



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Blind Box Purchase Interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of social media marketing on purchase interest in blind box products among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City. The study used a quantitative approach with a survey method and a simple linear regression technique. The sample consisted of 100 respondents, determined using the Lemeshow formula (95% confidence level, 10% margin of error) and drawn through non-probability purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale, direct observation, and documentation, and analyzed with SPSS version 25 after validity, reliability, and classical assumption testing. The results show that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest, indicated by a regression equation of $Y = 2.717 + 0.752X$, a t-count of 6.782 greater than the t-table of 1.985 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), so that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.565 indicates a moderate relationship, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.319 shows that social media marketing explains 31.9% of the variation in purchase interest, while the remaining 68.1% is explained by variables outside this study, such as price, packaging design, word of mouth, and consumer psychological factors. TikTok was the platform most used by respondents (81%) to view blind box promotional content. These findings indicate that social media marketing activity is associated with higher purchase interest in blind box products among Generation Z, and that TikTok is the dominant channel through which respondents accessed such content in this sample.

Keywords

Social Media Marketing; Purchase Interest; Blind Box; Generation Z; Stimulus-Organism-Response.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has brought fundamental changes to marketing strategies and consumer behavior, particularly for Generation Z, who grew up in the digital era. The number of social media users in Indonesia has increased significantly, with growth of 2.9 percent from the beginning of 2024 to 2025 (Data Reportal, 2025), and Indonesian Generation Z, currently aged 13–28, shows a strong tendency to use platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter as primary references before making purchases (Databoks Katadata, 2024). Social media marketing (SMM) is a system that allows businesses to engage, collaborate, interact with, and leverage the strengths of their users for marketing purposes (Arviani *et al.*, 2021). According to Gunelius (2011) in Narottama and Nararya (2022), social media marketing carried out by a business can influence a person's thinking, which in turn affects the thinking of others more broadly before a purchasing decision is made, through the use of blogs, microblogs, social networks, social bookmarks, and content sharing. Kotler and Keller (2016) in Norma (2025) define social media marketing as a marketing communication activity that uses electronic media to attract consumers in various ways in order to build awareness, build company image, and increase sales of goods or services. This is reinforced by Ang and Andreani (2022) in Murti (2023), who describe social media marketing as two-way communication that seeks empathy with users to reduce misunderstanding and increase brand value. Based on a report by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2023), more than 59% of the world's population actively uses social media, with an average daily duration of two hours and thirty-one minutes, which underlines the significant role social media plays in the daily lives of Generation Z. One popular consumption trend among Generation Z is the blind box, a product sold in a sealed package containing a collectible figure whose specific character cannot be known until the packaging is opened. Each series generally consists of regular variants together with one or more rare “secret” characters that appear in only a very small proportion of the total production — for example, one in every 144 boxes.

This uncertainty gives the purchase a surprise element comparable to a game of chance (Suara Merdeka, 2024) and generates strong hedonic value: buyers are drawn less by the product's practical function than by the pleasure of anticipation, the thrill of the reveal, and the satisfaction of collecting a complete or rare set. The rarity of the secret character in each series is the main attraction and encourages consumers to make repeated purchases in pursuit of the character they want, a pattern of collectible behavior that is reinforced by promotion on social media. Content creators and influencers who post unboxing videos amplify this dynamic by publicly displaying moments of surprise and delight, which can trigger a bandwagon effect — the tendency of consumers to follow a trend simply because it is popular (Sabir *et al.*, 2020, in Maharani, 2025) — as well as FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), the anxiety of being left behind when others are seen enjoying a trending product (Apriliani *et al.*, 2025). Blind box products are promoted massively by influencers and social media users, especially through TikTok, which has more than 125 million active users in Indonesia (Data Reportal, 2024). Promotion takes place through unboxing content, the For You Page (FYP) feature that algorithmically distributes content to a targeted audience, and hashtags such as #blindbox and #unboxing, which build a virtual community of collectors. This combination of hedonic value, scarcity-driven collectible behavior, and FOMO forms the psychological backdrop against which social media marketing is expected to shape purchase interest, and provides the rationale for examining this relationship empirically rather than assuming it. In Lhokseumawe City, the blind box phenomenon has begun to emerge, marked by growing conversation about the product among students and pupils, including at the MINISO Suzuya outlet. To capture the scale of this phenomenon before conducting the main study, the author carried out an initial survey of 32 members of Generation Z in Lhokseumawe City, the results of which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Initial Survey on Blind Box Awareness and Purchase Interest (n = 32)

No	Question	Yes (%)	No (%)
1	Are you aware of or have you heard of blind box products?	96.9%	3.1%
2	Have you seen promotional content or information about blind box products?	90.6%	9.4%
3	Have you ever visited the blind box stand at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City?	59.4%	40.6%
4	Are you interested in purchasing blind box products at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City?	56.3%	43.8%

Table 1 shows that although 96.9% of respondents were familiar with the blind box and 90.6% had seen its promotional content, only 59.4% had visited the blind box stand at MINISO Suzuya and 56.3% expressed interest in purchasing. This gap between exposure to social media marketing and purchase interest indicates that awareness does not automatically translate into purchase interest, and points to the need for further study of the factors that influence the conversion from awareness to purchase intention. Studies on the influence of social media marketing on purchase interest have been widely conducted on products with utilitarian value, such as frozen food, skincare, and fashion, but specific studies on products with strong hedonic value and gamification elements, such as blind boxes, especially among Generation Z, remain very limited. The blind box trend itself has only become widespread since 2024 and has not been

extensively examined academically, particularly regarding how digital marketing strategies influence impulsive purchase decisions driven by FOMO and the bandwagon effect. This study offers novelty as one of the initial studies that specifically analyzes the influence of social media marketing on purchase interest in blind boxes at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City, a relatively new product category with consumption characteristics that differ from conventional products. Based on this description, the problem formulated in this research is whether social media marketing influences purchase interest in blind boxes among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City. This study aims to determine this influence and to provide theoretical contributions to the development of business administration science, particularly the study of social media marketing and purchase interest in hedonic, gamified products, as well as practical contributions for retail business actors in designing effective social media marketing strategies and for Generation Z consumers in recognizing the persuasive mechanisms — such as FOMO and the bandwagon effect — embedded in blind box promotional content.

2 | BACKGROUND THEORY

2.1 Social Media Marketing

According to Gunelius (2011) in Narottama and Nararya (2022), social media marketing carried out by a business can influence a person's thinking, which has an impact on the thinking of others more broadly before a purchasing decision is made, through the use of blogs, microblogs, social networks, social bookmarks, and content sharing. Social media marketing is also understood as two-way communication that seeks empathy with users in order to reduce misunderstanding and increase brand value (Ang & Andreani, 2022, in Murti, 2023). Gunelius (2011) in Narottama and Nararya (2022) formulated four indicators of social media marketing, namely:

- 1) Content Creation — creating unique content related to the business that represents the brand while being useful and appealing to the target market.
- 2) Content Sharing — distributing brand-related content to the target market so that it can be re-shared (republished) by online audiences, thereby reaching a wider potential market.
- 3) Connecting — ensuring that content connects with online audiences and other social networks, thereby building brand credibility and loyalty.
- 4) Community Building — building a social community that allows people with shared interests to meet, thereby expanding the business's network and online audience reach.

2.2 Purchase Interest

Priansa (2017) in Dewi Reniawati *et al.* (2024) defines purchase interest as a focus of attention on something accompanied by a feeling of pleasure, which then gives rise to a desire to own the item by paying or exchanging it for money. Priansa (2017) in Dewi Reniawati *et al.* (2024) formulated four indicators of purchase interest, namely:

- 1) Transactional Interest — a person's tendency to purchase a product.
- 2) Referential Interest — a person's tendency to recommend a product to others.
- 3) Preferential Interest — a preference that shows a product as a person's primary choice.
- 4) Exploratory Interest — a tendency to actively search for information about a desired product and information that supports its positive characteristics.

2.3 Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) Theory

To connect the two variables above beyond a simple cause-and-effect statement, this study draws on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), which is widely used in marketing and consumer behavior research to explain how external environmental cues (stimulus) affect an individual's internal cognitive and affective state (organism), which in turn produces a behavioral outcome (response). In the context of this study, the four dimensions of social media marketing — content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building — act as the stimulus: they are the environmental cues Generation Z encounters through blind box promotional content, unboxing videos, and TikTok's For You Page. This stimulus is processed internally by the consumer (organism) in the form of curiosity, hedonic pleasure from the element of surprise, perceived rarity of the secret character, and psychological pressure such as FOMO. These internal responses then manifest as an observable outcome (response), namely purchase interest, expressed through its four indicators: transactional, referential, preferential, and exploratory interest. This theoretical bridge provides the conceptual basis for expecting social media marketing to shape purchase interest not directly, but through the psychological state it evokes in Generation Z consumers, and it underlies the hypothesis tested in this study.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

According to Sugiyono (2015), a conceptual framework describes the relationship between the variables in a

study — in this case, the relationship between social media marketing (X) and purchase interest (Y). Building on the S-O-R framework above, the conceptual framework of this study can be visualized as follows: social media marketing, represented by its four indicators (content creation, content sharing, connecting, and community building), is positioned as the independent variable that is hypothesized to influence purchase interest, represented by its four indicators (transactional, referential, preferential, and exploratory interest), as the dependent variable. The relationship between the two variables is tested for statistical significance using the t-test.

2.5 Hypothesis

Based on the theoretical review above, the hypothesis formulated in this study is as follows:

Ha: Social media marketing is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City.

H0: Social media marketing is suspected to have no positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City.

According to Gunelius (2011) in Narottama and Nararya (2022), social media marketing carried out by a business can influence a person's thinking which has an impact on the thinking of others more broadly before making a purchasing decision, through the use of blogs, microblogs, social networks, social bookmarks, and content sharing. Social media marketing is also understood as two-way communication that seeks empathy with users to reduce misunderstandings and increase brand value (Ang & Andreani, 2022, in Murti, 2023). Gunelius (2011) in Narottama and Nararya (2022) formulated four indicators of social media marketing, namely: (1) content creation, (2) content sharing, (3) connecting, and (4) community building.

2.6 Purchase Interest

Priansa (2017) in Dewi Reniawati *et al.* (2024) defines purchasing interest as a focus on something accompanied by a feeling of pleasure, which then gives rise to a desire to own the item by paying or exchanging it for money. Priansa (2017) in Dewi Reniawati *et al.* (2024) formulated four indicators of purchasing interest, namely: (1) transactional interest, (2) referential interest, (3) preferential interest, and (4) exploratory interest.

3 | METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method (Sugiyono, 2013). The research variables consist of social media marketing (X) as the independent variable and purchase interest (Y) as the dependent variable. The study was conducted at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City, with Generation Z as the subject, because the location is a main distribution point for blind box products as well as a gathering place for young people in Lhokseumawe City. The study population was Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, residing in Lhokseumawe City. Since the exact population size was unknown, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula with a 95% confidence level and a 10% margin of error, as follows:

$$n = Z^2 p(1-p) / d^2$$

The calculation yields $n = (1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5) / 0.10^2 = 96.04$, which was then rounded up to 100 respondents to facilitate data analysis and increase precision. The sampling technique used non-probability sampling with purposive sampling, applying the following criteria: (1) domiciled in Lhokseumawe City; (2) belonging to Generation Z (born 1997–2012), male or female; (3) actively using social media; (4) having been exposed to blind box promotional content; and (5) having visited MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City. Because the Generation Z age range (1997–2012) includes respondents below 18 years of age — 6% of the final sample was aged 13–17 — the questionnaire cover letter informed every respondent of the study's purpose and guaranteed the confidentiality of their data before they began filling it in, and participation was entirely voluntary, consistent with standard practice for low-risk, anonymous survey research. The questionnaire did not collect any information that could identify individual respondents. However, a separate, written procedure for obtaining parental or guardian consent for respondents under 18 years old was not formally implemented in this study; this is acknowledged as a limitation, and future studies involving minors are recommended to establish an explicit guardian-consent procedure and, where feasible, to obtain approval from a research ethics committee prior to data collection. Primary data were collected through questionnaires (printed and Google Form) using a five-point Likert scale, direct observation of blind box promotional content on social media and consumer interactions at the MINISO outlet, and documentation in the form of screenshots of promotional content and photographs of research activities. Data were analyzed using a simple linear regression technique with the help of SPSS version 25, using the equation $Y = a + bX$. Before hypothesis testing, a validity test (Pearson correlation), a reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6), and classical assumption

tests — a normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov, histogram, and P-P Plot) and a heteroscedasticity test (scatterplot) — were carried out. Hypothesis testing was carried out through the t-test, the correlation coefficient, and the coefficient of determination (R^2).

4 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 100 Generation Z respondents, all of whom (100%) had seen blind box promotional content on social media and had visited MINISO Suzuya in Lhokseumawe City. Detailed respondent characteristics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Social media platform	TikTok	81	81%
	Instagram	17	17%
	Other	2	2%
Age	18–22 years	72	72%
	23–28 years	22	22%
	13–17 years	6	6%
Gender	Woman	58	58%
	Man	42	42%
Occupation	Student (university)	77	77%
	Working	12	12%
	Student (secondary school)	9	9%
	Other	2	2%

Source: Processed data (2026)

Table 2 shows that TikTok was the platform most used by respondents to view blind box promotional content (81%), followed by Instagram (17%) and other platforms (2%). Respondents were predominantly aged 18–22 (72%), female (58%), and university students (77%), while 6% were aged 13–17, reflecting the fact that Generation Z as defined in this study spans both minors and young adults who are active on social media and open to popular-culture trends.



Figure 1. Blind box products displayed at the MINISO Suzuya outlet, Lhokseumawe City

4.1.2 Validity and Reliability Test

The validity test shows that all statement items in the social media marketing (X) and purchase interest (Y) variables have an r-count value greater than the r-table value (0.197) at a 5% significance level, so all items are declared valid, with r-count ranging from 0.676 to 0.824 for social media marketing and from 0.776 to 0.882 for purchase interest. The reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha shows that both variables are reliable, as their values exceed the 0.60 threshold, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Items	r-count range	r-table	Cronbach's Alpha	Note
Social Media Marketing (X)	8	0.676 – 0.824	0.197	0.893	Valid & Reliable
Purchase Interest (Y)	8	0.776 – 0.882	0.197	0.935	Valid & Reliable

4.1.3 Classical Assumption Test

The normality test used three complementary approaches: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, a histogram graph, and a P-P Plot graph. The full Kolmogorov-Smirnov output is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	Unstandardized Residual
N	100
Normal Parameters — Mean	0.0000000
Normal Parameters — Std. Deviation	6.06244974
Most Extreme Differences — Absolute	0.114
Most Extreme Differences — Positive	0.064
Most Extreme Differences — Negative	-0.114
Test Statistic	0.114
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	0.143
Monte Carlo 99% CI — Lower Bound	0.133
Monte Carlo 99% CI — Upper Bound	0.152

Table 4 shows an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value, based on the Lilliefors significance correction, of 0.003, which is below the 0.05 threshold and would, on its own, suggest a non-normal distribution. However, the Lilliefors-corrected asymptotic significance can be imprecise for samples of this size, so the Monte Carlo method — simulating 10,000 sampled tables with a fixed starting seed — was used to obtain a more accurate exact significance estimate. This produced a Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.143 (99% CI: 0.133–0.152), which is above 0.05. Because the Monte Carlo estimate is the more reliable indicator for this sample size, and because it is supported by a symmetrical, bell-shaped histogram and a P-P Plot in which the data points closely follow the diagonal line (Figure 2), the residual data is declared to be normally distributed and the regression model is considered to satisfy the normality assumption.

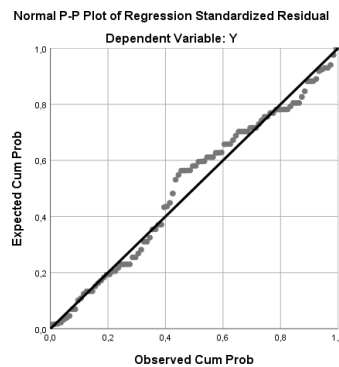


Figure 2. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

The heteroscedasticity test using a scatterplot graph (Figure 3) shows points spread randomly without forming a particular pattern above or below zero on the Y axis, so the regression model is declared free from heteroscedasticity and suitable for use in hypothesis testing.

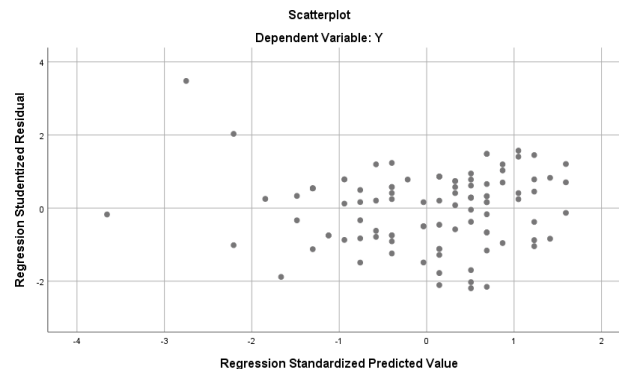


Figure 3. Scatterplot of the heteroscedasticity test

4.1.4 Simple Linear Regression Test and Hypothesis Test

The results of the simple linear regression analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of the Simple Linear Regression and t-Test

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-count	Sig.
(Constant)	2.717	3.512	–	0.774	0.441
Social Media Marketing (X)	0.752	0.111	0.565	6.782	0.000

Based on Table 5, the following regression equation is obtained: $Y = 2.717 + 0.752X$, where Y is purchase interest, X is social media marketing, the constant of 2.717 indicates the value of purchase interest when social media marketing is zero, and the regression coefficient of 0.752 indicates that every one-unit increase in social media marketing is associated with a 0.752-unit increase in purchase interest. The t-value of the social media marketing variable, 6.782, is greater than the t-table value of 1.985, with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), so H_a is accepted and H_0 is rejected. Thus, social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City.

Table 6. Results of the Correlation and Determination Coefficient Tests

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.565	0.319	0.312	6.093

The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.565 falls within the 0.40–0.599 range, which, according to Sugiyono's (2018) interpretation guidelines, is classified as a moderate relationship between social media marketing and purchase interest. The coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.319 indicates that the social media marketing variable explains 31.9% of the variation in blind box purchase interest, while the remaining 68.1% is explained by variables outside this study. In line with the S–O–R framework outlined in Section 2.3, these unexamined variables plausibly include organism-level and situational factors such as product price, packaging design, word of mouth, and other consumer psychological factors, which future research is encouraged to test directly.

4.2 Discussion

The results of this study confirm that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City. To understand this effect more precisely, respondents' mean scores for each indicator of social media marketing are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Mean Scores by Social Media Marketing Indicator

Indicator	Item	Mean	Category
Content Creation	X.1 / X.2	3.87 / 3.92	High
Content Sharing	X.3 / X.4	3.86 / 4.11	High
Connecting	X.5 / X.6	4.16 / 4.00	Highest
Community Building	X.7 / X.8	3.55 / 3.73	Lowest

Content creation and content sharing both scored in the high category, indicating that respondents perceive blind box promotional content as distinctive, representative of the MINISO brand, and worth passing on to others. The connecting indicator obtained the highest mean score, especially for the ease of obtaining up-to-date information about blind box products through social media, in line with field observations that most visitors first learned about new blind box products from social media posts before visiting the store to confirm and purchase. Community building, by contrast, obtained the lowest mean score, reinforced by the absence of an active, organized MINISO Suzuya blind box fan community on social media — consumer interaction with the brand online remains largely individual rather than communal.

Table 8. Mean Scores by Purchase Interest Indicator

Indicator	Item	Mean	Category
Transactional Interest	Y.1 / Y.2	3.46 / 3.32	Highest
Referential Interest	Y.3 / Y.4	moderate–high	Moderate
Preferential Interest	Y.5 / Y.6	3.06 / 2.95	Lowest
Exploratory Interest	Y.7 / Y.8	moderate–high	Moderate

On the purchase interest side, the transactional interest indicator stands out as the strongest form of interest, consistent with the busy blind box display shelves and the relatively frequent purchase transactions directly observed by the researcher, while the preferential interest indicator falls in the lowest category, indicating that blind boxes have not yet become a top-priority collectible compared with other products sold at MINISO. Read through the S-O-R lens introduced in Section 2.3, this pattern is coherent: the connecting stimulus — easy, frequent exposure to new product information — most directly triggers an immediate transactional response, since it repeatedly renews consumers' awareness of new releases and rare characters. Community building, however, is the stimulus most closely tied to sustained brand attachment and collector identity; because it remains the weakest dimension of MINISO Suzuya's current social media marketing, the corresponding preferential-interest response — treating blind box as a priority collectible rather than an occasional purchase — also remains the weakest. This suggests that strengthening community-building efforts, such as organizing an active collector community, hosting interactive live sessions, or running hashtag-based fan campaigns, may be a more effective lever for deepening purchase interest than simply increasing the volume of promotional content. This finding is in line with research by Norma (2025) and Setianingsih and Aziz (2022), which similarly found a positive influence of social media marketing on purchase interest, and it reinforces the view of Priansa (2017) in Dewi Reniawati *et al.* (2024) that effective social media marketing can increase consumer awareness while encouraging the growth of purchase interest. The dominance of TikTok as the platform most used by respondents (81%) to view blind box promotional content indicates that, within this sample, the short-video platform was the primary channel through which Generation Z in Lhokseumawe City encountered blind box content; this descriptive finding does not by itself establish that TikTok is inherently more effective than other platforms, and comparative studies across platforms would be needed to test that claim directly. Overall, these results suggest that creative, consistent, and — in particular — more community-oriented social media marketing strategies represent a key opportunity for increasing blind box purchase interest at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City.

5 | CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on blind box purchase interest among Generation Z at MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City (t -count 6.782 > t -table 1.985; sig. 0.000 < 0.05), with the regression equation $Y = 2.717 + 0.752X$. The relationship between the two variables is classified as moderate ($r = 0.565$), and social media marketing explains 31.9% of the variation in purchase interest, while the remaining 68.1% is explained by variables outside this study. TikTok was recorded as the platform most used by Generation Z respondents (81%) to access blind box promotional content, and the connecting indicator emerged as the strongest driver of transactional interest, while community building emerged as the weakest dimension, corresponding to the low level of preferential interest observed. MINISO Suzuya, Lhokseumawe City is advised to continue optimizing its social media marketing strategy through TikTok and Instagram with creative, informative content, while specifically strengthening community-building initiatives such as an active online collector community, exclusive membership programs, or interactive events to deepen consumer emotional engagement and preferential interest. Generation Z consumers are advised to be more critical and selective in responding to blind box promotional content, recognizing FOMO- and bandwagon-driven persuasion techniques, and to weigh their needs and financial capacity before purchasing; this study, however, did not statistically test financial capacity as a variable, so this recommendation is offered as practical guidance rather than an empirical finding. Future researchers are advised to add other variables such as word of mouth, brand image, price perception, or hedonic motivation; to expand the scope of research locations so that results are more generalizable; and, where the sample includes respondents under 18 years of age, to design and document an explicit guardian-consent procedure in advance of data collection.

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