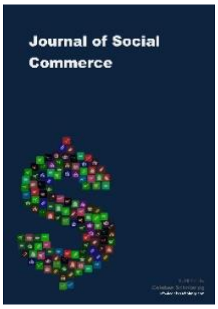

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Gen Z Digital Investment Intentions: An Analysis of Financial Literacy, Social Media, and Privacy Issues

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Abstract

Economic uncertainty is inevitable for every individual, including Generation Z. One way to deal with this economic uncertainty is through financial planning, which also includes investment activities. This study aims to investigate the role of financial literacy, social media, and privacy concerns on investment intentions. This study involved 206 respondents who were Generation Z students in Semarang City, Indonesia. The results showed that financial literacy and the role of social media have a positive influence on Generation Z's intention to invest in digital platforms, while privacy concerns negatively affect their intention to invest in digital platforms. However, this study was unable to show a moderating relationship between privacy concerns and the role of social media and investment intentions in digital platforms.

Introduction

"Failing to plan is planning to fail" is a widely used term. This term implies that individuals should plan well if they desire future success. Failure to plan will result in suboptimal efforts to achieve a goal. Failing to plan is the same as planning to fail.

An individual needs to plan carefully to achieve a goal. This also includes planning for future financial conditions, especially in uncertain times. Basic human needs, such as housing, lead to high demand, which results in soaring property prices. However, on the other hand, this increase in property prices is not in line with the increase in individual wages. If this phenomenon is not addressed seriously, it will lead to the inability of future generations to own property. The results of an Inventure survey, as shown in the Indonesia Industry Outlook (IIO) 2025, revealed that two out of three middle-class Generation Z members believe they will not be able to purchase their first home within the next three years, either through installments or cash. The challenges of global economic uncertainty also face individuals today. The Global Risk Report 2025 released by the World Economic Forum revealed that three global risks remain, and will be faced in the future, including state-based armed conflict, extreme weather, and geoeconomic conflict. The current economic uncertainty requires individuals to implement sound financial planning to survive.

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Economic uncertainty is a challenge facing the entire global community, including Generation Z (those born between the mid-1990s and the late 2000s). In this era of uncertainty, Generation Z is challenged to manage their spending wisely and exercise self-control (Astungkara et al., 2025). They also need to consider alternative ways to improve their financial situation. One such approach is investing.

Investment options through digital platforms are currently growing rapidly, especially among Generation Z. Generation Z is a generation that is closely related to technology and the digital world, this is supported by the fact that most of Generation Z spends at least 9 hours in the digital environment (Handopo & Rahadi, 2021; Kushwaha, 2021; Bhalla et al., 2021). Many factors can influence investment decisions, one of which is a person's financial literacy. A person's financial literacy influences individual behavior in making investment decisions (Hana et al., 2024; Oppong et al., 2023; Suresh, 2021). Investors who have financial literacy will have sufficient confidence to make assessments regarding their investments, and they are able to process the information appropriately to make investment decisions (Raut, 2020; Aren & Nayman Hamamci, 2023; Bai, 2023).

Individuals rely on information they obtain from social media as a source of information in making investment decisions (Hana et al., 2024). Studies on Generation Z show that the availability of diverse information on the internet influences their investment decisions (Khatik et al., 2021a). Generation Z's use of digital platforms is related to their privacy awareness. Studies have (Lumare et al., 2024) shown that as *privacy concerns* increase, individual trust decreases, ultimately negatively impacting the use of digital platforms.

development of digital investment *platforms* requires special attention, including the factors that influence digital generation or Generation Z to invest. Several previous studies have revealed the influence of financial literacy and the influence of social media on investment intentions and investment decisions, but the role of *privacy concerns* in this relationship has not been further identified. This study will investigate the influence of financial literacy and the role of social media on Generation Z's intention to use digital platforms for investing. *Privacy concerns* will also be tested both directly and as a moderating factor in the relationship between financial literacy and the role of social media on Generation Z's intention to use digital platforms for investing.

Literature Review

Financial Literacy

literacy is the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that influence attitudes and behaviors to improve the quality of decision-making and financial management to achieve public financial well-being (OJK, 2025). In essence, financial literacy influences a person in making decisions to save or use funds to achieve prosperity both now and in the future. (OJK & BPS, 2024)conducted a national survey of financial literacy and inclusion (SNLIK), the results of the survey were a financial literacy index of 65.43%, meaning that out of 100 people aged 15 to 79 years, only 65 people were well financially literate. On the other hand, the aspect of knowledge regarding financial service institutions and their products and services was the largest contributor to the formation of the literacy index.

Social media

Media is a means of conveying information from a message source to a message recipient. Social media, often referred to as social media, is a digital platform that facilitates users' interaction and sharing of content in the form of text, photos, and videos (Putra, 2024). Social media is a virtual public space. It allows people around the world to exchange information without the constraints of space and time.

Privacy Policy

Diggelmann & Cleis (2014) states that the right to privacy was an international human right before it became a nationally established fundamental right. Furthermore, *privacy concern* is the extent to which consumers are concerned about potential violations of their right to prevent disclosure of personal information to others. Consumers are also concerned about their inability to control the amount of information they receive (Baek & Morimoto, 2012; Wu & Hang, 2023).

Investment Intention

The theory of intention is derived from *the theory of planned behavior*, popularized by Ajzen in 1991. *The theory of planned behavior* is a tool that can be used to predict individual behavior when the individual lacks full control of their own will. The individual faces obstacles or constraints that prevent their behavior from being arbitrary (Mahyarni, 2013). Intention is the foundation and even the barometer of every behavior. If someone has the intention to do something, it is almost certain to happen. Therefore, intention is fundamental in making investment decisions.

The Role of *Financial Literacy* on Investment Intention

Individuals who lack understanding of the capital market will hesitate to participate actively in it, while individuals with financial literacy will have an impact on their investment intentions (Nag & Shah, 2022). Financial literacy has a significant positive influence on investment intentions and investment choices (Hana et al., 2024; Ira Pratiwi et al., 2023). Inadequate financial literacy will discourage individuals from investing, while individuals with financial literacy understand financial instruments and are willing to take risks (Samsuri et al., 2019). Having financial literacy will make it easier for an individual to mitigate risks and project returns on their investments.

H1: *Financial literacy* in Generation Z influences the intention to invest in digital *platforms* .

The Role of Social Media on Investment Intention

Lestiana & Nurfauziya (2023) concluded that *social media influencers* have a positive and significant influence on students' interest in investing in the capital market. (Hana et al., 2024; Ira Pratiwi et al., 2023) It also confirms that social media has a significant impact on investment choices made by individual groups. According to *Social Contagion Theory*, social interaction plays a crucial role in shaping and transmitting psychological responses and interpersonal behavior within a group. Investment strategies and attitudes popularized on social media platforms have a significant influence on the dissemination and investment decision-making process (Dang, 2024). Generation Z is a generation that has a close connection to technology; through social media, they will receive recommendations related to the capital market from various sources that will influence their opinions, behavior, and investment decisions (Ningtyas et al., 2024).

H2: The role of social media on Generation Z influences the intention to invest in digital *platforms*

The Role of *Privacy Concern* on Investment Intention

Security has a significant influence on customer interest in investing (Hair et al., 2021). *Privacy concerns* will have a negative impact on confidence in the use of digital financial platforms (e-commerce) and trust (Fortes & Rita, 2016). *Privacy concerns* are closely related to concerns about the loss of privacy due to voluntary or secret monitoring and disclosure of information which has a negative impact on the intention to carry out online transactions (Dinev & Hart, 2005). Individuals who have privacy concerns *will* be more careful in sharing their private data, especially on digital platforms.

H3: *Privacy Concern* in Generation Z has an influence on the intention to invest in digital *platforms*

Although Generation Z is closely connected to technology and social media and is more easily influenced by investment-related information, high *privacy concerns* can weaken their intention to invest in digital platforms. Generation Z with high privacy concerns will be more cautious about their data privacy when interacting with digital investment platforms.

H4: *Privacy Concern* In Generation Z, the role of social media moderates the relationship between the intention to invest in *digital platforms*

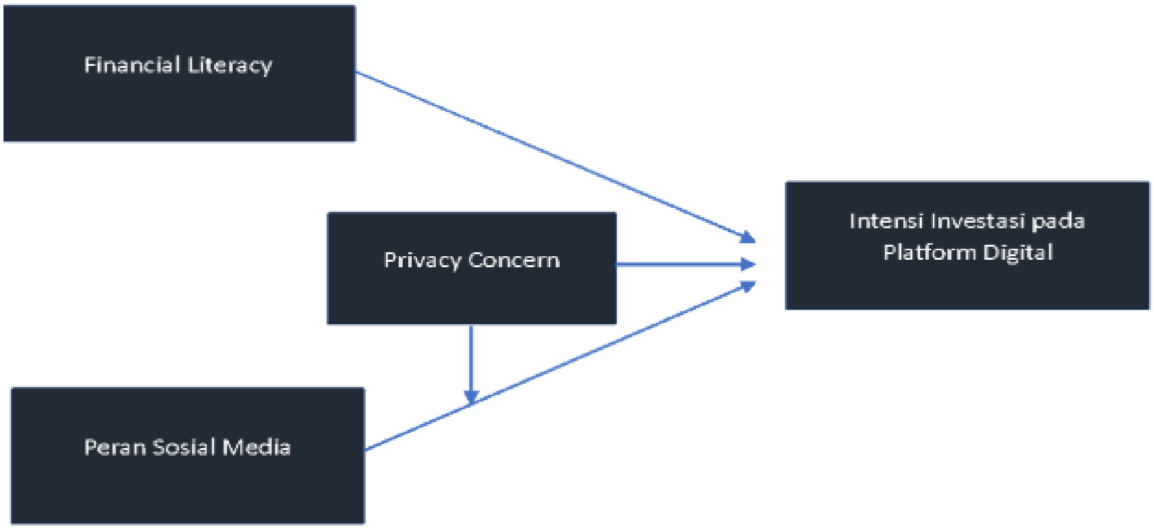

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Methods

The research design used in the study was a quantitative research approach and survey design. The reason that led to the choice of the method lies in its adaptability to measuring the association between predetermined variables, i.e., financial literacy, social media, privacy concern, and an intention to invest. The research criteria were used to identify the eligible respondents who were administered the questionnaire using an electronic questionnaire.

The sample of the research was composed of social media users including Instagram, Twitter/X, Facebook, and Tik Tok, among others. The intended audience was represented by individuals constituting Generation Z that can be attributed to people born between 1997 and 2012. This generation was chosen on the basis of their high rate of digital activity and their being potential emerging investors. In order to make it relevant to the study, only enquirers with interest in investing or with previous experience were considered.

Research Instrument

The data collection tool was a structured questionnaire in terms of Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). The instruments were old and validated instruments modified. The financial literacy was assessed by five questions taken from Remund (2010). The role of social media was evaluated on the basis of items used by Khatik et al. (2021b), and the degree of privacy concern addressing the items created by Huang et al. (2017). The dependent variable, investment intention was measured by five items that have been developed on Ajzen concept of theory of planned behavior (1991). These tools were modified to fit the context of the study and the theoretical bases were not compromised.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was gathered by means of an online questionnaire delivered online. The approach was selected to fit the needs of the Generation Z which is very active in the digital space. The survey was spread through social networks and online community groups to find the respondents that meet the research requirements.

Data Analysis Method

The quantitative analysis was done through partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with the software SmartPLS. The analysis will be performed in a two-step procedure: testing the measurement model and testing the structural model. The tests of validity and reliability of the measurement model were conducted. Convergent validity was be measured in terms of factor loading (acceptable at >0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50). Discriminant validity was calculated as Fornell-Larcker criterion, whereas the internal consistency reliability was computed as composite reliability (adequate above 0.70). To test the relationship between the variables under consideration, hypothesis testing was performed in the structural model test. There was testing of hypotheses based on P-value and a significance level of 0.05. As per the Hair et al. (2021), the hypotheses were taken to be true when the P-value was less than 0.05.

The Rationale of PLS-SEM

The determination of PLS-SEM was dependent on the fact that it is used in predictive and exploratory research designs, especially when the relationships between many variables are complicated. LS-SEM is also resilient to data which fail to conform to normality and can well address sample sizes of small-to-medium size. That is why it was deemed the most suitable analytical technique to examine the links between the variables of financial literacy, use of social media, concern with privacy, and investment intention among the Generation Z interviewees.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Demographics

This study involved 206 respondents, accounting students at state universities in Semarang City. According to Table 1, female respondents predominated at 166. Furthermore, the majority of respondents had monthly income and expenses of less than Rp 750,000.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Description	Amount	%
Gender		
Man	40	19.4
Woman	166	80.6
Age		
< 18 years	7	3.4
18 – 25 years old	199	96.6

Monthly Income		
< 750,000	87	42.2
750,001 - 1,000,000	67	32.5
1,000,001 – 1,500,000	32	15.5
1,500,001– 2,000,000	12	5.8
> 2,000,001	7	3.4
Monthly Expenses		
< 750,000	89	43.2
750,001 - 1,000,000	79	38.3
1,000,001 – 1,500,000	24	11.7
1,500,001 – 2,000,000	8	3.9
> 2,000,001	5	2.4

Evaluation of Measurement Model (*Outer Model*)

This measurement model is used to test the correlation between variables and their indicators by applying reliability and validity tests of a model. In *convergent validity,* a study is declared valid if the *outer loading value* is more than 0.70, and if the AVE value is greater than 0.50, the model is categorized as having high *convergent validity. Reliability measurements in this study use the results of Composite Reliability* (CR) and *Cronbach's Alpha* , where both values must be greater than 0.70. Any items that do not meet the requirements will be eliminated and retested. Of the 16 indicators used, there is one indicator to measure *financial literacy* that is invalid because it has an *outer loading value* below 0.70, so the item is removed from the model and re-estimated.

Table 2. Results of *Convergent Validity* and Reliability

Variables	Measurement Items	*Outer Loading*	*Cronbach's Alpha*	*CR*	*AVE*
Financial Literacy	FL1	0.781	0.804	0.870	0.627
	FL2	0.821			
	FL4	0.762			
	FL5	0.802			
The Role of social media	SM1	0.777	0.746	0.855	0.663
	SM2	0.729			
	SM3	0.746			
	SM4	0.760			
Privacy Concern	PC1	0.706	0.860	0.900	0.695
	PC2	0.891			
	PC3	0.908			
	PC4	0.814			
Intention to Invest	I1	0.841	0.747	0.840	0.567
	I2	0.814			
	I3	0.787			

financial literacy variable is measured by four items with *outer loading values* ranging from 0.762 to 0.821, indicating a strong correlation in explaining *financial literacy*. The reliability level of the *financial literacy variable* has a *Cronbach's alpha value* of 0.804. and a *composite reliability value* of 0.870, above 0.70, and *convergent validity* indicated by *an AVE* of 0.627 > 0.50. Among the four valid measurement items, item FL2 appears to be more robust in reflecting the *financial literacy variable,* namely the comfort of discussing investment choices before deciding to use a digital investment platform.

Outer loading value of 4 (four) items the α-values measuring the social media role variable ranged from 0.729 to 0.777, thus concluding that all items are valid and strongly correlated in explaining the social media role variable. Of the four items, item SM1, which relates to respondents' intensity in following investment content, most strongly reflects the social media role variable. These four items also had a *Cronbach's alpha value of 0.746*, *a composite reliability* of 0.855, and an AVE value of 0.663.

privacy concern variable is also measured by four items that have a strong correlation in explaining it because they have an *outer loading value* of 0.706 - 0.908. These four items are also reliable in explaining the *privacy concern variable because they have Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and AVE* values of 0.860, 0.900 and 0.695, respectively. PC3 is the item that best reflects the *privacy concern variable because it has the highest outer loading* value . This item relates to respondents' concerns about the misuse of personal information when accessing digital investment platforms. Furthermore, the intention variable, measured by three items, has *an outer loading* ranging from 0.787 to 0.841. Of the three items strongly correlated in explaining the intensity variable, item I1, related to achieving respondents' financial goals through digital investment platforms, is the item that best reflects respondents' investment intention. This variable is also considered reliable, having a *Cronbach's alpha value* of 0.747, *a composite reliability* of 0.840, and an AVE of 0.567.

Table 3. Results of *the Fornell Larcker Criterion*

Variables	***Financial Literacy***	**Intention to Invest**	***Privacy Concern***	**The Role of Social Media**
Financial Literacy	0.792			
Intention to Invest	0.602	0.814		
Privacy Concern	-0.022	-0.219	0.833	
The Role of Social Media	0.556	0.483	0.060	0.753

The validity of this study is based on *the Fornell-Larcker* Criterion, which is measured by the square root of the AVE value. The *financial literacy variable* has a square root of 0.792, which is significantly correlated with *social media and privacy concerns*. This result indicates that the discriminant validity of *financial literacy* is met. Similarly, the validity of the role of social media, *privacy concerns*, and intentions has a value greater than the correlation between the other variables.

Structural Model Evaluation

Evaluation of the research model can be done by looking at the value of R *square.* In this study, the R2 value obtained was 0.433 which means that the influence of *financial literacy*, the role of social media and *privacy concern* on the intention to invest was 43.3% (moderate influence). Before testing the structural model hypothesis, it is necessary to see whether there is multicollinearity between the variables, namely by the *inner* VIF value. The evaluation results show that the VIF value <5 is 1.459 (Financial *Literacy* on Intention), 1.502 (Role of social media on Intention), 1.123 (*Privacy Concern* on Intention) and 1.173 (*Privacy Concern* * Role of social media on Intention) so that the level of multicollinearity between variables is low.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	**Hypothesis Statement**	***Path Coefficient***	***p-value***
H1	*Financial Literacy* => Intention to Invest	0.463	0.000
H2	The Role of Social Media => Intention to Invest	0.235	0.002
H3	*Privacy Concern* => Intention to Invest	-0.217	0.000

H4	*Privacy Concern* * Role of Social Media => Intention to Invest	-0.015	0.789

Hypothesis 1 has *a path coefficient* of 0.463 and a p- *value* of 0.000 (<0.005), indicating that *financial literacy* significantly influences the intention to invest in digital *platforms*. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. The higher a person's financial literacy, the higher their intention to invest through digital *platforms.* Testing the variable of social media's role in investment intention yielded a *path coefficient* of 0.235 and *a p-value* of 0.002. Hypothesis 2 is therefore accepted, and it can be concluded that social media has a positive effect on a person's intention to invest in digital *platforms.* The greater the influence of social media on a person, the greater their intention to invest through digital *platforms.*

Hypothesis 3 yielded a *path coefficient* of -0.217 and *a p-value* of 0.000. These results indicate that *privacy concerns* negatively influence investment intentions. The greater a person's concern about their personal information, the lower their intention to invest through digital *platforms.* Testing *the privacy concern variable* as a mediator between the role of social media on investment intention showed *a path* coefficient of -0.015 and a p- *value* of 0.789, thus it can be concluded that hypothesis 4 is rejected. *The privacy concern variable* cannot moderate the role of social media on a person's intention to invest in digital *platforms.*

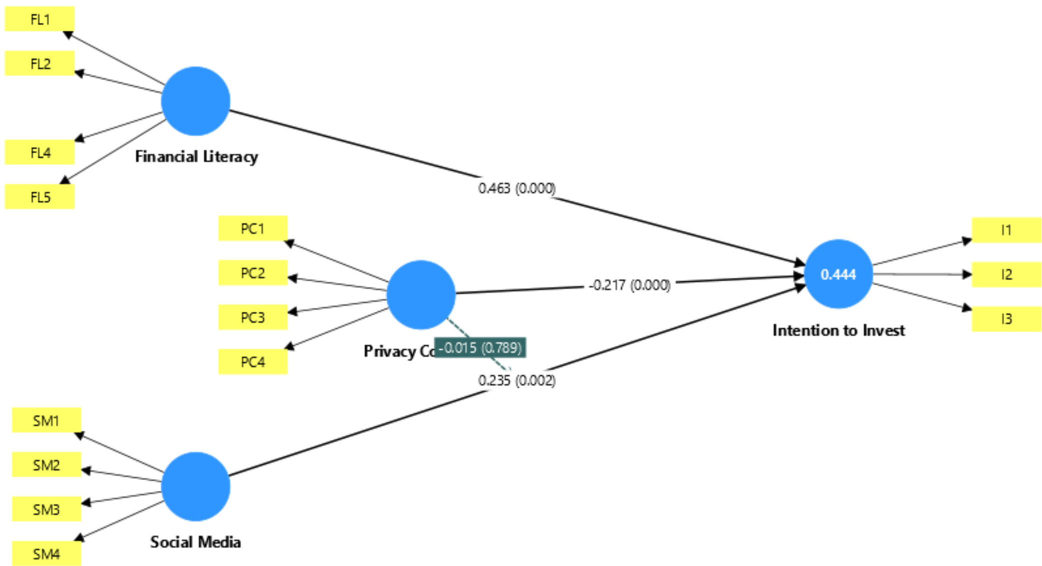

Figure 2. Structural Model of the Relationship between Financial Literacy, Social Media, and Privacy Concerns on Intention to Invest

Financial Literacy and Social Media as Dual Pillars Driving Investment Intention

Financial literacy has been elevated more and more to the status of the pillar that determines the ability of individuals to actively respond to investment opportunities in a more uncertain world. It not only gives the technical expertise needed to assess the financial instruments, but also the interpretive capabilities that enable individuals to assess risks and long term results with judgment. It has always been proven that more financially literate people have a greater chance to invest, to diversify, and to continue their involvement in financial markets due to their ability to think critically and to avoid the noise of market fluctuations (Oppong et al., 2023; Raut, 2020). The research based on large household data sets in Asia indicates that increased risk participation in assets is positively ordinated by better literacy and that this effect is strongest among younger and better educated respondents, affirming that literacy acts as both the initiation point and enabling factor to long term financial activity (Clarke, 2024). Simultaneously, literacy offers the ability to withstand the turbulent environment as informed investors are less likely to panic-sell and better prepared to make financial choices that match their future aspirations and transform uncertainty into an opportunity instead of fear (Suresh, 2021).

Financial literacy is not only important to technical competence, but also motivation. Knowledge breeds confidence and confidence turns intention to action. Some researchers have found that students who have a better financial literacy level exhibit a greater desire to invest since they do not view investment as a gambling game but as a systematic way of achieving financial activeness and independence (Nag & Shah, 2022; Purba et al., 2025). Hana et al. (2024) validate the fact that intention is directly predetermined by literacy as it affects both recognition and a sense of the possibility of managing investment tools successfully. On the same note, a study by Ira Pratiwi et al. (2023) points out the interaction of literacy and financial management attitudes, forming a more positive attitude toward investment. These discoveries underline that literacy is not the passive hoarding of knowledge but a metamorphic scheme that fosters self efficacy and encourages Generation Z to consider themselves competent economic actors capable of planning and maintaining mechanisms to support their financial destinies. This motivational aspect of literacy is particularly essential in those contexts where there is ambiguity both globally and domestically in economic matters since it enables young investors to convert the anxious state into an action-oriented response.

Together with literacy, social media has become an influential amplifier that creates the space where the image of investment decisions is formed and followed. To Generation Z, who is almost always digitally immersed, websites like Tik Tok, Instagram, and Reddit have become leading sources of monetarily centered stories and guidance. Research indicates that social media affects the choice of investment due to the increased access to financial information and because it fosters a feeling of group involvement in financial processes (Dang, 2024; Lestiana & Nurfauziya, 2023). A study by Ningtyas et al. (2024) carried out in Indonesia shows that content in social media investment has a strong influence on the financial behavior of the Muslim Generation Z, suggesting that online platforms not only convey knowledge but also cultural validity to the concept of investing. Nevertheless, such influence is not necessarily positive. The behavioral finance literature has sounded alarms that the proliferation of investment trends on social platforms tends to cause herding and overconfidence, thus making people follow the crowd sentiment without proper analysis (Sathya & Prabhavathi, 2024). As Ramli et al. (2023) have discovered, students who were exposed to deceptive financial campaigns on social media were more susceptible to fraudulent investment deals, which emphasizes the fact that the informational richness of the social platform can be turned into misinformation instead of empowerment in the absence of literacy.

The relationship between literacy and social media is thus conclusive. When people have the necessary financial literacy, they can more easily utilise the social media as a platform where to expand their worldviews and share knowledge and argue out various opinions. According to Robkob & Pankham (2023), the impact of social media on investment behavior is particularly enhanced in the case of emerging phenomena like the cryptocurrency, where the user must have a background of financial literacy that enables them to filter the trustworthiness of advice against speculative noise. Tania & Utami Tjhin (2025) further include that digital literacy as a related concept to financial competence reinforces the effectiveness of the social influence on the use of investment application by the generation Z generation so as to maximize the success of social influence. On the contrary, Widyasari & Aruan (2022) have noted that blind following of social media in the Indonesian capital market tends to result in major decision making, which supports the position that literacy acts as a protective mechanism. Literacy and social media do not exist in a mutually exclusive relationship, but rather are involved in a symbiotic relationship. Literacy offers order and sanity, whereas social media offers instantaneity and accessibility. The combination of both creates a better informed and vigorous intention to invest, when literacy balances the digital trends to reflective judgment.

The intersection of these results suggests a consistent model of the empowered intention to invest among Generation Z. Financial literacy is the provider of the cognitive base, the ability to take risks, the confidence to become a motivator to invest in an activity that becomes viable and appealing. Social media brings about exposure, support, the urgency of community confirmation, which maintains the interest in investment alive and dynamic. A combination of these two elements forms a strong framework that allows a good financial involvement in the long term. Kurniawati & Pamungkas (2023) emphasize the role of literacy in increasing the motivation to invest, and Hana et al. (2024) demonstrate that social media extends the impact by establishing a sense of reinforcement due to ongoing streams of content. Purba et al. (2025) validate the fact that with a combination of knowledge and technology and lifestyle factors, there is always an interest in investing. Ningtyas et al. (2024) also demonstrate that cultural identity mediate the relationship between social media and literacy in the development of financial behavior, and this serves to emphasize the multifaceted nature of these relationships. All of the evidence proves that in order to cultivate investment intentions in younger generations, one should not only use education as a tool, or rely only on digital influence. The culminating point is in empowering financial literacy as a stabilizing mechanism and at the same time using social media as a micro-dynamism of financial empowerment.

Privacy Concerns as a Barrier to Digital Investment

Privacy concerns take center stage in determining how the generation Z uses the digital investment platforms. Privacy issues come out as a major barrier that sabotages intention as opposed to financial literacy and social media which are enabling forces. On the very basic level, the concept of privacy is associated with the security of personal information and the assurance that the confidential data will not be abused. When people are afraid that their personal information may be revealed or abused, they would hesitate and be reluctant naturally. It has been studied that the directly experienced fear of data security undermines the perceived trust in digital platforms and significantly lowers the tendency to conduct online financial operations (Fortes & Rita, 2016; Hair et al., 2021). It happens especially with Generation Z that, despite being digitally native, they have an intense awareness of the dangers of data breaches, identity theft, and unauthorized surveillance that come with the high level of technology use (Lumare et al., 2024). Accordingly, privacy is a psychological filter, which is capable of reducing even the intense motivations generated through literacy and social influence.

There is extensive empirical support on the impact of privacy issues on investment intention which is direct and negative. The initial indication of such data layered in the work of Dinev & Hart (2005), who found that fear of misuse of this data lowers the tendency to make transactions online and the same evidence is still valid with the spread of online transaction platforms. Other more recent studies still confirm that the higher the worries regarding the loss of personal information, the less people are willing to invest (Priliasari, 2023). Such concerns have been more pronounced in the Indonesian context whereby there are increasing awareness of data protection laws. Irawan & Affan (2020) reported that perceived privacy and security affected fintech payments adoption intentions, indicating that a lack of confidence in investment platforms is not a one-dimensional digital trust deficit. These results are not inconsequential, since they suggest that the intention to invest is not merely a product of rational consideration of benefits but also of emotive encouragement that the private identity will be preserved. When it comes to financial literacy and motivation produced by social media interaction, the privacy problem can be easily used to counterbalance the motivational benefits of such interaction, particularly in the case of young investors.

Interestingly, the current research found out that the issue of privacy did not mediate the relationship between exposure to social media and investment intention. This observation is worth getting into consideration. The lack of moderation implies that privacy does not act in an interdependent manner but is therefore an interactive process within this dynamic. Although social media facilitates investment based on the shared passion and attention, the issue of privacy may have an independent deterrent effect that does not necessarily reduce the activity of social media but exists in parallel with it. Alzaidi & Agag (2022) say to rely on the parallel nature of trust and privacy, and condition the user engagement, but are not always directly related to social influence processes. Equally, Pertiwi (2022) showed that the perceived privacy protection also leads to a positive increase in the willingness to use e-wallets, but the impact lies in individual trust, and not in the transmission of information through the social network. What this means is that the issue of privacy is a potent individual restraint. They do not necessarily decline the attractiveness of social influence but they on their own reduce the intention to behave by rendering individuals wary at the execution stage.

Such division of enablers and inhibitors is a manifestation of greater complexity in digital behavior. Social media has on the one hand been demonstrated to increase the effect of herding and group excitement about investment opportunities (Sathya & Prabhavathi, 2024). Conversely, privacy issues tie individuals to more cautious stances which in most cases lead to a reluctance in taking action even when there has been a great social push. This dualism brings a conflict to the investment behavior of Generation Z. Ningtyas et al. (2024) found out that social media fosters optimism and predispositions towards investment products, but at the same time, when young investors think that there might be high data exploitation risks, the final behavioral intention becomes fragile. Practically, social media and financial literacy will provoke the willingness to invest, but concerns with privacy can draw people back, which forms a self-correcting mechanism that determines the very decision to use digital tools.

The lesson that comes out of this tension is quite valuable to both academics and practitioners. The issues of privacy are not the momentary obstacles that can be easily compensated by the eagerness. They are a structural problem of the digital economy of an enduring nature. Research in several settings reveals that the guarantee of privacy protection is among the most determining factors in the adoption of digital financial platforms (Alzaidi & Agag, 2022; Fortes & Rita, 2016). Trust (and therefore investment intention) is high where there exist appropriate laws on data protection and open institutional practices. On the other hand, in places where privacy protection is perceived as low people will not be willing to invest any resources even when they are financially literate and socially affected. This insists on the fact that trust and privacy are not auxiliary factors but prerequisites to the sustainability of digital investment participation.

The implication is clear. In the event that stakeholders are keen to create a strong digital investment culture amongst the Generation Z, they need to go beyond improving literacy and using social media to address the issue of privacy directly. This needs a multi-dimensional approach. Regulatory measures should offer plausible safety of consumer information. The mediums should be clear about the data storage, usage, and protection. Educational campaigns are not limited to financial literacy but also literacy in digital privacy should also be provided so that young investors understand how to assess the security level of the platforms. In such a way, the deterrent effect of the privacy issues can be reduced and turned into trust. The motivational forces of literacy and social media can only translate into long-term investment behaviour when Generation Z is assured that the personal identities will not be exploited.

Conclusion

Every individual faces economic uncertainty, including Generation Z. In addition to personal economic uncertainty, Generation Z also faces global economic uncertainty, which will ultimately impact their lives. Financial planning is a key activity in navigating economic uncertainty. Financial planning also encompasses investment activities, which are carried out not only conventionally but also through digital platforms.

This study aims to investigate the role of financial literacy, social media, and privacy concerns on investment intentions. This study involved 206 respondents who were Generation Z students in Semarang City. The results showed that financial literacy and the role of social media have a positive influence on Generation Z's intention to invest in digital platforms, while privacy concerns held by Gen Z will negatively affect their intention to invest in digital platforms. Higher financial literacy and high exposure to investment content on social media will increase Generation Z's intention to invest in digital platforms. However, privacy concerns held by Gen Z will hinder investment intentions due to concerns about the misuse of private personal information. The study was unable to show a moderating relationship between privacy concerns on the role of social media and investment intentions on digital platforms.

The practical implication of this research is that to strengthen the investment climate for Generation Z, stakeholders can engage in activities that enhance financial literacy, such as training, workshops, and education on various platforms. Furthermore, stakeholders can utilize social media as a means to promote and publish educational content related to investment. Stakeholders must also be able to provide adequate assurance that confidentiality and non-misuse of private data are guaranteed to avoid investor distrust in digital investment platforms.

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