (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)	3	Likert 1–5	Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023), adapted

All six Perceived Usefulness items were adopted without modification from Rahmona et al. (2025), including the measurement object, since the original instrument was designed specifically for social commerce. The Social Influence and Behavioral Intention instruments were adapted from Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023) by replacing the referent object "social media" with "social commerce," because social commerce is a form of social media use oriented toward commercial purposes (Zhang & Benyoucef, 2016); this narrowing of the object does not alter the essence of the construct being measured.

Before the analysis, a strict screening procedure eliminated ineligible responses, leaving only participants who met every inclusion criterion. The verified dataset was subsequently processed in several stages using SPSS: the validity of each item was examined through Pearson Product Moment correlation between the item score and the construct's total score; reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha for every

construct; the classical assumption tests comprised residual normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov), multicollinearity (Tolerance and VIF), and heteroscedasticity (Glejser test); finally, the hypotheses were tested through multiple linear regression, applying the t-test to the partial effects (H1, H2), the F-test to the simultaneous effect (H3), and the coefficient of determination (R^2).

As a methodological note, the field verification process to confirm the full compliance of all respondents with the screening criteria, particularly domicile and usage experience, was still being finalized by the researchers at the time this manuscript was prepared. The methodological implications of this note are discussed further in the research-limitations section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The respondents comprised 120 Generation Z individuals living in Langsa City who had shopped through social commerce. Table 3 presents their characteristics.

Table 3. Respondent Profile (N = 120)

Characteristic	Category	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	32	26.7
	Female	88	73.3
Frequency	Daily	18	15%
	Several times a week	34	28,33%
	Several times a month	68	56,67%

Most respondents were female (73.3%), whereas males made up 26.7%. Regarding usage frequency, the majority (68 respondents; 56.67%) used social commerce a few times a month, 34 respondents (28.33%) used it a few times a week, and 18 respondents (15%) used it every day. These figures suggest that Generation Z in Langsa City regards social commerce as part of a regular shopping routine and not as a heavy daily activity, which is understandable because the traits of a small city differ from those of large urban centers in terms of digital transaction intensity. Concerning platforms, TikTok Shop and Shopee Live were chosen most often, followed by WhatsApp Business, Instagram Shopping, and Facebook Marketplace, which mirrors the prominence of live streaming and short-form video in Indonesia's current social commerce landscape.

Instrument Validity and Reliability Test Results

Item validity was examined by calculating the Pearson correlation between every item score and the construct's total score, and the r-calculated value obtained was then contrasted with the r-table value. For N = 120 respondents, 118 degrees of freedom (df = N − 2), and a 5% significance level (two-tailed), the r-table value is 0.1793. An item is regarded as valid if its r-calculated value is higher than this r-table value. Table 4 presents the complete results.

Table 4. Results of Instrument Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable	Item	r-calculated	r-table (df=118; α=5%)	Sig.	Remarks	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived Usefulness (X1)	PU1	0.790	0.1793	0.000	Valid	0.900
	PU2	0.810	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	PU3	0.848	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	PU4	0.823	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	PU5	0.832	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	PU6	0.799	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
Social Influence (X2)	SI1	0.721	0.1793	0.000	Valid	0.621
	SI2	0.818	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	SI3	0.730	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
Behavioral Intention (Y)	BI1	0.818	0.1793	0.000	Valid	0.757
	BI2	0.811	0.1793	0.000	Valid	
	BI3	0.832	0.1793	0.000	Valid	

All r-calculated values (ranging from 0.721 to 0.848) clearly exceed the critical value of 0.1793, so the 12 items are deemed valid, consistent with their significance values, which all fall below 0.01. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient reached 0.900 for Perceived Usefulness (very reliable) and 0.757 for Behavioral Intention (reliable), while Social Influence obtained 0.621, at the lower edge of the adequately reliable category yet still above the generally accepted minimum of 0.60. A closer look shows that item SI1 has the lowest Corrected Item-Total Correlation (0.389; still above the r-table value) among the three Social Influence items, which partly explains why the Alpha of this construct is close to the lower limit. The instrument was nevertheless used in full, but this result deserves attention in future instrument development.

Results of Classical Assumption Testing

Normality Test

Normality testing is intended to establish whether the research data or variables are normally distributed, as a sound regression model presupposes data with a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed for this purpose. By its decision rule, data are considered normal when the significance value is higher than 0.05, and non-normal when it is not.

Table 5. Results of the Normality Test

Asymp. Sig. Value (2-tailed)	Significance Level	Remarks
0.200	0.05	Normal

As Table 5 shows, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yields an Asymp. Sig. value of 0.200, which is far above the 0.05 limit. This signifies that the data follow a normal

distribution, so the normality assumption is satisfied and the data are suitable for this study.

Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity testing examines whether the independent variables in the regression model are highly correlated with one another; a proper model should be free of multicollinearity. Two criteria are used: multicollinearity does not exist if Tolerance exceeds 0.10 and VIF is under 10.00, whereas it exists if Tolerance falls under 0.10 and VIF exceeds 10.00.

Table 6. Results of the Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Remarks
X1	0.944	1.060	Free of Multicollinearity
X2	0.944	1.060	Free of Multicollinearity

Table 6 indicates that both variables have Tolerance values higher than 0.10 and VIF values lower than 10.00. Therefore, the regression model exhibits no multicollinearity and is fit for use in this study.

Heteroscedasticity Test

Heteroscedasticity testing checks whether the residual variance is unequal across observations, since a sound regression model must not exhibit heteroscedasticity. The Glejser test was used to detect it, under the rule that a significance value higher than 0.05 indicates the absence of heteroscedasticity in the model, and the opposite otherwise.

Table 7. Results of the Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	Sig.	Remarks
X1	0.991	No Heteroscedasticity
X2	0.739	No Heteroscedasticity

Table 7 shows that neither Perceived Usefulness (X1) nor Social Influence (X2) displays heteroscedasticity, as their significance values (0.991 for X1 and 0.739 for X2) are far above the 0.05 threshold. These findings show that the model is free from heteroscedasticity and can proceed to the regression analysis.

Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 8. Multiple Linear Regression Output

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.206	0.919	-	1.313	0.192
Perceived Usefulness (X1)	0.312	0.029	0.669	10.593	0.000
Social Influence (X2)	0.219	0.066	0.211	3.342	0.001

The resulting regression equation is Y = 1.206 + 0.312X1 + 0.219X2. This means that, with the other variable held constant, each one-unit increase in Perceived Usefulness lifts Behavioral Intention by 0.312 units, and each one-unit increase in Social Influence lifts it by 0.219 units. The constant of 1.206 is not significant (p = 0.192), indicating that when both predictors are absent the level of Behavioral Intention cannot be predicted reliably, which actually underlines the relevance of both predictors in the model.

Table 9. Coefficient of Determination and F-Test (Simultaneous Testing)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
0.748	0.559	0.552	74.300	0.000

The R value of 0.748 indicates a strong relationship between Behavioral Intention and the combined predictors Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence. The R Square of 0.559 means that both variables jointly explain 55.9% of the variation in Behavioral Intention, while the remaining 44.1% is variation that the current model leaves unexplained. The F value of 74.300 with a significance of 0.000 confirms that Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence exert a significant simultaneous influence on Behavioral Intention, so the regression model is considered appropriate for explaining the phenomenon studied.

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Table 10. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Test Statistic	Decision
H1	Perceived Usefulness has a positive effect on Behavioral Intention (partial)	t = 10.593; Sig. = 0.000	Accepted
H2	Social Influence has a positive effect on Behavioral Intention (partial)	t = 3.342; Sig. = 0.001	Accepted
H3	Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence have a significant joint effect on Behavioral Intention (simultaneous)	F = 74.300; Sig. = 0.000	Accepted

The t-test significance values for H1 (0.000) and H2 (0.001) are below 0.05, and H3, tested with the F-test, produces a significance value of 0.000, which is likewise below 0.05. Consequently, all three hypotheses of this study, comprising two partial effects and one simultaneous effect, are accepted. Comparing the Beta values reveals that Perceived Usefulness (0.669) contributes over three times more than Social Influence (0.211), even though both are significant on their own and together.

Influence of Perceived Usefulness on Behavioral Intention

Perceived Usefulness exerts a significant and positive influence on Behavioral Intention (t = 10.593; p = 0.000), with a Beta of 0.669, which makes it the leading predictor in the model. This is consistent with the TAM proposition (Davis, 1989) that

perceived benefit fosters a favorable attitude toward a system, which in turn shapes the intention to use it.

Similar results appear in Handarkho (2021), where Perceived Usefulness had a significant effect on Behavioral Intention among Indonesian social commerce users, and in Puspitasari and Baridwan (2026), who found the same pattern specifically among Generation Z. Astriani and Sihite (2025) reported that Perceived Usefulness influences attitude, which subsequently builds intention in other digital applications, and Salsabila et al. (2025) identified a similar pattern among Generation Z users of a social e-commerce platform. The agreement among these studies, regardless of platform and city, suggests that the role of Perceived Usefulness in shaping usage intention is fairly stable and not particularly dependent on location or platform type.

The dominance of this effect in the current study becomes understandable in light of respondents' shopping patterns, which tend to be regular but not intensely daily (see Table 3): at such a level of transaction intensity, functional benefits—efficient interaction with sellers and easy browsing of product information—weigh much more heavily in consumers' considerations than social-environment pressure alone. A Beta more than three times that of Social Influence confirms that investing in transactional efficiency can influence usage intention far more than strategies relying only on social influence, especially in a small city such as Langsa City.

Social Influence and Its Effect on Behavioral Intention

Social Influence is also shown to have a significant and positive impact on Behavioral Intention ($t = 3.342$; $p = 0.001$), although its contribution (Beta = 0.211) is far smaller than that of Perceived Usefulness. This outcome agrees with the normative-compliance mechanism of UTAUT (Venkatesh et al., 2003), through which individuals align their behavioral intention with the expectations of their reference group.

A comparably positive and significant effect within the Indonesian social commerce setting was reported by Rahman et al. (2020) and Pratama (2024), as well as by Khoa (2025) regarding Generation Z's repurchase behavior through the UTAUT framework, and by Abdalla (2024), who integrated Social Influence into TAM. However, this result differs from Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023), who reported a negative influence of Social Influence on consumers' attitude toward social commerce, and from Octaviani et al. (2023), who found no significant effect among Indonesian Generation Z. The difference may arise from the outcome variable and research object: Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023) modelled consumers' attitude toward social commerce in an extended UTAUT2 framework, while Octaviani et al. (2023) examined online travel platforms—both unlike the everyday transactional social commerce setting that this study focuses on.

In a meta-analysis that combined 68 studies on social commerce, Dwivedi et al. (2023) observed that findings in this area are inconsistent, which implies that the role of social constructs depends on context, including platform type, population characteristics, and local culture. In Langsa City, a positive but modest effect suggests that local Generation Z still takes the opinions of those close to them into account when deciding

to use social commerce—a culturally plausible pattern given that Acehnese society is known for maintaining social cohesion in everyday decision-making—although this consideration carries less weight than the assessment of the platform's own functional benefit.

Simultaneous Effect and Comparison of Predictor Strength

In addition to the partial effects, Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence also have a significant combined influence on Behavioral Intention ($F = 74.300$; $p = 0.000$), with a combined contribution of 55.9 percent ($R^2 = 0.559$). Acceptance of H3 confirms that the integrative TAM-UTAUT model, which merges functional benefit and social normative pressure within one framework, explains Behavioral Intention empirically better than testing the two constructs separately. Even so, the Beta gap between Perceived Usefulness (0.669) and Social Influence (0.211), exceeding threefold, points to an unequal structure of influence between them. This pattern may be interpreted to mean that, at the present stage of social commerce market development in a small city like Langsa, consumers tend to be more functionally rational than their counterparts in large cities, where the literature often reports social roles that are as strong as, or stronger than, functional benefit. In a still-developing market, the evaluation of usefulness seems to outweigh social normative pressure in decision-making, and that pressure usually grows stronger as technology adoption matures within a population.

Novelty and Theoretical Contribution

This study makes three empirical contributions relative to recent research. First, it verifies in a small-city context what recent Indonesian studies of Generation Z, mostly based on larger urban or national samples, have found: Perceived Usefulness is a powerful positive predictor of usage intention (Puspitasari & Baridwan, 2026; Rahmona et al., 2025), and in the current data it is the dominant one. Second, the positive and significant influence of Social Influence is consistent with recent evidence that social factors affect Generation Z's intentions in social commerce (Huwaida et al., 2024; Khoa, 2025; Sarker et al., 2025), yet it departs from the negative path reported by Vatanasakdakul et al. (2023) and the non-significant effect reported by Octaviani et al. (2023). As those studies use a different outcome variable (attitude toward social commerce) and platform context (online travel), the contrast implies that the direction of Social Influence depends on context and is not a simple contradiction. Third, this study tests both predictors in a single regression model for a largely neglected locus, Langsa City, so the findings extend the TAM–UTAUT evidence to a small-city Generation Z population and contribute empirical evidence to the debate on the inconsistent effect of Social Influence documented in social commerce literature (Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Practical Implications

Because Perceived Usefulness dominates, social commerce operators and platform developers are advised to give priority to features that directly improve shopping

efficiency—easy interaction with sellers, quick responses, and transparent product information—as the main strategy for increasing usage intention among Generation Z in small cities, which agrees with recent evidence that perceived functionality matters more than interface simplicity alone (Puspitasari & Baridwan, 2026; Rahmona et al., 2025). Social Influence remains significant, both partially and within the simultaneous effect, which indicates that strategies built on recommendations, testimonials, and endorsements by influential figures continue to be relevant as a complement (Huwaida et al., 2024; Khoa, 2025), particularly in a society that values social cohesion. For local policymakers, the findings also imply that strengthening digital literacy and transactional infrastructure could do more to expand social commerce penetration in Langsa City than campaigns based on social influence alone.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations need to be kept in mind when reading the results. Because non-probability sampling was used, the extent to which the findings can be extended to all Generation Z residents of Langsa City is limited, so the results ought to be seen as preliminary evidence rather than a complete representation of that group. When this manuscript was prepared, the researchers were still finalizing the verification of whether respondents fully met the screening criteria; the reported results may therefore be adjusted in a later revision once data cleaning is complete, and the researchers undertake to update the analysis if that process produces material changes. The reliability value of Social Influence (Alpha = 0.621), which lies at the lower threshold of the adequately reliable category, also calls for caution when interpreting this construct, and additional items are recommended for future research. Finally, the model accounts for only 55.9 percent of the variation in Behavioral Intention, which leaves space for other variables, such as trust, perceived risk, perceived enjoyment, or habit, that were not included.

Subsequent research is encouraged to increase the sample size through probability sampling and to include variables such as trust, perceived risk, or perceived enjoyment to improve the model's explanatory capacity. Testing this framework again in other small Indonesian cities with similar socio-economic characteristics would also broaden the generalizability of the findings and help verify how consistent the influence of Social Influence is across social commerce adoption models.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate how Perceived Usefulness and Social Influence affect Behavioral Intention, partially and simultaneously, in the use of social commerce by Generation Z in Langsa City. The results indicate that both variables have a positive and significant influence on Behavioral Intention, both individually and jointly, so all three hypotheses are accepted. Perceived Usefulness is the dominant predictor, meaning that the functional benefit of social commerce is the chief reason Generation Z in Langsa City intends to use it, while Social Influence has a significant yet complementary role. The findings offer empirical evidence from a small-city setting rarely examined before

and add to the debate over the direction of Social Influence's effect in social commerce research. For business operators and platform developers, the implication is to reinforce functional features first and support them with recommendation- and testimonial-based strategies. Future research should adopt probability sampling, extend the model with variables such as trust or perceived risk, and complete the verification of respondent data to strengthen the external validity of these findings.

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