

The Positive Link Between Self-Esteem and Consumptive Behavior Among Generation Z Shopee Users in Urban Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z users of the Shopee e-commerce platform in Cipondoh District, Tangerang City. Previous studies report inconsistent findings, with many emphasizing negative relationships in which low self-esteem drives impulsive or excessive consumption. Addressing this gap, the present study provides contextual evidence from a digitally intensive urban environment, where consumption functions as identity affirmation rather than emotional compensation. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from 407 Generation Z participants through accidental sampling. Self-esteem was measured with the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI), and consumptive behavior was assessed with the Consumer Orientation Scale. Spearman's rank correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior ($r = .274, p < .01$), indicating a low-strength correlation. This finding suggests that higher self-esteem is associated with stronger consumptive tendencies, particularly through symbolic self-expression on digital marketplaces. However, the cross-sectional design and accidental sampling limit causal inference and generalizability. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, include mediating variables such as social media use or fear of missing out (FoMO), and compare multiple e-commerce platforms.

Keywords: consumptive behaviour, self-esteem, Z generation

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and the increasing use of the internet have brought significant changes to consumption patterns, particularly among Generation Z. This generation, born between 1997 and 2012, has grown up in an environment that is highly integrated with digital technology, making online shopping through e-commerce platforms a part of everyday lifestyle (Arum et al., 2023). The ease of access, transaction speed, and high intensity of exposure to digital promotions make Generation Z particularly vulnerable to consumption behavior, especially in the context of app-based consumption.

One of the most dominant e-commerce platforms in Indonesia is Shopee. Asih (2024) states that aggressive marketing strategies, free shipping, flash sales, and an integrated digital payment system drive Shopee's success. These features not only facilitate transactional convenience but also create psychological stimuli that encourage impulsive buying and increase consumption frequency, particularly among young users who are highly responsive to digital reinforcement and the status symbols associated with the products they consume.

Conceptually, consumptive behavior is understood as an individual's tendency to engage in excessive, impulsive, and irrational purchasing without considering actual needs or long-term benefits. Purwanto et al. (2025) demonstrate that fast fashion consumption among Generation Z is not driven solely by functional needs, but is strongly influenced by hedonism and social media exposure, positioning consumption as a means of pleasure seeking and identity expression. Hidayati (2025) reports that for Generation Z, digital consumption acts as more than a functional shopping activity it serves as a symbolic medium of identity signaling and emotional expression, where online purchases and interactions reflect personal self-presentation and social belonging.

One important internal psychological factor that plays a significant role in consumptive behaviour is self-esteem. Coopersmith (Girgin & Yavuz, 2022) defines self-esteem as an individual's evaluation of their own worth, which is reflected in the degree of self-acceptance or self-rejection. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be more sensitive to social pressure and use consumption as a form of emotional compensation. Nevertheless, in the modern digital environment, high self-esteem may also encourage consumption as a means of affirming identity and as a symbol of personal success.

The relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior has been widely studied; however, the findings remain inconsistent. Indrayani et al. (2024) found that students with lower levels of self-esteem are significantly more prone to impulsive buying behaviour, as they may use unplanned purchases to compensate for negative self-feelings and enhance their self-worth. In contrast, research by Razmus and Laguna (2024) in *Current Psychology* shows that consumers who are more engaged with brands often experience feelings of authentic pride during the purchase process, which in turn can elevate their self-esteem and motivate purchases that reinforce their self-concept and personal satisfaction suggesting a link between positive self-views and identity-expressive consumption.

From a theoretical perspective, Sociometer Theory conceptualizes self-esteem as an internal indicator of social acceptance. Accordingly, consumption can serve as a strategic means of maintaining or enhancing social status, particularly in digital



environments where social comparison and visibility are salient (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Meanwhile, Terror Management Theory explains that symbolic consumption serves as a mechanism through which individuals reinforce their sense of self-meaning and manage existential anxiety by attaching value to culturally recognized symbols of success and worth (Solomon et al., 1991).

In the context of platforms such as Shopee, both theories are highly relevant for explaining why individuals with high self-esteem may exhibit higher levels of consumption. Rather than being driven by insecurity, consumption in this case operates as a form of identity expression and symbolic self-completion, through which individuals affirm who they are or aspire to be. This process is further strengthened by digital social reinforcement mechanisms, including product reviews, ratings, and the public visibility of purchasing activities, which collectively validate personal identity and social standing in the digital space.

Previous studies also indicate that the influence of self-esteem on consumptive behavior is not always direct. Miswanto et al. (2024) found that self-esteem affects consumptive behavior through a hedonic lifestyle as a mediating variable. Zhou & Li (2024) emphasized that the intensity of social media use strengthens the relationship between self-esteem and irrational consumption, particularly among university students and younger generations. However, most of these studies were conducted in major metropolitan cities. They placed greater emphasis on external factors, leaving research that specifically positions self-esteem as a primary internal factor within the context of emerging urban areas relatively limited.

Cipondoh District, Tangerang City, was selected as the research location due to its high internet usage and an urban population that actively uses e-commerce platforms. The intensive socio-digital environment and the dominance of Shopee usage in this area make it a relevant context for examining the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z in a more contextualized manner.

Based on the theoretical analysis and the identified research gaps, this study aims to examine the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z Shopee users in Cipondoh District, Tangerang City. By considering the socio-digital context of Generation Z in emerging urban areas, this study proposes the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem levels and consumptive behavior among Shopee users..

METHODS

This study use a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design aimed at identifying the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z users of the Shopee e-commerce platform in Cipondoh District, Tangerang City. The quantitative approach was selected because it allows for the objective measurement of psychological variables using standardized instruments and the application of inferential statistical analyses. Correlational data analysis techniques were used to examine the direction and strength of relationships between variables without manipulating research subjects' conditions.

The variables examined in this study comprised two main constructs, namely self-esteem and consumptive behaviour. Self-esteem is defined as an individual's evaluation



of their self-worth and personal value, encompassing aspects of strength, significance, virtue, and competence. Meanwhile, consumptive behaviour is understood as an individual's tendency to engage in impulsive, excessive, and irrational purchasing, driven by emotional and symbolic factors within the context of digital consumption.

The population of this study consisted of Generation Z individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who reside in Cipondoh District and use the Shopee platform. As the exact size of the population was not known, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula. With a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, the minimum required sample size was 384 respondents. To enhance the representativeness of the data, the number of participants involved in this study exceeded this minimum threshold.

The sampling technique used in this study was non-probability sampling, specifically accidental sampling. This method was chosen because it enables researchers to reach respondents who meet the research criteria and are willing to participate during data collection. Respondent recruitment was conducted through the distribution of online questionnaires via Google Forms, disseminated via social media platforms commonly used by Generation Z, such as WhatsApp Groups, Instagram, and Telegram, as well as through direct approaches at several public locations in Cipondoh District characterized by high levels of digital activity. This approach was considered appropriate given Generation Z's digital engagement patterns and their responsiveness to online surveys.

Data were collected using a survey method with an instrument based on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The data obtained included respondents' demographic information as well as scores for the self-esteem and consumptive behaviour variables. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Form link and could be accessed using respondents' personal devices. On average, respondents required approximately 10–15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Participation in this study was voluntary without any incentives.

To ensure that respondents' characteristics aligned with the research objectives, screening questions on age and the intensity of Shopee platform usage were included at the beginning of the questionnaire, allowing only active Shopee users to proceed with the survey. Data collection was conducted over a four-month period. Subsequently, the collected data underwent screening, coding, and statistical analysis, which were carried out over the course of one month. All responses were completed independently, with the principle of anonymity applied to minimize social desirability bias and to enhance the honesty of participants' responses.

The self-esteem measurement instrument used in this study was the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI), which has been adapted and validated in numerous previous studies. This scale assesses four primary dimensions of self-esteem and consists of both favorable and unfavorable items to control for response bias. Meanwhile, consumptive behavior was measured using the Consumer Orientation Scale, developed based on the concepts proposed by Rosen and Fromm, with indicators including impulsive purchasing, extravagance, and non-rational buying behavior.

Instrument validity was established based on construct validity that has been demonstrated in previous studies, while scale reliability was tested using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. All instruments exhibited adequate internal consistency, indicating their suitability for use as measurement tools in this study. Statistical assumption testing



included normality and linearity tests to ensure that the data met the requirements of the applied analytical techniques.

The results of the validity and reliability testing of the Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI), as reported by Potard (2020), indicate satisfactory psychometric properties. Regarding construct validity, the first aspect, namely power, demonstrated good construct validity, with Standardized Loading Factor (SLF) values for the items ranging from .64 to .76, indicating that each indicator adequately represents the construct. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of .54 suggests that more than half of the item variance is explained by the power aspect. For the second aspect, significance, adequate construct validity was observed, with item SLF values ranging from .61 to .74 and an AVE of .52, indicating that the construct consistently explains the majority of item variance. The virtue aspect also showed a sufficiently strong contribution of items to the construct, with SLF values ranging from .63 to .72 and an AVE of .51, demonstrating acceptable convergent validity. Finally, the competence aspect exhibited very good construct validity, with SLF values across all items ranging from .66 to .78 and an AVE of .58, which exceeds the recommended threshold and indicates strong construct representation. These findings suggest that the competence aspect is well measured and reliable in representing this dimension of self-esteem. Potard (2020) also reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .77, indicating that the scale has high and adequate reliability in measuring self-esteem. In line with Potard's findings, the present study also conducted a reliability test using SPSS version 24 for the CSEI scale and obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .864, indicating high reliability and suitability for use in this study.

About the Consumer Orientation Scale, Saunders and Munro (2000) reported that this instrument demonstrates strong construct validity, with Standardized Loading Factor (SLF) values ranging from .68 to .83, reflecting a robust relationship between the items and the latent construct. An Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of .61 indicates that the majority of item variance is well explained by this factor, thereby supporting impulsive buying as a valid dimension of consumptive behaviour. The results for the wasteful buying aspect also indicate good construct validity, as evidenced by SLF values ranging from .64 to .78 and an AVE of .55, which meets the minimum criteria for convergent validity. For the final aspect, non-rational buying, the findings show high construct validity, with SLF values ranging from .66 to .80 and an AVE of .63, indicating substantial contributions from each indicator. Thus, this aspect can be considered structurally and empirically valid in representing consumptive behaviour. Saunders and Munro (2000) also conducted reliability testing for this scale and reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .85, indicating a high level of internal consistency and suitability for research use. Consistent with these findings, the present study conducted a reliability test for the Consumer Orientation Scale using SPSS version 24 and obtained a Cronbach's alpha value of .859, demonstrating that the scale has high reliability and is appropriate for use in this study.

The results of the normality test indicated that the data were not normally distributed; therefore, hypothesis testing was conducted using Spearman's correlation technique. This analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of the



relationship between self-esteem and consumption behavior, with the significance level set at $\alpha = .05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The categorization of age groups in this study follows the developmental stage framework proposed by Havighurst (1972), which classifies individuals aged 12–15 years as early adolescents, those aged 16–20 years as late adolescents, and those aged 21–28 years as early adults. This classification is based on the stages of developmental tasks that individuals are expected to accomplish at each phase of life. Based on the table above, three age categories within Generation Z were identified among the participants in this study: early adolescents totaling 65 individuals (16%), late adolescents comprising 184 individuals (45.2%), and early adults consisting of 158 individuals (38.8%).

Table 1.
Age Categorization

Developmental Stages	Age Interval (Havighurst)	Frequency	Percentage
Early Adolescents	Age 12 – 15	65	16%
End of Adolescents	Age 16-20	184	45.2%
Early Adulthood	Age 21-28	158	38.8%
Total		407	100

Explanation:

N: 407

Min: 12

Maks: 28

Mean: 21.71

SD: 2.993

Descriptive Analysis Test

Based on Table 2, the respondents' data indicate that the majority of participants had moderate self-esteem, accounting for 63.9% of the sample. Furthermore, 35.4% of respondents were categorized as having high self-esteem, while only 0.7% were categorized as having low self-esteem.

Table 2.
Categorization of Self-Esteem

Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage
Low	$X < 80$	3	.70
Moderate	$80 \leq X < 120$	260	63.9
High	≥ 120	144	35.4
		407	100

Explanation:

N: 407

Min: 78

Max: 148

Mean: 113.15

SD: 13.88



Other than that, the results in Table 3 indicate that the majority of respondents were classified within the moderate category, accounting for 68.6% of the sample. Meanwhile, 22.6% of respondents were categorized as having high levels, and 8.8% were categorized as having low levels.

Table 3.
 Categorization of Consumptive Behaviour

Category	Interval	Frequency	Percentage
Low	$X < 48$	36	8.8
Moderate	$48 \leq X < 72$	279	68.6
High	≥ 72	92	22.6
		407	100

Explanation:

N: 407

Min: 39

Max: 92

Mean: 62.70

SD: 10.674

Normality Test

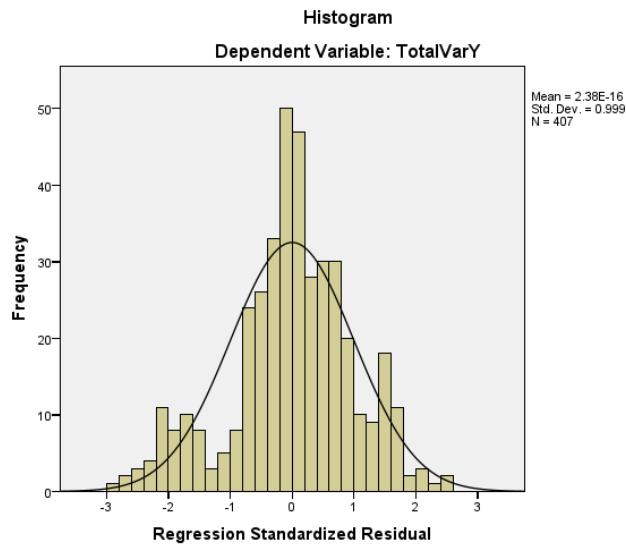
Based on the table above, the normality test results indicate that the self-esteem variable has a Kolmogorov–Smirnov value of 0.096 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the data are not normally distributed. Similarly, the consumptive behaviour variable yielded a Kolmogorov–Smirnov value of 0.088 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a non-normal distribution. Therefore, this study employed Spearman’s rank correlation rather than Pearson’s correlation to examine the relationship between the variables.

Table 4.
 Normality Test

		Self Esteem	Consumptive Behavior
N		407	407
Normal Parameters	Mean	113.15	62.70
	Std. Deviation	13.880	10.674
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.096	.088
	Positive	.096	.088
	Negative	-.062	-.051
Test Statistic		.096	.088
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)		.000	.000

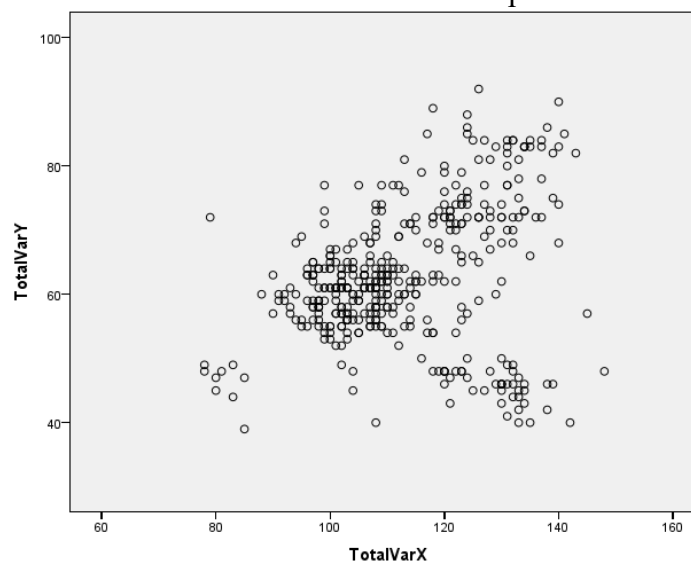


Graph 1.
Histogram of Self Esteem and Consumptive Behaviour



Based on Graph 1, the histogram illustrates the distribution of self-esteem (X) and consumptive behaviour (Y) scores, providing a visual assessment of data normality. The distribution shows that the scores are concentrated around the central values, with a relatively symmetrical pattern, although slight deviations from a perfectly normal curve are observable at the tails. This visual pattern is consistent with the results of the statistical normality test, which indicated that the data did not fully meet the assumption of normal distribution. Based on Graph 1, the histogram supports the decision to apply non-parametric statistical analysis in examining the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behaviour.

Graph 2.
Scatter Plot of Self Esteem and Consumptive Behaviour



The scatter plot illustrates the bivariate relationship between self-esteem (X) and consumptive behaviour (Y) under conditions where the data do not meet the assumption of normality. The distribution of data points shows a monotonic pattern rather than a perfectly linear one, indicating that changes in self-esteem are consistently associated with changes in consumptive behaviour, despite variability among respondents. The spread of observations around the overall trend suggests heterogeneity in individual responses, which is common in behavioural data. Given the non-normal distribution of the variables, this visual pattern supports the use of non-parametric correlation analysis, such as Spearman's rho, to accurately capture the direction and strength of the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behaviour.

Table 4.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Unstandardized Residual	407	-28.86955	26.55081	.00000	10.25277	-.403	.256		
Valid N (listwise)	407								

The descriptive statistics indicate that the unstandardized residuals (N = 407) have a mean value of 0.000, suggesting no systematic bias in the prediction errors. However, the distribution shows a skewness of -0.403, indicating slight negative skewness, and a kurtosis of 0.256, indicating a modest deviation from normality. Although these values remain within an acceptable range for descriptive interpretation, they suggest that the residuals are not perfectly normally distributed. This pattern is consistent with the results of the normality test and supports the conclusion that the data do not fully meet the assumption of normality. Consequently, the use of non-parametric statistical techniques is considered appropriate for analyzing the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior in this study.

Linearity Test

Based on the table above, the normality test results indicate that the self-esteem variable obtained a Kolmogorov-Smirnov value of 0.096 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the data are not normally distributed. Similarly, the consumptive behavior variable yielded a Kolmogorov-Smirnov value of 0.088 with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), which also suggests a non-normal distribution. Therefore, this study employed Spearman's rank correlation rather than Pearson's correlation to examine the relationship between the variables.



Table 5.
 Linearity Test

	Sum of Sqaures	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
(Combined)	11394.790	62	183.787	1.814	.000
Linearity	3574.589	1	3574.589	35.276	.000
Deviation from Linearity	77820.201	61	128.200	1.265	.101

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using Spearman's rank correlation due to the non-normal distribution of the data. The Spearman correlation analysis revealed a coefficient of 0.274 ($p < 0.01$), indicating a positive and highly significant relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior, although the strength of the correlation is considered low. This finding suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to exhibit stronger tendencies toward consumptive behavior. Conversely, lower levels of self-esteem are associated with a lower tendency to engage in consumptive behavior.

Table 6.
 Hypothesis Test

	Self esteem	Consumptive Behaviour
Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.274**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	407	407
Correlation Coefficient	.274**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	407	407

Discussion

This study finds a positive and statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z Shopee users in urban Indonesia. Although the strength of the relationship is relatively weak ($r = .274$), its direction remains theoretically important because it differs from the common view that consumptive behavior is mainly driven by low self-esteem. Rather than simply repeating prior findings, this result clarifies how self-evaluation influences digital consumption, particularly in e-commerce environments characterized by high social visibility.

The findings of this study indicate a positive relationship between self-esteem and consumption behavior among Generation Z, which contrasts with several previous studies that reported a negative or insignificant association between these variables. Earlier research often explained consumptive behavior as a compensatory response to low self-esteem. However, recent studies focusing on Generation Z show a different pattern. Tessy and Setiasih (2024) found that self-esteem significantly contributes to impulsive buying behavior among Gen Z consumers, suggesting that psychological deficits do not always drive consumption. Generational characteristics and platform context can explain these differences. As people who are more familiar with technology, Generation Z perceives consumption as a form of identity expression in digital spaces, making their behaviour less comparable to that of older generations. Moreover, studies that focus on specific



platforms, such as Shopee, demonstrate that platform features, including intensive promotions and high social visibility (Laraswati & Indrawati, 2025).

In addition, differences in research findings can be attributed to variations in the conceptualization of self-esteem. Recent studies emphasize that self-esteem is closely related to social context and lifestyle rather than being a purely stable global trait. Miswanto et al. (2024) showed that self-esteem influences consumptive behavior among Generation Z through a hedonic lifestyle, indicating that this relationship is context-dependent and non-linear. Similar results were found in social commerce settings, such as TikTok Shop, where self-esteem affects impulsive buying through subjective norms and social exposure (Sumajaya & Yudiaatmaja, 2025). These findings suggest that differences in digital environments, levels of social visibility, and approaches to measuring self-esteem play an important role in explaining inconsistent results in the literature. Therefore, a comparative analysis that considers generational differences, platform characteristics, and self-esteem constructs is essential for understanding consumption behavior in the digital era.

A systematic comparison with previous studies reveals meaningful contextual distinctions. Research such as *Frontiers in Psychology* (Zawadzka et al., 2022) and *Frontiers in Psychology* (Zhang & Hawk, 2019) reported that lower self-esteem predicts stronger materialistic or impulsive consumption tendencies. Similarly, Miswanto et al. (2024) identified self-esteem as indirectly related to consumptive behavior through hedonic lifestyle. However, those studies largely focused on adolescents or university students in different sociocultural settings and did not specifically situate consumption within a platform-centric, gamified marketplace such as Shopee. The divergence in findings may therefore be attributable to generational configuration (digitally immersed Gen Z vs. earlier generation), platform architecture (Shopee's sales based on algorithm and public visibility vs. general consumption contexts), urban digital density (Cipondoh's high connectivity environment), and measurement differences between global and domain-specific self-esteem constructs. These structural differences suggest that the relationship between self-esteem and consumption is not universally compensatory but context-sensitive.

To deepen the theoretical explanation, the findings can be interpreted through the self-concept consistency theory and the principle of self-image congruence. Contemporary consumer research by Razmus & Laguna (2024) emphasizes that individuals prefer products aligned with their valued self. Within Generation Z, whose identities are shaped by continuous digital self-presentation, high self-esteem may encourage individuals to express a coherent and positively evaluated self-concept through symbolic purchases. Consumption in this case is not compensation for deficiency but affirmation of surplus identity. Shopee is used as a performative marketplace where products become extensions of the self, publicly validated through reviews, ratings, and algorithmic exposure. This mechanism clarifies why high self-esteem correlates positively with consumption. Individuals confident in their self-worth may feel empowered and even motivated to invest in products that align with their identity.

This interpretation is also aligned with Jean Baudrillard's perspective on consumption as a system of signs. Although Baudrillard's work predates digital commerce, his argument that consumption operates primarily through "sign value" rather



than use value is highly applicable to contemporary e-commerce. In a postmodern digital economy, products are purchased not solely for functional utility but for their symbolic capacity to show status and belonging. The present findings may therefore be read as empirical support for Baudrillard's thesis that Generation Z consumers on Shopee purchase goods as identity markers within a socially visible digital field. In such an environment, high self-esteem does not reduce consumption.

The implications for Sociometer Theory (Leary & Baumeister, 2000) are theoretically significant. Traditionally, Sociometer Theory has been interpreted linearly, with low self-esteem as a signal of threatened social inclusion, thereby motivating compensatory behaviour. However, the current findings suggest that in digitally mediated environments. Individuals with high self-esteem may possess a higher "sociometric bar," meaning they are motivated to maintain their established social valuation. In highly visible platforms like Shopee, where consumption patterns are socially referenced, maintaining status may require continuous symbolic participation. Thus, high self-esteem may not reduce consumption but instead sustain it as a maintenance strategy. This interpretation extends Sociometer Theory beyond a deficit-compensation model toward a status-maintenance model that is adapted to digital visibility contexts.

Moreover, the findings can be situated within recent digital consumption studies such as Zhou & Li (2024), which indicate that social network intensity amplifies the link between self-evaluative processes and online purchasing. In some urban environments, consumption decisions are embedded in feedback loops involving peer comparison and algorithmic personalization. These environmental reinforcements may strengthen the self-consumption linkage among individuals already possessing strong self-concepts.

A critical methodological reflection is also necessary. The study employed the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI), which conceptualizes self-esteem as a relatively stable global trait. Contemporary literature distinguishes between trait self-esteem, state self-esteem, and contingent self-esteem. It is reasonable that respondents scoring high on the CSEI possess forms of contingent self-esteem partially dependent on achievement, appearance, or material success. If so, consumption may function as a strategy to sustain specific self-worth. Because the CSEI does not distinguish between these different types of self-esteem, it may not fully explain the specific motivational processes underlying consumption behaviour. Future research should use more comprehensive measurement tools that can clearly differentiate between stable overall self-esteem and self-esteem that depends on specific domains or conditions.

Although the correlation is relatively small, the consistent positive relationship shows that self-esteem still plays an important, though not the only, role in shaping consumptive behavior. The small effect size suggests that other factors, such as fear of missing out (FoMO), tendencies to compare ourselves with others, or the intensity of digital self-presentation, may influence this relationship. Future studies should use longitudinal designs and compare different e-commerce platforms to examine whether this positive relationship remains consistent across platforms or is strengthened by Shopee's specific promotional features.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature by showing that, in a highly digital Generation Z context, high self-esteem may encourage consumption as a means of expressing identity and maintaining social status, rather than merely compensating for



insecurity. These findings suggest that common assumptions about self-esteem need to be reconsidered in specific digital contexts, and that theories such as self-concept consistency, symbolic consumption, and revised views of Sociometer Theory should be integrated into the examination of consumer behaviour in platform-based markets.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research objective of examining the relationship between self-esteem and consumptive behavior among Generation Z Shopee users, this study demonstrates a positive and significant association, indicating that higher self-esteem is associated with stronger consumptive tendencies in the e-commerce context. This finding contributes a nuanced perspective to the existing literature, as it contrasts with studies that emphasize low self-esteem as the primary driver of excessive consumption and instead highlights how high self-esteem among Gen Z may foster consumption as a form of identity expression, self-affirmation, and symbolic self-completion in digitally mediated marketplaces. The results are theoretically consistent with Sociometer Theory and Terror Management Theory, suggesting that consumption in e-commerce environments is not merely a compensation for insecurity but a strategy to maintain social value and improve personal meaning within highly visible digital spaces. In practice, these findings imply that psychoeducational interventions for Generation Z should not focus solely on enhancing self-esteem but also integrate financial literacy training and critical awareness of persuasive digital marketing tactics, such as flash sales and algorithmic promotions. Nevertheless, this study is limited by its cross-sectional design, the use of accidental sampling, which may introduce sampling bias, and measurement instruments that may not fully capture the multidimensional complexity of self-esteem and consumptive behavior. Future research is therefore recommended to employ longitudinal or experimental designs, incorporate mediating or moderating variables such as social media intensity, subjective norms, and fear of missing out (FoMO), and conduct comparative analyses across different e-commerce platforms to strengthen theoretical generalization and contextual validity.

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