

The Effect of Perceived Price Fairness and Product Quality on Generation Z Consumers' Purchase Decisions

Febi Rahellia¹, Fara Adelia Putri², Feryy Muhamad Yuandi³, Fitri⁴,
Agung Wijoyo.⁵

Pamulang University

*febirahellia@gmail.com, adeliaaaputrii02@gmail.com, feryymuhamadyuandi@gmail.com,
fitrioktaviani032006@gmail.com.*

Abstract Generation Z consumers have become an important market segment due to their familiarity with digital technology, access to product information, and changing consumption preferences. In making purchasing decisions, consumers may consider not only the price of a product but also whether the price is perceived as fair and whether the product meets their quality expectations. This study aims to analyze the effects of perceived price fairness and product quality on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions. A quantitative approach with an explanatory research design is proposed. Data will be collected through a questionnaire distributed to Generation Z consumers who have purchased products. The variables will be measured using a Likert scale, and the data will be analyzed using multiple linear regression, provided that the data meet the relevant statistical assumptions. The study examines three relationships: the effect of perceived price fairness on purchase decisions, the effect of product quality on purchase decisions, and the simultaneous effect of both independent variables on purchase decisions. Previous studies have examined price fairness, product quality, and consumer purchasing behavior in different product categories. However, the combination of these two variables in explaining Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions remains relevant for further investigation. The findings are expected to provide insights for businesses in developing pricing strategies and maintaining product quality to support consumer purchasing decisions. The empirical results will be presented after the questionnaire data have been collected and analyzed.

Keywords: perceived price fairness, product quality, purchase decisions, Generation Z, consumer behavior

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Changes in consumer behavior have encouraged businesses to pay greater attention to the factors that influence purchasing decisions. Consumers no longer concern themselves only with product availability; they also evaluate prices, quality, benefits, and the value they receive. Generation Z represents an important consumer segment in modern marketing. Having grown up alongside digital technology, this generation has access to social media, online marketplaces, customer reviews, and promotional content, which allows them to compare alternatives and judge whether a product is worth buying.

One factor that may influence purchasing decisions is perceived price fairness, which refers to consumers' assessments of whether a product's price is reasonable, acceptable, and consistent with the benefits received. Price fairness differs from price level: a relatively expensive product may still be considered fair if its quality and benefits justify

the cost, whereas a cheaper product may not be perceived as fair if consumers suspect poor quality or inconsistent pricing practices.

Another factor is product quality, namely the extent to which a product performs according to consumer expectations and provides the promised benefits. Depending on the category, quality may be assessed through durability, reliability, functionality, appearance, materials, and consistency. Quality perceptions are not always based on direct experience; consumers may also rely on descriptions, reviews, recommendations, and brand reputation.

Perceived price fairness and product quality may influence purchasing decisions individually and simultaneously. A good-quality product may become less attractive if its price is perceived as unfair, while a reasonable price may not suffice if the product is considered unreliable. Zeithaml (1988) explains the relationship between price, perceived quality, and perceived value, and Solomon (2020) emphasizes that purchasing decisions involve evaluating alternatives based on needs and preferences. Previous findings, however, must be interpreted according to their research contexts, because studies focusing on particular brands or product categories may not fully explain these relationships among Generation Z consumers in other contexts.

1.2 Research Gap

Previous studies have examined perceived price fairness in relation to purchasing decisions, brand image, consumer satisfaction, and purchase intention, and have investigated product quality alongside price, brand image, digital promotion, and electronic word-of-mouth. However, some studies focus on specific products such as skincare, cosmetics, smartphones, or footwear; several examine outcomes other than purchase decisions, such as satisfaction and purchase intention; and price is not always measured as perceived price fairness, which is related to but not identical with general price perceptions.

Accordingly, this study proposes to examine perceived price fairness and product quality together as independent variables associated with Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions within a clearly defined respondent group and product context. The research gap should not be interpreted as evidence that no previous study has examined these variables together; it concerns the need to clarify their combined relationship in the

specific context selected. The final gap should be strengthened by comparing the complete findings, methods, samples, and limitations of the relevant articles.

1.3 Research Questions

1. Does perceived price fairness affect Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions?
2. Does product quality affect Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions?
3. Do perceived price fairness and product quality simultaneously affect Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions?

1.4 Research Objectives

4. To examine the effect of perceived price fairness on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.
5. To examine the effect of product quality on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.
6. To analyze the simultaneous effect of perceived price fairness and product quality on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.

1.5 Research Significance

Theoretical significance. This study is expected to contribute to the marketing management and consumer behavior literature by examining the relationships between perceived price fairness, product quality, and purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers, and to provide a basis for comparison with future studies in other product categories or consumer groups.

Practical significance. The findings may help business owners and marketing practitioners evaluate whether their pricing is perceived as fair and whether their products meet consumer expectations, supporting decisions on pricing, quality control, product development, and marketing communication.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the processes through which individuals or groups select, purchase, use, and evaluate products and services to satisfy their needs and wants, involving psychological, social, cultural, and economic considerations (Solomon, 2020). Purchasing decisions generally involve recognizing a need, searching for information, evaluating alternatives, making a purchase, and evaluating the product afterward,

although consumers do not always follow these stages in a fixed order. For Generation Z, online reviews, product comparisons, and social media content can influence perceptions before a transaction, though this influence may differ by product category, preferences, and previous experience. Consumer behavior provides the broader framework for understanding how price fairness and product quality may be associated with purchase decisions.

2.2 Perceived Price Fairness

Perceived price fairness refers to consumers' judgments regarding whether a price is reasonable and justifiable in a particular transaction, influenced by comparisons with other sellers, previous prices, product quality, expected benefits, and business pricing practices. It should be distinguished from objective price, which is the monetary amount charged; two consumers may face the same price but judge its fairness differently because of different expectations, budgets, reference prices, or experiences.

Zeithaml (1988) discusses how consumers evaluate price in relation to perceived quality and perceived value, which explains why consumers do not necessarily choose the cheapest product but consider whether the benefits justify the amount paid. When consumers perceive a price as fair, they may be more willing to consider purchasing; when they perceive it as unfair, they may postpone the purchase or choose an alternative. Sherli et al. (2023) examined perceived price fairness in relation to skincare purchase decisions and reported a relationship involving brand image, although a relationship identified in a specific skincare context should not automatically be generalized to all Generation Z consumers or product categories. Perceived price fairness is therefore proposed as one of the factors associated with purchase decisions in this study.

2.3 Product Quality

Product quality refers to the extent to which a product meets consumer expectations and performs according to its intended purpose, and may include durability, reliability, performance, functionality, design, materials, and consistency. Quality evaluation can be based on direct experience or on indirect information such as reviews, recommendations, brand reputation, and product descriptions.

Product quality may also interact with price perceptions: consumers may accept a relatively high price when they believe the product offers superior quality, while a product may be perceived as poor value when its quality does not justify its price. The strength of

this relationship must be examined empirically rather than assumed. Sakinah and Firmansyah (2021) examined product quality and price in relation to purchasing decisions, with purchase intention as an intervening variable, and other studies have investigated product quality in cosmetics, skincare, smartphones, and footwear. In this study, product quality is treated as an independent variable that may be associated with Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.

2.4 Purchase Decisions

A purchase decision refers to a consumer's choice to buy a particular product after considering available alternatives, influenced by needs, preferences, financial resources, perceptions of price and quality, brand image, and information from other consumers or sellers. It should be distinguished from purchase intention, which reflects a willingness or plan to buy; the two concepts are not interchangeable. Purchase decisions can be measured through indicators reflecting product choice, preference, confidence in the decision, and the decision to proceed with a purchase, adapted from appropriate literature and tested for validity and reliability. In this study, purchase decisions are the dependent variable.

2.5 Generation Z as a Consumer Segment

Generation Z is commonly used to describe the generation that grew up with widespread digital technology and internet access, although the precise birth-year boundaries vary across publications; the study must therefore state the birth-year range or age criteria used to identify eligible respondents. Digital access allows them to obtain information from multiple sources and compare alternatives easily, which makes them a relevant population for examining evaluations of price and quality. Nevertheless, Generation Z should not be treated as homogeneous, since differences in income, lifestyle, purchasing experience, and product involvement may lead to different evaluations of the same product. The findings should be interpreted in relation to the selected respondents and product category.

2.6 Previous Research

Previous studies have examined the relationships between price, perceived price fairness, product quality, and consumer purchasing behavior. The following table summarizes eight relevant studies and identifies their contributions to the present research.

***The Effect of Perceived Price Fairness and Product Quality on
Generation Z Consumers' Purchase Decisions***

No.	Previous study	Research focus and method	Relevance to the present study
1	Sherli et al. (2023)	Perceived price fairness and skincare purchase decisions, including brand image.	Provides evidence concerning the relevance of perceived price fairness to purchase decisions.
2	Seno Putri and Djamaludin (2024)	Perceived price and product quality in relation to Generation Z consumers' satisfaction with MS Glow cosmetics.	Provides a Generation Z context, although the outcome is satisfaction rather than purchase decisions.
3	Aprelyani et al. (2024)	Literature review concerning price, product quality, purchase intention, and Something purchasing decisions among Generation Z consumers.	Offers a synthesis of factors discussed in the skincare and e-commerce context.
4	Senali et al. (2024)	Trust and purchase intention in social commerce, considering perceived price fairness and trust disposition.	Helps explain the role of price fairness in online consumer evaluations.
5	Safitri et al. (2026)	Digital promotion and product quality in relation to local skincare purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers in Lampung.	Provides a related Generation Z purchasing context and highlights product quality.
6	Stefanni and Damanik (2026)	Product quality, brand image, and iPhone purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers.	Shows the relevance of product quality in a technology-product context.
7	Yuliana et al. (2026)	Brand awareness, price, electronic word-of-mouth, product quality, and Bata footwear purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers.	Examines multiple factors associated with purchasing decisions in a Generation Z sample.
8	Jia (2026)	Differential pricing, perceived fairness, and purchase intentions in e-commerce.	Provides a discussion of price fairness in online purchasing contexts.

Source: Compiled from the studies listed in the references. Details of the research methods and findings should be checked against each original article before final submission.

The previous studies demonstrate that price perceptions and product quality have been investigated across different consumer groups and product categories, but their findings cannot be compared solely by the variables used; methods, sampling, measurement instruments, and dependent variables must also be considered. A study of consumer satisfaction does not provide the same evidence as one of purchase decisions, and purchase intention is not equivalent to an actual purchase decision. The contribution of the present study is the focused examination of perceived price fairness and product quality as independent variables and purchase decisions as the dependent variable within a clearly defined Generation Z sample and product context.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework proposes that perceived price fairness and product quality are associated with Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions. Independent variable (X1): Perceived Price Fairness; independent variable (X2): Product Quality; dependent variable (Y): Purchase Decisions. The proposed relationships are:
Perceived Price Fairness (X1) → Purchase Decisions (Y)
Product Quality (X2) → Purchase Decisions (Y)
Perceived Price Fairness (X1) + Product Quality (X2) → Purchase Decisions (Y)
The framework assumes that consumers evaluate the fairness of a product's price and its quality when selecting an alternative, and the relationships will be examined using quantitative data.

2.8 Hypotheses

- H1: Perceived price fairness has a positive and significant effect on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.
H2: Product quality has a positive and significant effect on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.
H3: Perceived price fairness and product quality simultaneously have a significant effect on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions.

These hypotheses are propositions to be tested. They should not be presented as confirmed findings before the statistical analysis is completed.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study proposes a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design, which is appropriate because the study seeks to measure relationships between variables using numerical data from respondents. The research examines perceived price fairness as X1, product quality as X2, and purchase decisions as Y, measured through questionnaire items developed from relevant theoretical concepts and previous studies.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population consists of Generation Z consumers who meet the study's eligibility criteria. The operational definition of Generation Z, the product category, and the research location must be specified before data collection. Respondents should belong to the

selected birth-year range and have experience purchasing the product investigated, so that they can provide relevant evaluations. If purposive sampling is used, the selection criteria must be explained, and the final sample size should be justified using an appropriate methodological basis rather than chosen arbitrarily.

Research details to be completed:

- Research location: [Insert location]
- Product category: [Insert product category]
- Generation Z age or birth-year criteria: [Insert criteria]
- Sampling technique: [Insert technique]
- Target sample size: [Insert number of respondents]
- Data collection period: [Insert period]

3.3 Data Collection

The primary data will be collected through a structured questionnaire containing statements designed to measure respondents' perceptions of price fairness, product quality, and purchase decisions. A Likert scale can be used, for example from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and the questionnaire should be reviewed before the main survey to ensure the statements are understandable and relevant. Secondary data will be obtained from relevant books and scientific journal articles to develop the theoretical framework and support the interpretation of the findings.

3.4 Research Variables and Operational Definitions

Variable	Operational definition	Potential measurement aspects
Perceived Price Fairness (X1)	Consumers' evaluation of whether a product's price is reasonable and justified.	Price reasonableness, price consistency, comparison with alternatives, and perceived value for money.
Product Quality (X2)	Consumers' evaluation of a product's ability to meet expectations and provide the intended benefits.	Performance, reliability, durability, product features, and consistency with expectations.
Purchase Decisions (Y)	Consumers' decisions to select and purchase a product.	Product choice, preference, confidence in the decision, and decision to purchase.

Note: The final questionnaire items must be supported by appropriate sources and adapted to the selected product category. The indicators above are proposed measurement aspects, not a validated measurement instrument.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics will summarize respondents' characteristics and responses, followed by instrument testing, including validity and reliability assessments. Before regression analysis, the relevant assumptions (linearity, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and residual normality) should be assessed. Multiple linear regression is proposed to examine the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, expressed as: $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$, where Y = purchase decisions; a = constant; b_1 = regression coefficient for perceived price fairness; X_1 = perceived price fairness; b_2 = regression coefficient for product quality; X_2 = product quality; and e = error term.

The t-test will examine the individual contribution of each independent variable, the F-test the joint contribution, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) the proportion of variation in purchase decisions explained by the model. The significance level will be established before the analysis, commonly at 0.05. Interpretation will consider coefficient direction, statistical significance, effect size where appropriate, and the limitations of the design; statistical significance alone should not be interpreted as proof of causality.

4. Results and Discussion

IMPORTANT: This section is a reporting template. Actual results cannot be presented until the questionnaire data have been collected and analyzed. No respondent characteristics, statistical values, or hypothesis-testing outcomes should be invented.

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Respondent characteristics will be presented to describe the sample, such as age, gender, occupation or student status, and purchasing experience, provided these variables are collected and relevant to the research objectives.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	[Insert category]	[Insert data]	[Insert data]
Gender	[Insert category]	[Insert data]	[Insert data]
Occupation	[Insert category]	[Insert data]	[Insert data]
Purchase experience	[Insert category]	[Insert data]	[Insert data]
Total	[N]		100%

Source: Primary data, processed by the researcher. The narrative should describe the actual composition of the respondents after the table has been completed, identifying the dominant categories without making unsupported claims.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Descriptive analysis will summarize responses to perceived price fairness, product quality, and purchase decisions using means, standard deviations, and other relevant statistics.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Perceived Price Fairness (X1)	[N]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]
Product Quality (X2)	[N]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]
Purchase Decisions (Y)	[N]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]

Source: Primary data, processed by the researcher. Labels such as low, moderate, or high must be based on a clearly stated classification procedure.

4.3 Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple linear regression will be conducted after the measurement instrument and relevant assumptions have been evaluated, indicating the direction and statistical significance of the relationships.

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Results

Predictor	Regression coefficient	t-statistic	p-value
Constant	[Insert value]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]
Perceived Price Fairness (X1)	[Insert value]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]
Product Quality (X2)	[Insert value]	[Insert value]	[Insert value]

Model statistics: F-statistic: [Insert value]; model significance: [Insert value]; R^2 : [Insert value]; adjusted R^2 : [Insert value]. Source: Primary data, processed by the researcher.

H1 will be interpreted from the coefficient of perceived price fairness and its significance: if positive and statistically significant under the predefined criterion, H1 is supported; otherwise it is not. The same procedure applies to H2 using the coefficient for product quality, and H3 will be evaluated using the overall model test. The researcher must report the actual values and distinguish between significant and non-significant findings.

4.4 Discussion of the Effect of Perceived Price Fairness on Purchase Decisions

The discussion of H1 will examine whether perceptions of price fairness are associated with purchase decisions. A positive and significant relationship may indicate that consumers are more inclined to purchase when prices are considered reasonable and justified by the benefits, and could be discussed in relation to Zeithaml (1988) and compared with Sherli et al. (2023). If H1 is not supported, the discussion should consider explanations grounded in the actual research context, such as greater importance placed on product quality, brand reputation, or convenience, presented as possibilities rather than confirmed causes unless the data provide evidence.

4.5 Discussion of the Effect of Product Quality on Purchase Decisions

The discussion of H2 will evaluate whether product quality is associated with purchasing decisions. A positive and significant relationship may indicate that consumers favor products they believe meet their expectations, and can be compared with Sakinah and Firmansyah (2021) and studies on Generation Z in specific product categories. The interpretation should consider the type of product, since quality may be evaluated differently for cosmetics, smartphones, footwear, or food. If H2 is not supported, this should not automatically be taken to mean that quality is unimportant, as the result may depend on the sample, instrument, variation in evaluations, or factors outside the model.

4.6 Discussion of the Simultaneous Effect of Perceived Price Fairness and Product Quality

The discussion of H3 will assess whether perceived price fairness and product quality jointly explain variation in purchase decisions. A significant F-test would indicate that the variables, considered together, are associated with the dependent variable within the specified model, while R^2 indicates the proportion of variation explained; the remainder may relate to other factors, measurement error, and individual differences. A significant joint effect does not necessarily mean both variables are individually significant, so the individual and overall tests must be interpreted separately. The final results should be compared with previous research, noting similarities, differences, and limitations, without claiming that the two variables are the only determinants of purchase decisions.

4.7 Proposed Visual Presentation of Results

A bar chart may be used to display the mean scores of perceived price fairness, product quality, and purchase decisions, created only after the descriptive statistics have been calculated.

Figure 1. Mean Scores of Research Variables

[Insert bar chart based on the actual mean scores of X1, X2, and Y.]

Source: Primary data, processed by the researcher.

The chart should use the same measurement scale for all variables and include a clear title, axis labels, and source. It should not be used to imply that one variable causes another. A separate chart of regression coefficients may be considered if it helps explain the final findings.

5. Conclusion

This study proposes a quantitative examination of the effects of perceived price fairness and product quality on Generation Z consumers' purchase decisions. Perceived price fairness concerns consumers' assessments of whether a price is reasonable and justified, while product quality concerns the extent to which a product meets expectations. The framework identifies three relationships to be tested: the individual effect of each variable and their simultaneous effect on purchase decisions. Previous studies provide a theoretical and empirical basis, although their findings must be interpreted according to their contexts, methods, and dependent variables.

The final conclusions regarding the hypotheses cannot be established until the questionnaire data have been collected and statistically analyzed. This article should therefore be treated as a research manuscript draft rather than a completed empirical report. Once the analysis is complete, the conclusion should summarize the actual findings, explain their theoretical and practical implications, and state whether each hypothesis is supported.

6. Limitations and Recommendations

This study has several anticipated limitations. First, the findings will depend on the selected product category, research location, sampling procedure, and respondent characteristics, and may not be generalizable to all Generation Z consumers. Second, the study focuses on perceived price fairness and product quality, while other factors such as

brand image, promotion, electronic word-of-mouth, trust, and purchasing power may also be relevant but are not included in the model. Third, questionnaire responses may be influenced by respondents' understanding of the questions, recall, and willingness to answer accurately, so the instrument should be clear and data collection should follow ethical practices. Future research could examine additional variables, compare product categories, or investigate whether the relationships differ across consumer groups, and may consider alternative analytical approaches when justified by the research questions and measurement model.

References

- Aprelyani, S., Ali, H., & Hadita. (2024). Pengaruh harga, kualitas produk dan minat beli produk skincare Somethinc terhadap keputusan pembelian di e-commerce Shopee pada Generasi Z. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Pemasaran Digital*, 2(3), 163–173. <https://doi.org/10.38035/jmpd.v2i3.177>
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., Danks, N. P., & Ray, S. (2021). *Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using R: A workbook*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-80519-7>
- Jia, Y. (2026). Differential pricing, perceived price fairness, and purchase intentions in e-commerce. *Advances in Economics, Management and Political Sciences*, 252, 196–204. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2754-1169/2026.LD31362>
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson.
- Safitri, A. D., Oktarina, D., & Umpu Singa, H. A. (2026). [Article on digital promotion, product quality, and Generation Z consumers' purchasing decisions for local skincare products in Lampung]. *Jurnal Ilmiah Feasible*, 8(1), 153–167. <https://doi.org/10.32493/fb.v8i1.2026.153-167.60187>
- Sakinah, & Firmansyah. (2021). [Study on product quality and price in relation to purchase decisions, with purchase intention as an intervening variable]. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen dan Bisnis*, 22(2). <https://doi.org/10.30596/jimb.v22i2.7100>
- Senali, M. G., et al. (2024). [Study on trust and purchase intention in social commerce, including perceived price fairness and trust disposition]. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.elerap.2024.101370>
- Seno Putri, N. D. A., & Djamaludin, M. D. (2024). The effect of perceived price and quality on consumer satisfaction of MS Glow cosmetic products in Generation Z. *Journal of Child, Family, and Consumer Studies*, 3(1), 45–54. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jcfcs.3.1.45-54>
- Sherli, S. B., Yuliati, L. N., & Hasanah, N. (2023). Pengaruh beauty influencer dan perceived price fairness terhadap keputusan pembelian produk skincare. *Jurnal Aplikasi Bisnis dan Manajemen*, 9(1), 305. <https://doi.org/10.17358/jabm.9.1.30522>
- Solomon, M. R. (2020). *Consumer behavior: Buying, having, and being* (13th ed.). Pearson.
- Stefanni, & Damanik. (2026). [Study on product quality, brand image, and iPhone purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers]. *Jurnal Minfo Polgan*, 15(1), 289–301. <https://doi.org/10.33395/jmp.v15i1.15935>

- Tjiptono, F., & Chandra, G. (2020). *Pemasaran strategik: Domain, determinan, dinamika* (4th ed.). Andi.
- Yuliana, et al. (2026). [Study on brand awareness, price, electronic word-of-mouth, product quality, and Bata footwear purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers]. *JIIIP—Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 9(5), 5407–5418. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v9i5.11512>
- Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224298805200302>