

THE INFLUENCE OF VIRAL SONGS ON PREFERENCES GENERATION Z MUSIC IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

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This study aims to analyze the influence of viral music on the music consumption habits of Generation Z in the digital era. Using a quantitative method with questionnaires distributed to 66 respondents, the research examines nine independent variables, including viral popularity effects, music discovery sources, popularity bias, social connections, identity expression, trend prioritization over loyalty, genre exploration, rapid consumption cycles, and preference retention. The multiple linear regression analysis revealed that identity expression and trend prioritization over loyalty significantly influence music consumption behavior, while other variables were insignificant. The findings indicate that Generation Z tends to choose viral music as a means of self-expression and social adaptation, even if it does not always align with personal taste. The implications of this research provide insights for the music industry and digital platforms in developing marketing strategies tailored to Generation Z's preferences. This understanding can lead to more effective promotional campaigns that resonate with this demographic, ultimately enhancing engagement and sales. Additionally, by recognizing the role of social media in shaping music preferences, companies can leverage these platforms to create targeted content that speaks directly to the values and behaviors of young consumers.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology has created fundamental transformations in various aspects of human life, including in the fields of communication and information exchange. The role in the digital era, which is synonymous with the globalization process, enables the international integration of cultures through the exchange of various products of thought and culture (Purnamasari et al., 2025). In addition to the statistics, the roles of Framing and Branding in Image Strengthening also play an important role in facing challenges through positive news coverage, historical narratives, and publications that support the creation of a positive public perception (Hidayati et al., 2025). This phenomenon is primarily made possible by significant advancements in telecommunications infrastructure and the global internet network. In the context of the creative industry, this transformation has a very tangible impact on the music sector, both in terms of the creation process, distribution, and consumption patterns (Ngongo et al., 2019). It seems there is no text to translate. Please provide the text you would like me to translate. Generation Z, which includes those born between 1995 and 2012, occupies a central position in this change. The results of revealed that this generation has been intensely interacting with various technological devices since the beginning of their lives. For them, the presence of smartphones and internet connectivity is not something innovative, but rather a basic necessity that is inseparable from daily life. The pattern of technology usage is not limited to entertainment activities alone, but also encompasses aspects of self-development and social identity formation. Therefore, data science needs to be introduced to Generation Z in the digital era (Putri et al., 2024). The teenage group, as the dominant part of Generation Z, has traditionally always been the main market for the music industry. A strong tendency among teenagers to identify themselves with various popular music genres. This psychological tendency is further reinforced by the presence of digital platforms that enable the massive and instant dissemination of music content (Fretes & Bonggaminanga, 2021). The concept of virality in the context of social media has become a typical phenomenon in the contemporary era. The term "viral" refers to content that can attract mass attention and spread rapidly through various digital platforms (Ernawati, 2012).

The role of digital platforms in shaping contemporary music trends is increasingly undeniable. Data collection through web scraping is conducted by social media to reveal how recommendation algorithms on platforms like TikTok can effectively create and strengthen certain music trends (Hidayati et al., 2024). This mechanism is supported by various interactive features such as the ability to share songs on the Instagram platform (Nggilu et al., 2019). The continuous acceleration of technological development has created a high dependency on social media among Generation Z. The habit of spending hours on various digital platforms constantly exposes them to various viral music content (Ramadhani et al., 2024). The rapid development of the digital era has raised fundamental questions about the extent to which the popularity of songs on social media shapes the musical tastes of Generation Z as digital natives. The virality of a song does not merely indicate a momentary success, but also reflects the process of identity construction in the digital space, the dominance of content curation algorithms, and the shift in music consumption patterns that are increasingly instant and fluctuating. Various previous studies have demonstrated the ability of platforms like TikTok and Instagram to create global music phenomena expressively, yet few have examined the long-term impact on

fan loyalty, genre diversification consumed, or the sustainability of viral songs in personal collections after the trending period ends.

This research aims to deeply examine the influence of viral music on the listening habits of Generation Z, considering key aspects such as self-representation in the digital world, social pressure, and the tendency to follow mainstream trends, in order to provide a holistic picture of the transformation of the music ecosystem amidst an increasingly digitalized society.

RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Population and Sample

This research was conducted to understand the preferences for sources of music discovery based on gender, age, and respondent status. The population in this study consists of all individuals who actively listen to music through various digital platforms, such as Spotify, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. The research sample consists of 66 respondents divided into 31 male respondents (47%) and 35 female respondents (53%), with the largest age distribution in the 16-18 year group (34 respondents/51.5%), followed by 19-21 years (20 respondents/30.3%), 13-15 years (6 respondents/9.1%), and 22+ years (6 respondents/9.1%). In terms of status, the majority of respondents were students (41 respondents/62.1%), followed by university students (18 respondents/27.3%), workers (5 respondents/7.6%), and others (2 respondents/3%).

Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire method, where all 66 respondents provided answers regarding the music platforms they use. The results of the questionnaire indicate that TikTok is the most popular platform (26 respondents/39.4%), followed by Spotify (24 respondents/36.4%), YouTube (12 respondents/18.2%), Instagram (2 respondents/3%), and others (2 respondents/3%). The choice of the questionnaire method is considered effective because it can efficiently reach respondents from various backgrounds, while also allowing for comparative analysis based on demographic categories. With a sufficient number of respondents and a diverse sample distribution, the results of this study are expected to represent trends in music platform usage among teenagers and young adults.

2.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis conducted: Validity test, reliability test, classical assumption test (multicollinearity test, normality test, and heteroscedasticity test), and multiple linear regression analysis using t-test, f-test, and also the coefficient of determination test. This research analyzes 9 factors that influence music preferences through a questionnaire survey of 66 participants, covering aspects such as viral popularity, trends, identity, and music consumption patterns. In this data processing, this research uses SPSS 26 software to obtain a comprehensive picture of the relationship between one variable and another.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Validity and reliability test

In this study, the validity and reliability tests were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 to ensure the feasibility of the questionnaire instrument. A total of 10 questions with a 4-point Likert scale were tested on 10 respondents as an initial sample.

Table 1: Validity test

		Correlations										
		Y	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7	X8	X9	TOTAL
Y	Pearson Correlation	1	.222	.187	.459**	.305	.093	.207	.248	.066	-.088	.423**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.168	.248	.003	.055	.567	.201	.123	.686	.590	.007
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X1	Pearson Correlation	.222	1	.310	.134	.605**	.649**	.288	.546**	.523**	.389*	.759**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.168		.052	.411	.000	.000	.071	.000	.001	.013	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X2	Pearson Correlation	.187	.310	1	.151	.158	.262	.263	.288	.209	.246	.491**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.248	.052		.352	.331	.102	.102	.071	.196	.126	.001
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X3	Pearson Correlation	.459**	.134	.151	1	.257	.216	.599**	.324*	.277	-.128	.535**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.411	.352		.109	.181	.000	.041	.084	.430	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X4	Pearson Correlation	.305	.605**	.158	.257	1	.704**	.353*	.737**	.338*	.295	.768**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	.000	.331	.109		.000	.025	.000	.033	.064	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X5	Pearson Correlation	.093	.649**	.262	.216	.704**	1	.389*	.515*	.490**	.220	.742**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.567	.000	.102	.181	.000		.013	.001	.001	.173	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X6	Pearson Correlation	.207	.288	.263	.599**	.353*	.389*	1	.500**	.451**	-.088	.649**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.201	.071	.102	.000	.025	.013		.001	.003	.598	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X7	Pearson Correlation	.248	.546**	.288	.324*	.737**	.515*	.500**	1	.339*	.184	.758**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.123	.000	.071	.041	.000	.001	.001		.032	.257	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X8	Pearson Correlation	.066	.523**	.209	.277	.338*	.490**	.451**	.339*	1	.329*	.664**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.686	.001	.196	.084	.033	.001	.003	.032		.038	.000
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
X9	Pearson Correlation	-.088	.389*	.246	-.128	.295	.220	-.088	.184	.329*	1	.377*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.590	.013	.126	.430	.064	.173	.588	.257	.038		.016
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.423**	.759**	.491**	.535**	.768**	.742**	.649**	.758**	.664**	.377*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.016	
	N	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Validity testing is conducted by correlating the score of each item with the total score using Pearson Correlation, where an item is considered valid if the significance value is < 0.05 . Meanwhile, the reliability test is measured using Cronbach's Alpha, where the instrument is considered reliable if the Alpha coefficient > 0.70 .

Table 2: Reliability test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.822	10

Based on the results of the reliability test analysis, a Cronbach's Alpha value of $0.822 > 0.70$ was obtained, indicating that the instrument is reliable.

2. Classical Assumption Test

In the application of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method for multiple linear regression, there are several fundamental statistical assumptions that must be met. The fulfillment of all these assumptions ensures that the resulting regression model meets the criteria of BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator), which is the ideal standard in econometric analysis. The concept of BLUE guarantees that the obtained estimator is linear, unbiased, and has the smallest variance compared to other linear unbiased

estimators. The classical assumption tests used are as follows:

Table 3: Normal test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
			Unstandardized Residual
N			66
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000	
	Std. Deviation	.81795903	
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.082	
	Positive	.063	
	Negative	-.082	
Test Statistic			.082
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			.200 ^{c,d}

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

The results of the normality test show an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.200, which means it is greater than 0.05. Thus, the research data is normally distributed.

Table 4: Normal test

Coefficients ^a								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.196	.600		1.994	.051		
	X1	.259	.158	.262	1.634	.108	.546	1.831
	X2	.100	.134	.099	.747	.458	.792	1.262
	X3	.278	.143	.280	1.939	.058	.671	1.490
	X4	.079	.166	.081	.478	.634	.490	2.043
	X5	-.196	.159	-.198	-1.231	.223	.543	1.842
	X6	.085	.150	.086	.567	.573	.606	1.650
	X7	.087	.155	.088	.562	.576	.566	1.768
	X8	-.210	.142	-.209	-1.476	.146	.696	1.437
	X9	.067	.134	.066	.498	.620	.794	1.259

a. Dependent Variable: Y

The test results show a tolerance value of 0.546 and a VIF of 1.831 for the viral popularity effect variable, a tolerance value of 0.792 and a VIF of 1.262 for the music discovery source variable, a tolerance value of 0.671 and a VIF of 1.490 for the popularity bias variable, a tolerance value of 0.490 and a VIF of 2.043 for the social connection variable, a tolerance value of 0.543 and a VIF of 1.842 for the identity expectation variable, a tolerance value of 0.606 and a VIF of 1.650 for the trend priority over loyalty variable, a tolerance value of 0.566 and a VIF of 1.768 for the genre exploration variable, a tolerance value of 0.696 and a VIF of 1.437 for the fast consumption cycle variable, and a tolerance value of 0.794 and a VIF of 1.259 for the preference retention variable. Based on the data, the variables are declared free from multicollinearity and the regression model is deemed suitable for use.

Table 5: Heteroskedasticity Test

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.584	.283	2.062	.044
	X1	.053	.075	.120	.481
	X2	.033	.063	.073	.606
	X3	-.030	.067	-.069	.654
	X4	-.147	.076	-.336	.060
	X6	-.069	.071	-.157	.332
	X7	.086	.073	.195	.247
	X8	-.056	.067	-.125	.411
	X9	-.036	.063	-.079	.573
	X51	.110	.065	.271	.095

a. Dependent Variable: ABS_RES

Based on the statistical tests conducted, all independent variables in the model show significance values above the alpha level of 0.05. These findings indicate that there is not enough statistical evidence to state that there is a problem of heteroscedasticity in the constructed regression model. Thus, it can be concluded that the assumption of homoscedasticity is met, where the residual variance of the model is constant across observations.

3. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple regression is a statistical method for analyzing the relationship between several independent variables (X) and one dependent variable (Y). This analysis includes three main components. namely the coefficient of determination (R^2) measures how well the model explains data variation, the F-test assesses the significance of the influence of all X variables collectively, and the t-test examines the significance of each X variable individually. Together, they ensure the accuracy of the model's predictions.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_n + \beta_i X_{ni} + \varepsilon_i$$

Table 6: F-Test

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.337	9	3.260	6.980	.000 ^b
	Residual	26.152	56	.467		
	Total	55.489	65			

a. Dependent Variable: Y

b. Predictors: (Constant), X51, X2, X9, X3, X8, X7, X6, X1, X4

The calculation results show that the independent variables collectively have an influence on the dependent variable. This is evidenced by the calculated F value of 6.980 with a probability value of 0.000. The calculated F value of 6.980 with a probability value of 0.000 indicates that H_0 is rejected, thus the regression model can be used to predict music consumption behavior.

Table 7: T-Test

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	1.071	.465		.2304
	X1	.332	.122	.336	.009
	X2	.047	.104	.046	.653
	X3	.355	.111	.358	.002
	X4	.287	.125	.293	.026
	X6	.169	.116	.171	.151
	X7	.063	.120	.064	.601
	X8	-.190	.110	-.189	.090
	X9	.160	.103	.158	.127
	X51	-.667	.106	-.736	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Based on the table above, the results are obtained:

- 1) Testing the social variable of viral popularity effect. Based on the test results, a t-value less than 0.05 ($0.009 < 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the variable of viral popularity effect does not have a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 2) Testing the variable of music discovery sources. Based on the test results, a t-value greater than 0.05 ($0.653 > 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the variable of music discovery source expression has an influence on the decision-making of music consumption behavior.
- 3) Testing the popularity bias variable. Based on the test results, a t-value less than 0.05 ($0.002 < 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the popularity bias variable does not have an influence on the decision-making of music consumption behavior.
- 4) Testing the social connection variable. Based on the test results, a t-value less than 0.05 ($0.026 < 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the social connection variable does not have a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 5) Testing the identity expression variable. Based on the test results, a t-value of less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the identity expression variable has a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 6) Testing the variable of trend priority over loyalty. Based on the test results, a t-value greater than 0.05 ($0.151 > 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the variable of trend priority over loyalty has a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 7) Testing the genre exploration variable. Based on the test results, a t-value greater than 0.05 ($0.601 > 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the genre exploration variable has a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 8) Testing the fast consumption cycle variable. Based on the test results, the t-value is greater than 0.05 ($0.090 > 0.05$). This means that the fast consumption cycle variable has a significant influence on music consumption behavior.
- 9) Testing the preference retention variable. Based on the test results, a t-value greater than 0.05 ($0.127 > 0.05$) was obtained. This means that the preference retention variable has a significant influence on music consumption behavior.

Table 7: Coefficient of Determination Test

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.727 ^a	.529	.453	.68337

a. Predictors: (Constant), X51, X2, X9, X3, X8, X7, X6, X1, X4

Deterministic analysis measures the extent of the contribution of independent variables (X) to the dependent variable (Y). This method is used to determine the percentage of the combined influence of all independent variables on the dependent variable simultaneously. The coefficient of determination (R^2) serves to measure the extent of the influence of the combination of digital variables (digital social connections, digital social expression, digital social interaction, and loyalty to viral songs) on music consumption behavior. This analysis aims to calculate the proportion of variation in music consumption decisions that can be explained by these digital factors and to identify the percentage of variation that cannot be explained by the model. Based on the results of the statistical computation, an R^2 value of 0.453 was obtained, which means that 45.3% of the purchase decision variable can be explained by the variables of price, product quality, service quality, and word of mouth. The remaining ($100 - 45.3 = 54.7$) 54.7% is influenced by other variables not included in the research model.

CONCLUSION

Gen Z tends to listen to viral songs on digital platforms not based on personal preference, but rather driven by the need to express their identity and keep up with the latest trends (Fear of Missing Out). Although the popularity of these songs does not automatically shape their musical taste, viral music content becomes a medium for self-expression in the social realm, such as through challenges on TikTok or other content creations. Attachment to certain musicians is often displaced by the desire to remain relevant, while dynamic music consumption patterns facilitate the transition to the latest viral songs. In essence, for this generation, viral music trends serve as a tool to assert their presence in the digital world while also adapting socially in the virtual environment.

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