

## GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED PROMOTION MIX EFFECTIVENESS ON SHOPEE: EVIDENCE FROM GENERATION X, Y, AND Z CONSUMERS IN INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The increasing competition in e-commerce requires platforms to implement adaptive promotion strategies across consumer segments. However, differences in generational perceptions toward promotion mix strategies remain underexplored, particularly in the context of Shopee users in Indonesia.

**Purpose:** This study aims to analyze cross-generational perceptions toward Shopee's promotion mix and identify differences among Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z consumers.

**Design/methodology/approach:** A quantitative approach was employed using survey data from 165 Shopee users in Jabodetabek. Data were analyzed using the Kruskal–Wallis test to examine perceptual differences and Biplot analysis to visualize perceptual proximity toward promotion mix dimensions.

**Findings/Results:** The results indicate significant generational differences in personal selling and public relations, while advertising, sales promotion, and direct marketing show relatively similar perceptions. Generation Z emerged as the most responsive cohort toward interactive and socially driven promotion strategies, particularly live streaming, influencer marketing, customer reviews, and social media communication. Generation X preferred personalized and informative direct marketing, while Generation Y demonstrated relatively neutral promotional preferences.

**Conclusion:** Promotion effectiveness in e-commerce is influenced by generational characteristics, particularly regarding interactivity and social engagement. Therefore, Shopee should implement differentiated promotion strategies to enhance consumer engagement across generations.

**Originality/value (state of the art):** This study extends promotion mix literature by integrating generational cohort analysis and Biplot visualization in the e-commerce context.

**Keywords:** promotion mix, e-commerce, generational cohort, digital marketing, shopee, consumer perception

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## INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed consumer purchasing behavior and accelerated the growth of e-commerce in Indonesia. Increased internet penetration, smartphone usage, and social media adoption have shifted consumer preferences toward digital marketplaces that offer convenience, flexibility, and interactive shopping experiences. This transformation has intensified competition among e-commerce platforms, requiring companies to implement increasingly adaptive and sophisticated promotional strategies to attract and retain consumers (Zhang et al. 2026). Within Indonesia's digital marketplace ecosystem, Shopee has emerged as one of the dominant platforms due to its aggressive digital promotion strategies and highly interactive marketing communication system.

Competition in e-commerce is no longer driven solely by price and product availability but increasingly by the effectiveness of digital promotion in shaping consumer perception and purchase behavior (Bolton et.al., 2021). Since online consumers cannot physically evaluate products before purchase, promotional communication plays a critical role in building trust, stimulating engagement, and influencing purchasing decisions. According to Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, the promotion mix consists of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing, which organizations integrate to communicate customer value and influence target markets. In digital commerce environments, these dimensions have evolved into technologically mediated forms such as influencer marketing, live-stream shopping, cashback programs, personalized recommendations, affiliate marketing, and algorithm-driven promotions (Bolton et.al., 2021).

Shopee provides a relevant context for examining promotion mix effectiveness because the platform implements highly diversified digital promotional strategies. Advertising is delivered through social media campaigns, video-based promotion, and in-app advertising, while sales promotion is emphasized through discounts, flash sales, cashback, and free shipping programs. Personal selling increasingly appears through interactive features such as Shopee Live, chat services, and chatbot systems. Furthermore, influencer partnerships, customer reviews, affiliate programs, and referral systems represent public

relations efforts to strengthen platform credibility and consumer trust. Personalized notifications, retargeting advertisements, and recommendation systems also illustrate Shopee's implementation of direct marketing strategies. These promotional activities position Shopee as an appropriate setting for understanding how consumers perceive multidimensional promotion strategies in digital commerce (Wang & Chen, 2022).

Consumer responses toward promotion activities are shaped not only by promotional exposure but also by how marketing messages are interpreted. Consumer perception theory suggests that individuals selectively process information based on personal experience, social influence, and psychological characteristics. In digital environments where consumers are exposed to intensive marketing content, promotional effectiveness increasingly depends on consumer interpretation and acceptance of promotional messages rather than promotional intensity alone (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

Among demographic factors influencing perception, generational differences have become particularly relevant in digital marketing research. Generational Cohort Theory explains that individuals who experience similar technological and social conditions tend to develop comparable attitudes, lifestyles, and consumption patterns. In the digital commerce context, Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials), and Generation Z exhibit different technological familiarity and communication preferences (Çoklar & Tatli, 2021). Generation X tends to prioritize credibility and practical value, Millennials emphasize experience and social interaction, while Generation Z, as digital natives, is more responsive to visual content, influencer recommendations, and interactive shopping experiences (Munsch, 2021). These distinctions indicate that similar promotion strategies may generate different responses across generations (Syamsudin et al. 2025).

Previous studies have confirmed that digital promotion significantly affects consumer behavior in online marketplaces (Wang & Chen, 2022). Yadav and Rahman (2017) found that digital marketing activities positively influence customer engagement and perceived value in e-commerce settings. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2017) demonstrated that digital interaction contributes to stronger consumer engagement and platform stickiness. In Indonesian digital business contexts,

studies published in *Business Review and Case Studies* also emphasize the importance of digital marketing communication. *Business Review and Case Studies* studies by Chasanah et al. (2021) showed that interactive digital marketing significantly improves customer engagement, while Larasati et al. (2021) highlighted the strategic importance of marketing adaptation in dynamic digital environments. More recently, Rahayu et al. (2024) emphasized that communication effectiveness and digital interaction quality strongly influence digital marketing performance.

Despite these contributions, several important research gaps remain. First, prior studies tend to examine digital promotion partially, focusing on isolated strategies such as influencer marketing, cashback, flash sales, or social media advertising rather than conceptualizing promotion mix as an integrated multidimensional construct. Second, existing studies predominantly investigate behavioral outcomes such as purchase intention, impulsive buying, or customer loyalty while paying limited attention to consumer perceptions toward promotion attributes themselves. Third, cross-generational studies within Indonesian e-commerce settings remain limited, particularly in comparing how Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z perceive integrated promotion mix dimensions implemented by a specific platform such as Shopee.

This limitation creates both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, promotion mix theory has rarely been integrated with generational cohort perspectives to explain consumer perceptions within digital commerce environments. Practically, e-commerce platforms often implement generalized promotional strategies without adequately considering generational differences in promotional responsiveness, potentially reducing promotional efficiency. Understanding cross-generational promotional perception is therefore essential for developing more adaptive and targeted digital marketing communication strategies.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze cross-generational perceptions toward Shopee's promotion mix dimensions, including advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. Specifically, this study compares how Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z perceive Shopee's promotional activities to identify differences in promotional responsiveness. By integrating

promotion mix theory and generational cohort theory, this study contributes to digital marketing literature while providing managerial insights for e-commerce platforms in designing promotion strategies aligned with generational preferences.

## METHODS

This study employed a quantitative research approach to analyze cross-generational perceptions toward promotion mix attributes implemented by Shopee in Indonesia. Quantitative methods were considered appropriate because this study aimed to compare perceptual differences among generational groups based on measurable indicators and statistical analysis. The study utilized a cross-sectional survey design in which data were collected at a single point in time through structured questionnaires distributed online to Shopee users residing in the Greater Jakarta area (Jabodetabek). The research focused on evaluating consumer perceptions toward promotion mix dimensions consisting of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing within Shopee's digital commerce ecosystem.

The population of this study comprised active Shopee users in Jabodetabek. Respondents were selected using a non-probability sampling approach through stratified purposive sampling. This technique was chosen to ensure that respondents met predetermined research criteria while simultaneously allowing proportional representation across generational categories. The respondent criteria included: (1) individuals who actively used Shopee for online shopping activities, (2) individuals who had conducted at least one transaction on Shopee within the previous three months, and (3) individuals residing in the Jabodetabek area. Respondents were then classified into three generational cohorts based on birth year categories adapted from Strauss and Howe (1991), consisting of Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y or Millennials (1981–1996), and Generation Z (1997–2012).

The determination of sample size referred to Roscoe's (1975) recommendation, which suggests that a sample size ranging from 30 to 500 respondents is generally adequate for behavioral and social science research involving subgroup comparisons. The final sample consisted of 165 respondents distributed proportionally across generations, including 57 Generation X

respondents, 53 Generation Y respondents, and 55 Generation Z respondents. This distribution was considered sufficient to support comparative statistical analysis among groups.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire designed based on promotion mix theory proposed by Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller. In this study, promotion mix was conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of five dimensions, namely advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. The questionnaire indicators were adapted to contemporary digital marketing practices implemented by Shopee, including social media advertising, live-stream interaction, cashback programs, influencer marketing, referral systems, personalized notifications, and retargeting advertisements. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly unattractive to 5 = strongly attractive. The operationalization of variables and indicators used in this study is presented in Table 1.

Prior to data analysis, the research instrument was evaluated through validity and reliability testing to ensure measurement quality and internal consistency. Validity testing was conducted using Pearson

Product Moment correlation analysis by comparing the r-calculated values with the r-table values at a significance level of 0.05. Indicators were considered valid when the calculated correlation coefficient exceeded the critical r-table value. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient, where values greater than 0.60 indicated acceptable reliability and consistency among measurement indicators.

The data analysis procedure consisted of several stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to summarize respondent demographic characteristics and examine the distribution of responses across promotion mix dimensions. Second, normality testing was performed to identify data distribution patterns and determine the suitability of parametric statistical assumptions. Since several variables did not fully satisfy normality assumptions, this study employed the Kruskal–Wallis test as a non-parametric alternative to analyze perceptual differences among Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z respondents. The Kruskal–Wallis test was selected because it is appropriate for comparing more than two independent groups with ordinal-scale data or non-normally distributed data. Statistical significance was determined using a significance level of 0.05.

Table 1. Indicators Used in the Study (code)

Variable	Dimension	Dimensions and Indicators	References	Indicators
Promotion Mix	Advertising	social media ads, in-app ads, embedded ads, video ads	Kotler & Keller (2022)	A1–A4
	Personal Selling	Shopee Live, chatbot, live chat	Kotler & Armstrong (2022)	PS1–PS3
	Sales Promotion	discounts, flash sale, cashback, free shipping, loyalty program	Yadav & Rahman (2017)	SP1–SP5
	Public Relations	influencer marketing, affiliate marketing, referral programs, testimonials, social media activity	Chasanah et al. (2021)	PR1–PR7
	Direct Marketing	promotional email, push notification, personalized promotion, retargeting advertisement	Zhang et al. (2017)	DM1–DM5
Generation Cohort		Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z	Strauss & Howe (1991)	

Furthermore, this study utilized Biplot analysis to visualize perceptual relationships between generational groups and promotion mix dimensions. Biplot analysis enables simultaneous graphical representation of respondent groups and variables within a reduced-dimensional space, facilitating interpretation of similarity patterns, variable dominance, and perceptual proximity among generations. Through this approach, the study not only identified statistically significant differences among generations but also provided visual interpretation regarding which promotion mix dimensions were perceived as more attractive by specific generational groups.

All statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics and Biplot visualization techniques to support comparative interpretation of cross-generational promotional perception patterns within the Shopee digital commerce environment.

## RESULTS

The study involved 165 active Shopee users in the Greater Jakarta area (Jabodetabek), consisting of 57 respondents from Generation X, 53 respondents from Generation Y, and 55 respondents from Generation Z. The analysis aimed to identify differences in cross-generational perceptions toward promotion mix dimensions implemented by Shopee, including advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing. To examine these differences, the study employed the Kruskal–Wallis test followed by Biplot analysis to visualize perceptual proximity among generations and promotional attributes.

The Kruskal–Wallis results revealed that not all promotion mix dimensions generated different perceptions across generations. As presented in Table 2, significant differences were found only in personal selling and public relations dimensions, while advertising, sales promotion, and direct marketing showed relatively similar perceptions among generations. These findings indicate that transactional and exposure-based promotions tend to be universally perceived across generations, whereas interactive and relationship-based promotions are interpreted differently depending on generational characteristics.

The overall Biplot analysis from Figure 1 clarified these findings by demonstrating the perceptual proximity between generations and promotion mix dimensions. The Biplot visualization showed that Generation Z was positioned relatively close to personal selling and public relations vectors, indicating stronger responsiveness toward interactive, socially embedded, and engagement-oriented promotional activities. Meanwhile, Generation X appeared closer to direct marketing attributes, suggesting preference toward more structured and informational promotional communication. Generation Y was positioned relatively distant from most promotional vectors, indicating more neutral or moderate perceptions toward Shopee’s promotion mix activities. These findings support the argument that digital promotional effectiveness is increasingly shaped by generational interaction preferences rather than merely promotional exposure intensity.

Table 2. Kruskal–Wallis test results

Promotion Mix Dimension	H Value	Sig.	Interpretation
Advertising	1.030	0.598	No significant difference
Personal Selling	7.912	0.019	Significant difference
Sales Promotion	1.114	0.573	No significant difference
Public Relations	9.971	0.007	Significant difference
Direct Marketing	0.790	0.674	No significant difference

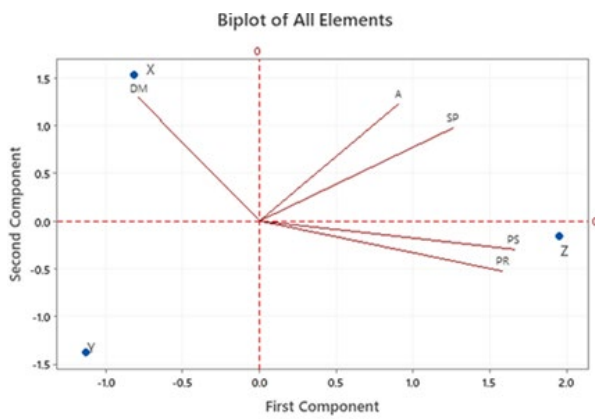


Figure 1. Biplot visualization of overall promotion mix dimensions

The findings indicate that Generation Z emerged as the most promotion-sensitive cohort within Shopee’s digital ecosystem. This generation demonstrated stronger responsiveness toward promotional approaches involving real-time interaction, social influence, community engagement, and personalized digital experiences. The result is consistent with Generational Cohort Theory proposed by William Strauss and Neil Howe, (1997) which explains that individuals who grow up within similar technological and social environments tend to develop similar consumption behaviors and communication preferences. As digital natives, Generation Z consumers are highly accustomed to participatory digital environments where interaction, entertainment, and social validation become integral parts of consumption experiences (Dewantoro et al. 2025).

The findings reveal that consumer perceptions toward Shopee’s promotion mix vary across generations, particularly regarding the level of interactivity and social engagement embedded in promotional activities. While some promotion dimensions demonstrated relatively similar responses across generations, others showed significant perceptual differences, indicating the importance of generational segmentation within digital marketing strategies.

### Advertising

Although the Kruskal–Wallis test indicated no statistically significant differences in advertising perceptions among generations, the Biplot analysis (Figure 2) revealed notable differences in attribute proximity. Generation Z was positioned closer to

social network advertising (A1) and video advertising (A4), suggesting stronger attraction toward visually engaging and platform-integrated promotional content. This finding reflects Generation Z’s preference for interactive, short-form, and entertainment-oriented communication formats frequently encountered in social media ecosystems (Fan et al. 2023). In contrast, Generation X demonstrated greater proximity toward display advertising (A2) and native advertising (A3), indicating stronger preference for structured and informative advertising formats that resemble conventional information delivery. Meanwhile, Generation Y showed relatively neutral positioning, suggesting balanced but less concentrated advertising preferences. These findings imply that although advertising remains broadly effective across generations, its format attractiveness differs substantially.

### Personal Selling

Personal selling emerged as one of the most differentiating promotion dimensions across generations (Figure 3). Generation Z demonstrated the strongest proximity toward live streaming, chatbot, and live chat attributes, indicating high responsiveness toward interactive and real-time shopping experiences. This finding supports previous studies emphasizing that younger consumers increasingly value digital interaction and entertainment within online purchasing processes (Windasari et al. 2022; Israfilzade & Guliyeva, 2023). Conversely, Generation X and Generation Y appeared relatively distant from personal selling attributes, suggesting lower dependence on interaction-based promotional mechanisms. While Generation Y showed moderate acceptance toward interactive features, Generation X tended to prioritize practical and less socially intensive communication approaches. The findings indicate that Shopee Live and creator-hosted commerce are particularly effective for engaging younger consumers.

### Public Relations

Public relations also demonstrated significant cross-generational differences (Figure 4). Generation Z was closely associated with influencer marketing, customer reviews, content marketing, and social media engagement, indicating stronger reliance on social proof and peer validation in purchasing decisions (Bratina & Faganel, 2024; Nugroho, 2025). These findings are consistent with studies showing that younger consumers increasingly construct trust through digital

communities and creator recommendations (Suwana et al. 2020; Nadanyiova & Sujanska, 2023). In comparison, Generation X and Generation Y demonstrated relatively lower proximity toward these attributes, indicating more selective responses toward socially embedded promotional communication. Generation Y appeared moderately receptive but more critical toward influencer-based persuasion, whereas Generation X preferred more formal and information-oriented communication mechanisms.

### Sales Promotion

Unlike personal selling and public relations, sales promotion did not show statistically significant differences among generations despite observable variations in Biplot positioning (Figure 5). Generation Z appeared relatively closer to flash sales, discounts, cashback, and free shipping, reflecting stronger responsiveness toward instant-benefit promotions (Sari & Sanistasya, 2025). However, Generation X also demonstrated moderate proximity toward cashback and flash sale attributes, suggesting that economic value remains attractive regardless of age. Generation Y appeared relatively closer to loyalty programs, indicating preference for long-term benefits rather than short-term promotional excitement. These findings suggest that transactional promotions maintain universal appeal, although generations differ in preferred promotional formats and perceived value orientation (Gardner, 2022).

### Direct Marketing

Similar to sales promotion, direct marketing did not produce statistically significant perceptual differences across generations (Figure 6). Nevertheless, Generation X demonstrated stronger proximity toward email marketing, mobile marketing, and personalization strategies, indicating preference for structured and informative promotional communication. In contrast, Generation Z appeared relatively distant from most direct marketing attributes, suggesting lower responsiveness toward repetitive promotional notifications and stronger preference for engagement-based communication. Generation Y occupied a relatively neutral position, reflecting selective acceptance toward direct promotional approaches. This finding reinforces the argument that direct communication effectiveness increasingly depends on message relevance and personalization quality (Marzouk et al. 2022).

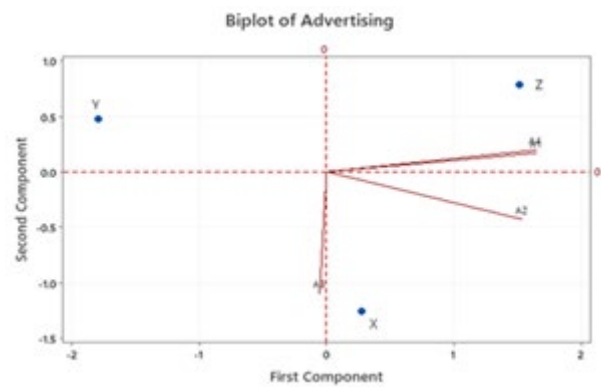


Figure 2. Biplot of advertising

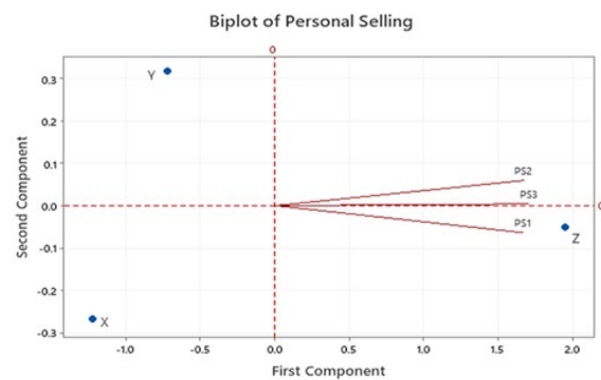


Figure 3. Biplot of personal selling

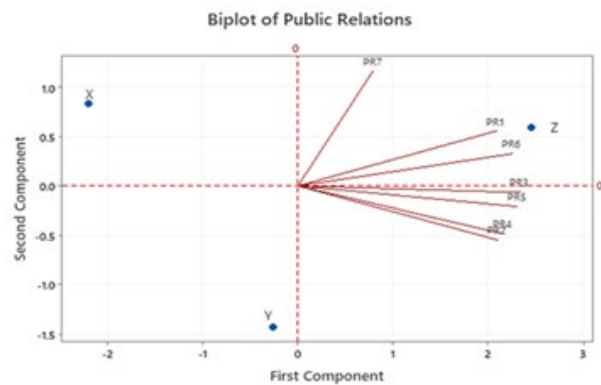


Figure 4. Biplot of public relation

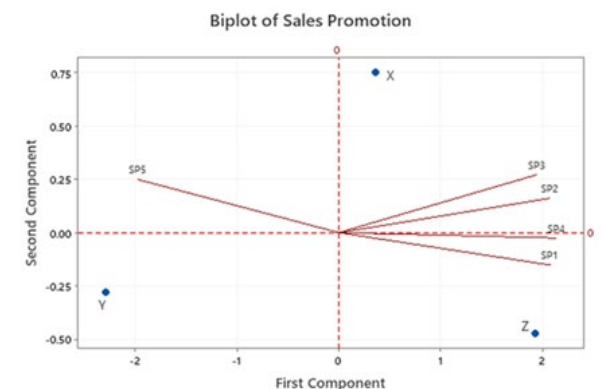


Figure 5. Biplot of sales promotion

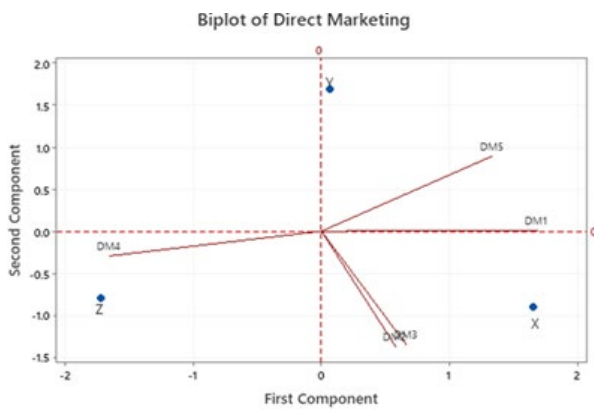


Figure 6. Biplot of direct marketing

The comparison between Generation X and Generation Y reveals that older and middle-generation consumers interpret Shopee’s promotion ecosystem differently from Generation Z. While Generation Z increasingly values engagement-based and socially interactive promotion, Generation X prioritizes informational personalization and practical relevance, whereas Generation Y demonstrates more moderate and selective promotional engagement. These differences indicate that digital promotion effectiveness cannot rely on uniform communication strategies because each generation constructs value, trust, and engagement through distinct promotional experiences.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that Shopee should implement differentiated promotional segmentation strategies across generational cohorts. For Generation X consumers, Shopee should strengthen personalized and informative direct marketing communication through recommendation systems, tailored promotional emails, and utility-oriented messaging. Promotional clarity and trustworthiness remain essential factors for this segment. For Generation Y consumers, Shopee may benefit from combining loyalty-oriented incentives with balanced promotional communication that emphasizes practical value and authenticity without excessive promotional intensity. These findings reinforce the importance of adaptive promotion mix management within increasingly segmented digital commerce markets.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

This study demonstrates that generational differences shape how consumers perceive the promotion mix implemented by Shopee, particularly in the context of digital promotion strategies. While advertising, sales promotion, and direct marketing were perceived relatively similarly across generations, personal selling and public relations exhibited significant perceptual differences. These findings indicate that interactive and socially embedded promotion strategies are more likely to create differentiated consumer responses than exposure-based promotional activities. Consequently, promotion effectiveness in digital commerce cannot be approached through a uniform strategy, as consumers from different generations construct trust, engagement, and purchase interest through distinct communication preferences.

The findings further reveal that Generation Z emerged as the most responsive cohort toward Shopee’s promotion ecosystem, particularly for promotion strategies involving real-time interaction, social engagement, and digital relationship building. Generation Z demonstrated stronger affinity toward live streaming, chatbot interaction, influencer marketing, customer reviews, and social media-based content. This suggests that younger digital consumers increasingly value participation, authenticity, and social validation within online shopping experiences (Jeena et al. 2024). In contrast, Generation X showed stronger preference toward structured and personalized communication, particularly through direct marketing channels such as email marketing, mobile-based communication, and tailored recommendations; constant with Al-Ahmed et al.’s (2025) study. Meanwhile, Generation Y demonstrated more moderate and selective responses across promotional dimensions, indicating balanced but less concentrated promotional preferences.

### Recommendations

The study contributes theoretically by extending promotion mix literature into the digital commerce context through a generational lens. The findings suggest that traditional promotion mix dimensions remain relevant; however, their effectiveness

increasingly depends on generational compatibility and the degree of interactivity embedded within promotional execution. In digital marketplaces, promotion effectiveness appears to be shifting from transactional exposure toward engagement-oriented communication.

Future studies are encouraged to expand generational comparisons beyond Jabodetabek and incorporate behavioral variables such as purchase intention, customer engagement, or platform loyalty to better understand the long-term implications of promotion mix effectiveness in digital commerce environments.

From a managerial perspective, Shopee should adopt a differentiated promotion strategy based on generational characteristics rather than relying on generalized mass promotion. For Generation Z consumers, Shopee should intensify engagement-based promotional approaches by strengthening live commerce ecosystems, influencer partnerships, affiliate-based content creation, customer testimonial integration, and interactive social media campaigns. Features such as Shopee Live, creator collaborations, gamified promotions, and short-form video marketing should be optimized because they align closely with Generation Z's preference for participatory shopping experiences.

For Generation X consumers, Shopee should prioritize informative and personalized communication by enhancing recommendation systems, tailored email marketing, customized mobile notifications, and trust-oriented promotional messages. Promotional communication targeting this segment should emphasize clarity, usefulness, and perceived practical value. Meanwhile, for Generation Y, Shopee may benefit from combining loyalty-based programs with balanced communication emphasizing convenience, authenticity, and long-term value creation. Such differentiated promotional strategies may enhance promotional effectiveness, strengthen consumer engagement, and improve platform competitiveness within increasingly segmented e-commerce markets.

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