

# Analysis Of Generation Z’s Discontinuance From Facebook: A Theory Of Planned Behavior Perspective

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## Keywords

Discontinuance;  
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## Abstract

*Facebook has experienced a shift in usage among Generation Z. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study aims to explain how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence Generation Z's discontinuance of Facebook use. Data were collected through structured interviews with 15 undergraduate students at Universitas Syiah Kuala who had previously used Facebook actively. The findings reveal that attitudes toward Facebook and subjective norms are the primary factors driving informants to leave the platform. Negative attitudes emerge from concerns over the widespread circulation of hoaxes and the perception that Facebook is dominated by older users with lower levels of media literacy. Subjective norms further reinforce this discontinuance, as peer migration to alternative social media platforms shapes individual decisions. While perceived behavioral control plays a less dominant role, it still contributes to discontinuance, particularly among users who feel limited in navigating Facebook's features and verifying information accuracy. These results highlight important implications for understanding the evolving dynamics of social media use and suggest that changing social environments and peer influence significantly shape platform abandonment among younger audiences. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that discontinuance of Facebook use is primarily socially and attitudinally driven rather than technologically constrained.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of the internet has progressed very rapidly, including in Indonesia. Internet penetration in Indonesia has increased at a relatively faster rate compared to many other countries. According to data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII, 2024), the number of internet users in Indonesia in 2024 reached 221,563,479 people, or 79.5% of the total population. This large number of internet users

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places Indonesia as the fourth-largest internet user country in the world as of January 2023 (Statista, 2024). By occupying the fourth position globally, Indonesia demonstrates significant market potential for social media platforms.

Among various internet sites, social media platforms are the most popular among internet users. APJII (2024) reports that accessing social media is the primary reason for internet use in Indonesia. The report further notes that Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram are the most popular social media platforms in Indonesia (APJII, 2024). When compared with APJII data from 2023, a shift in the ranking of the most frequently accessed social media platforms can be observed. In 2023, the most popular platforms were YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. This indicates that Indonesian internet users' preferences for social media platforms continue to change over time. These shifts reflect the dynamic nature of users' needs and interests in using social media.

Meanwhile, according to APJII (2024), internet penetration by age group shows that the highest penetration is among those aged 12–27 years (Generation Z), at 34.40%, followed by those aged 28–43 years (Millennials) at 30.62%, those aged 44–59 years (Generation X) at 18.98%, those aged 60–78 years (Baby Boomers) at 6.58%, and those over 79 years old (Pre-Boomers) at 0.24%. These figures indicate that focusing on younger generations is crucial, as the 12–27 age group, which includes Generation Z, has the highest level of internet penetration.

Generation Z is the first generation to grow up with digital technology and the internet as an integral part of their daily lives from an early age (Nurrahmi et al., 2025). As a result, they are known as digital natives who are highly accustomed to digital devices and social media use. According to Tulgan (2013), Generation Z is a generation that socializes through media; they may appear less comfortable in the real world but are very active in social interactions on social media. Social media serves as a bridge that connects members of Generation Z with one another.

When compared across generations, Facebook ranks as the most frequently used platform among all generations except Generation Z. A majority (51.9%) of Indonesian Generation Z users most frequently access Instagram (APJII, 2024). In contrast, among Millennials, Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Pre-Boomers, Facebook remains the most frequently accessed platform (APJII, 2024). The dominance of Instagram among Generation Z reflects their preference for visually oriented platforms with more dynamic interaction. This trend indicates that social media preferences among younger users, particularly

Generation Z, continue to evolve. Based on these dynamics, it is important to understand the factors that drive Generation Z to move away from Facebook.

Numerous studies have examined factors influencing social media use. Alhabash and Ma (2017) analyzed usage intensity, time spent, and motivations across major platforms using the Uses and Gratifications Theory and found that Instagram and Snapchat showed the highest usage intensity. Similarly, Whiting and Williams (2013) identified various gratifications derived from social media use, such as social interaction, information seeking, entertainment, and information sharing. Phua et al. (2017) further applied the Uses and Gratifications Theory to brand-related social media use, showing that platform differences influence user engagement and community involvement. In contrast, Kusyanti et al. (2018), using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), found that perceived usefulness significantly influenced Indonesian adolescents' social media use, while trustworthiness did not have a significant effect.

The fundamental difference between previous studies and this research lies in the focus on social media discontinuance. While earlier studies primarily examined the factors influencing the adoption and continued use of social media platforms, this study specifically investigates the reasons behind Generation Z's decision to discontinue using Facebook. By positioning Facebook as the object of analysis within a discontinuance framework, this research offers a new perspective on the psychological and social factors that motivate Generation Z to abandon an established social media platform.

Another difference lies in the theoretical framework used. Previous studies by Alhabash and Ma (2017), Whiting and Williams (2013), and Phua et al. (2017) employed the Uses and Gratifications Theory, while Kusyanti et al. (2018) applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). These frameworks primarily focus on adoption, continued use, and platform preference, emphasizing motivations, perceived usefulness, and gratifications derived from social media use. In contrast, this study shifts the analytical focus from adoption to social media discontinuance, specifically examining Generation Z's actual discontinuance of Facebook use.

To address this gap, the present study applies the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to understand the psychological and social factors underlying actual discontinuance, rather than intention alone. TPB enables a structured explanation by integrating attitudes toward Facebook, subjective norms (such as peer influence and social expectations), and perceived behavioral control related to stopping use. In particular, the inclusion of subjective norms

allows this study to explain how social pressure within Generation Z's peer networks contributes to the decision to discontinue Facebook, a dimension that is not adequately addressed in prior adoption-oriented research.

By explicitly defining actual discontinuance as the focal outcome, this study moves beyond descriptive accounts of platform switching and contributes a theory-driven explanation of social media discontinuance behavior among Generation Z. This approach offers a clearer conceptual boundary and a more robust framework for understanding disengagement from established social media platforms in a rapidly changing digital environment.

Therefore, this study aims to examine how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence Generation Z's discontinuance of Facebook use. The findings are expected to provide in-depth insights into the digital behavior of Generation Z in Indonesia and offer guidance for social media platforms in adapting their features to better meet the needs of Generation Z users.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***The theory of planned behaviour***

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action developed by Ajzen in 1985. The Theory of Reasoned Action, introduced by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the late 1960s, explains the primary factors influencing an individual's behavior (Douglass & Ajzen, 1975). This theory is based on the idea that people make rational decisions using available information while considering the potential outcomes of their actions. It posits that behavioral intention, which is a predictor of behavior, is influenced by two main factors: attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms.

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, the combination of attitudes and subjective norms encourages the emergence of intention, motivation, or willingness to engage in a behavior. When both attitudes toward the behavior and subjective norms are positive, individuals are more likely to develop a strong intention to perform the behavior (behavioral intention) (Ajzen, 2012a). This behavioral intention is then assumed to lead to actual behavior.

The Theory of Reasoned Action is particularly useful for understanding and predicting behaviors under voluntary control and has been widely applied in areas such as health behavior, marketing, and information technology adoption. However, the theory

assumes that individuals act rationally and have full control over their actions, which led to the development of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Unlike the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Planned Behavior explains behaviors that may not be entirely under an individual's control (Ajzen, 1991, 2005) as can be seen in figure 1. Therefore, it introduces an additional factor: perceived behavioral control.

Theory of Planned Behavior includes three main factors that influence an individual's intention to act:

1. Attitude refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing a particular behavior. Attitudes are shaped by beliefs about the outcomes of the behavior and whether these outcomes are perceived as favorable or unfavorable.
2. Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behavior. Subjective norms are influenced by individuals' perceptions of what important others (such as family, friends, or colleagues) think about the behavior and by their motivation to comply with these social expectations.
3. Perceived behavioral control refers to the extent to which individuals feel capable of performing the behavior. This factor relates to the availability of resources and opportunities, as well as individuals' beliefs about their ability to carry out the behavior.

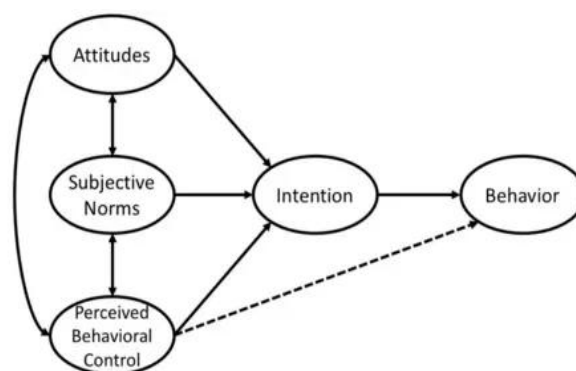


Figure 1. The Theory of *Planned Behavior* (Ajzen, 2005)

The beliefs underlying attitudes are referred to as behavioral beliefs. The beliefs underlying subjective norms are known as normative beliefs. Beliefs reflecting an

individual's perceived control over performing a desired behavior are referred to as control beliefs (Ajzen, 2012b).

Perceived behavioral control reflects how strongly an individual's effort to perform a desired behavior (Bt), combined with their level of control (C), determines the likelihood of actual behavior. Control beliefs are influenced by perceived ease derived from external resources (e.g., money and time) and internal resources (e.g., self-efficacy and ability) (Jusoh & Ishak, 2018). Perceived ease indicates how individuals assess the significance of each control belief and the extent to which perceived behavioral control, together with intention, can be used to predict behavior (Ajzen, 2012b).

While TPB originates from social psychology, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been widely applied across various fields, including health (Sin & Rochelle, 2022), marketing (Rukhsar. et al., 2024), and technology adoption (Duong, 2024). In the context of technology use, the theory is frequently employed to explain individuals' intentions to adopt or discontinue the use of new technologies (Cho & Jeon, 2023; Huang, 2023). In today's digital era, TPB is also considered highly relevant for understanding social media preferences (Shahzalal & Adnan, 2022), as media choices are shaped by social pressures, platform affordances, and perceived barriers to use.

In this study, Facebook is conceptualized as a form of new media whose consumption is embedded in social meanings, peer influence, and perceived platform affordances. At the mass communication level, social media use represents a patterned audience practice rather than a purely individual decision, influenced by shared evaluations of media credibility, collective platform migration, and normative expectations within peer networks. To explain this phenomenon, the study employs TPB as an analytical framework for understanding how media consumption decisions are formed and sustained.

Within this framework, attitude toward the behavior reflects users' evaluations of Facebook as a media platform, including perceptions of content quality, credibility, and relevance. Subjective norms capture social influences at the mass communication level, such as peer migration to alternative platforms and shared expectations regarding appropriate social media use. Perceived behavioral control represents users' assessments of platform accessibility, usability, and their ability to manage information exposure. Together, these constructs provide a coherent theoretical explanation for Generation Z's decisions to disengage from specific social media platforms.

*Social media discontinuance and switching among Generation Z*

Recent studies have increasingly recognized social media discontinuance as a distinct behavioral outcome, different from adoption, continued use, or platform preference. Farooq et al. (2023) defines social media discontinuance as the reduction or complete cessation of platform use and shows that discontinuance is commonly driven by factors such as dissatisfaction, fatigue, privacy concerns, and changing social environments. This shift in focus reflects growing awareness that users, particularly younger users, do not merely adopt platforms but also actively abandon them.

Among youth and Generation Z, discontinuance and switching behavior is often associated with negative evaluations of the platform, including boredom, perceived irrelevance, excessive advertising, and information overload. Nawaz et al. (2018) demonstrates that information overload and social overload can lead to exhaustion, which in turn motivates users to disengage from social networking sites altogether. Similarly, Bravo and Cuentas-Romero (2025) found that dissatisfaction and the perceived attractiveness of alternative platforms play a central role in users' decisions to stop using Facebook.

These antecedents can be systematically explained using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). First, negative experiences such as fatigue, dissatisfaction, and perceived irrelevance reflect attitudes, where users evaluate continued platform use unfavorably. When attitudes toward Facebook become predominantly negative, discontinuance becomes a more likely behavioral outcome (Farooq et al., 2023).

Second, subjective norms are particularly influential among Generation Z, whose digital behavior is strongly shaped by peer networks. As peer groups migrate to newer platforms, continued use of Facebook may no longer align with prevailing social expectations. Farooq et al. (2026) further show that negative word of mouth (WOM) plays a significant role in social media discontinuance, supporting the relevance of subjective norms in explaining why users stop using established platforms.

Third, perceived behavioral control relates to users' perceived ability to discontinue platform use. Factors such as the ease of account deactivation, reduced dependence on Facebook for communication, and the availability of alternative platforms enhance users' sense of control over stopping use. When users perceive fewer barriers to leaving a platform, actual discontinuance becomes more (Farooq et al., 2023).

Although prior studies have identified these antecedents, they are often examined descriptively or through fragmented theoretical lenses. Vaghefi et al. (2025) argue that

research on social media discontinuance requires more integrated behavioral frameworks, as existing studies rely on diverse theories and constructs that make it difficult to identify common explanatory factors. Through an empirical comparison of eight prominent theories and a synthesized model validated with survey data from 344 users, their study demonstrates that the Theory of Planned Behavior provides a coherent and effective framework for explaining social media discontinuance by integrating key psychological and social antecedents. Therefore, the present study applies TPB to examine actual Facebook discontinuance among Generation Z users who have already stopped using the platform.

## **METHODS**

This study adopts an interpretive paradigm and employs a qualitative explanatory research approach. Although the Theory of Planned Behavior originates from a positivistic tradition, it is applied in this research as a conceptual and analytical lens rather than a predictive model. The theory is used to explore how attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are articulated in participants' narratives and how these factors shape intentions and influence disengagement from Facebook as a social media platform.

The research was conducted among undergraduate students at Syiah Kuala University. Undergraduate students aged 18–24 fall within the Generation Z cohort and constitute the subjects of this study. The selection of Syiah Kuala University students is based on previous studies indicating that they are active social media users (Nurrahmi & Syam, 2020). In addition, Universitas Syiah Kuala is the largest university in Aceh, providing a relevant bounded case with limited transferability for examining Generation Z's social media behavior within an academic context.

Data were collected through structured open-ended interviews using a predetermined interview guide to ensure consistency and comparability across (Sugiyono, 2010). Although the sequence and wording of questions remained fixed, all questions were open-ended, allowing informants to elaborate on their experiences, perceptions, and reasoning. This design was intended to balance analytical rigor with the depth characteristic of qualitative inquiry.

The interviews involved 15 purposively selected undergraduate students at Syiah Kuala University, consisting of 8 male and 7 female students. The number of informants was determined based on data saturation, as no new themes or relevant insights emerged in the

later interviews. Informants were selected based on specific criteria: being undergraduate students, having more than two social media accounts, being active social media users, and having prior experience as active Facebook users.

Interviews were conducted online via WhatsApp to accommodate participants' accessibility and communication preferences. To enhance transparency and traceability during data analysis, each informant was assigned an anonymized identification code, consisting of a numerical label followed by "A" for male and "B" for female participants.

The data obtained from the structured interviews were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis model proposed by Huberman et al. (2014), which consists of three main stages. First, data collection, where data were gathered from respondents to capture their perspectives and experiences related to attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in social media use. Second, data condensation, in which the collected information was summarized, simplified, and focused on aspects relevant to the research objectives. Data concerning respondents' perceptions of social norms and perceived control in selecting specific social media platforms were categorized to identify emerging patterns. Finally, data display, where the refined data were presented systematically to enable further analysis. At this stage, tables or diagrams may be used to illustrate factors influencing intentions and behaviors related to social media adoption, allowing for a deeper analysis of the psychological and social factors involved.

The validity of the data was ensured through data triangulation by comparing information obtained from one informant with that from others (Morgan, 2024). A high level of consistency across informants indicates that the data are valid and reliable for the research findings. This triangulation technique ensures that the data accurately reflect the collective understanding and experiences of the informants, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study's results.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Attitudes toward Facebook***

All informants stated that they had previously used Facebook but have now stopped using it. They expressed negative attitudes toward the platform, primarily due to the widespread circulation of hoaxes.

One informant, B1, stated:

*“I used Facebook around 2015, in the sense that I actively posted statuses and used its Messenger chat feature. However, I stopped using it around 2018 and have not been active since then. The application is still installed, but I no longer use it. This is because there is a lot of false information circulating on Facebook.”* (B1, interview, August 2, 2024)

Their distrust of information on Facebook has shaped a negative attitude toward using the platform as a source of information. With the perception that Facebook often serves as a source of hoaxes or inaccurate information, their attitudes toward Facebook as an information medium tend to be negative. This became one of the main reasons they stopped using the platform.

Informant A4 added that the spread of hoax content on Facebook is related to the low level of social media literacy among its users. He stated:

*“In my opinion, negative news or hoaxes are more common on Facebook. Why Facebook? Because I think the standard of social media literacy is lower there. Even though Facebook has many users, the level of literacy is relatively low. Many users—children and mothers, for example—lack media literacy in terms of sharing content, which eventually leads to the spread of hoaxes. From Facebook, the information is then shared to WhatsApp and becomes a chain for the spread of hoax information.”* (A4, interview, August 2, 2024)

This indicates that perceptions of users’ media literacy contribute to negative attitudes toward Facebook.

In addition, informants’ negative attitudes toward Facebook were influenced by the perception that the majority of its users are older than them. As a result, they felt that Facebook content was not relevant to them as members of Generation Z. The dominance of users from older age groups gives Facebook an outdated image.

One informant commented:

*“I used Facebook before, but over time I decided to stop using it because it felt ‘old-fashioned’ and no longer relevant to my current needs. In addition, the content often seemed absurd and filled with interactions that did not suit my style, especially from older generations, such as many middle-aged men who are active there.”* (A1, interview, August 2, 2024)

This assessment reflects a sense of mismatch between Facebook content and the preferences and lifestyles of younger generations.

Informant A6 expressed that Facebook is filled with “*alay* teenagers,” reflecting a social stigma that has developed among younger users:

*“Personally, I don’t really use Facebook anymore because I rarely use it now, and there are a lot of ‘alay’ kids on Facebook.”* (A6, interview, August 2, 2024)

Finally, informants A2 and B3 mentioned that their negative attitudes toward Facebook were influenced by its less appealing features. These negative attitudes were formed because users felt that Facebook did not offer meaningful feature updates and that its content was monotonous and boring. Because the platform was perceived as failing to meet their expectations, these negative attitudes ultimately led them to stop using Facebook.

*“The reason I no longer use Facebook is that from year to year there are no significant changes. The features remain the same, and the content is boring.”* (A2, interview, August 2, 2024)

Overall, the dominant negative attitudes toward Facebook among the informants led them to discontinue using the platform. Dissatisfaction with the quality of information, lack of content relevance, social stigma, and unappealing features all contributed to their decision to seek alternative social media platforms that better align with their needs and preferences.

### ***Subjective norms***

Informant B7 stated that they stopped using Facebook because their friends were no longer active on the platform.

*“With Facebook, maybe the era has already passed. I used it a lot back in junior and senior high school. Now I feel lazy to use Facebook because I no longer recognize the people there—both those I follow and those who follow me.”* (B7, interview, August 2, 2024)

A similar view was expressed by Informant B5, who also no longer uses Facebook because their friends have moved to other platforms.

*“I no longer use Facebook because my friends are no longer active on it.”* (B5, interview, August 2, 2024)

In addition, Informant B3 noted that their friends’ negative perceptions of Facebook influenced their own decision to stop using the platform.

*“Some people even say, ‘Does anyone still use Facebook these days?’ That impression is also what made me stop being active on Facebook.”* (B3, interview, August 2, 2024)

When social norms or the surrounding social environment hold negative views of Facebook, this can strengthen an individual's decision to leave the platform or switch to another social media service. Such social norms play an important role in shaping a person's *subjective norms* toward social media use.

Another example comes from Informant A8, who was initially active on Facebook because many people used it. However, when the trend shifted to Instagram, they followed the social current in order to gain more followers.

*"I use certain features because that's where the followers are. In the past, it was Facebook—why? Because many people used Facebook and many became well-known there. Now I've moved to Instagram because that's where the followers are."*  
(A8, interview, August 2, 2024)

Overall, social norms play a significant role in determining whether individuals remain active on or discontinue the use of a particular social media platform. When the majority of friends or social groups move to other platforms or hold negative views toward platforms such as Facebook, this social pressure encourages users to follow the same shift.

### ***Perceived behavioral control***

Informant B4 stated that they only mastered a few Facebook features because they rarely used the platform. They felt limited in their ability to utilize the available features, which stemmed from a lack of experience or insufficient knowledge of how to use the features effectively. This inactivity contributed to the perception that they did not have sufficient control to interact actively on Facebook.

*"Personally, there are only a few Facebook features that I can use because I rarely use Facebook."* (B4, interview, August 2, 2024)

Informant A3 also expressed difficulty in distinguishing accurate information on Facebook, reflecting low confidence in their ability to verify information. In other words, their self-efficacy in assessing whether information is a hoax or not was relatively low. Uncertainty about the accuracy of circulating information, as expressed by A3, indicates that many users no longer trust the reliability of content on Facebook.

*"Yes, that's the current situation, sir. We no longer know what is true and what is false, so information conveyed through social media—such as content circulating on Facebook—on average, we don't know whether it is actually true or not."* (A3, interview, August 2, 2024)

This situation made them increasingly reluctant to use Facebook as a source of information.

Low proficiency in using platform features and difficulty in verifying information on Facebook contributed to the perception that users lacked adequate control over the platform. This perception further reinforced several informants' decisions to discontinue using Facebook.

### ***Integrating the theory of planned behavior in understanding Facebook discontinuance***

This study shows that the informants initially used Facebook. This finding is consistent with Nurrahmi (2018), who reported a high level of Facebook dependency among students at Syiah Kuala University at that time. However, the results of this study also reveal that the majority of informants have now stopped using Facebook. This shift in Facebook usage trends aligns with survey data from (APJII, 2024), which indicates that Facebook is currently the second most frequently used social media platform among Generation Z, after Instagram. When analyzed through the adoption stages proposed by Rogers (2003), Facebook can initially be categorized as being in a stage of continued adoption, but later transitions into discontinuance.

The findings indicate that all three core factors of the Theory of Planned Behavior—attitudes toward Facebook, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—play a role in influencing informants' decisions to stop using the platform. First, regarding attitudes toward Facebook, all informants expressed negative attitudes, primarily due to the widespread circulation of hoax content. This finding is consistent with Lubis (2020), who reported a high prevalence of hoax content on Facebook.

Some informants also held negative attitudes because they perceived Facebook as an “outdated” platform that no longer aligns with their needs and preferences. They viewed Facebook content as unappealing, monotonous, and dominated by information from older generations. This result supports the findings of Ilhami and Sudradjat (2024), who emphasized the importance of content quality in shaping user satisfaction. In addition, several informants felt that Facebook's features lacked innovation, which aligns with Maulana et al. (2021), who found that social media features contribute positively to user satisfaction. As a result, Generation Z increasingly perceives Facebook as lacking relevance and benefits, thereby reducing their motivation to remain active users. According to Ajzen

(2005), users' attitudes toward a behavior strongly influence their intention to continue or discontinue that behavior.

Subjective norms within Generation Z's social environment also play a significant role in their decision to leave Facebook. Many informants reported discontinuing Facebook use because most of their peers had already migrated to other platforms. When peers are more active on alternative platforms, individuals tend to follow these trends to maintain social connections. This finding is consistent with Falgoust et al. (2022), who identified communication and social interaction as primary motivations for social media use.

Furthermore, as peers leave Facebook, the platform becomes increasingly dominated by older generations. This situation reduces opportunities for peer interaction among Generation Z and reinforces their disengagement. Some informants also suggested that fear of missing out (FoMO) contributes to discontinuance, as they prefer to remain connected where their peers are most active. Perdana et al. (2024) explain that FOMO is closely linked to the desire to stay socially connected through media platforms.

In addition, negative perceptions of Facebook within informants' social circles create normative pressure to abandon the platform. This finding aligns with prior research showing that subjective norms play a significant role in shaping individual decision-making related to social media discontinuance (Farooq et al., 2026).

This study finds that negative attitudes toward Facebook and subjective norms are the two primary factors driving most informants to discontinue use. These findings support the assumptions of the Theory of Reasoned Action, which posits that behavior is shaped by the interaction between individual attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen, 2012a). In this case, both factors exert a negative influence, encouraging users to stop using Facebook.

Finally, although less prominent, perceived behavioral control was identified among several informants. Users who experienced difficulties in using Facebook's features felt that they lacked full control over their platform experience, which reinforced their decision to leave Facebook. When informants perceived limited control over their social media use, they were more likely to abandon the platform (Adhikari & Panda, 2020).

Perceived behavioral control also influenced decisions when informants struggled to verify the accuracy of information on Facebook. This difficulty reduced their willingness to use Facebook as an information source. Ajzen (2005) emphasizes that perceived behavioral control can significantly affect both intention and behavior. However, in this study, perceived behavioral control was evident only among some informants. This may be because

most informants had already decided to stop using Facebook, making control factors less central to their decision-making process.

For a smaller group of informants who continued to use Facebook with reduced intensity, perceived behavioral control served as an additional factor that eventually led to complete discontinuance. These limitations were often associated with low self-efficacy in using Facebook features and verifying information accuracy. Jusoh and Ishak (2018) highlight self-efficacy as a key internal factor influencing behavioral control. Low self-efficacy, particularly in identifying hoax content, reduces perceived control and ultimately contributes to the decision to stop using Facebook.

By integrating attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, the analysis demonstrates that negative user experiences influence decisions to discontinue Facebook use and encourage migration to alternative platforms that better meet users' needs. These findings support the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the primary determinants of behavioral intention and action (Ajzen, 2005).

Moreover, the role of perceived behavioral control highlighted in this study strengthens the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior over the Theory of Reasoned Action in explaining Generation Z's decision to leave Facebook. Consequently, discontinuing Facebook use can be understood as a behavior that is not entirely under individual control, as it is shaped by social pressure, perceived ability, and contextual constraints (Ajzen, 2012b).

### ***Implications***

The findings of this study demonstrate that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) can be effectively applied to explain socially patterned media disengagement at the mass communication level. Attitudes toward Facebook and subjective norms emerged as the most influential factors shaping Generation Z's decision to leave the platform, highlighting the importance of collective evaluations of media credibility, peer influence, and generational identity. This supports the use of TPB as an interpretive analytical framework in communication research rather than solely as a predictive individual-level model.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that retaining younger users requires more than technical improvements. Social media platforms, particularly Facebook, need to address negative perceptions related to misinformation, content relevance, and platform

image. The strong role of peer influence indicates that engagement strategies should consider collective user dynamics and evolving social norms within Generation Z communities.

Future research is encouraged to explore how new features on alternative platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok, attract younger users and how these features shape Generation Z's attitudes toward Facebook. Comparative studies examining multiple major social media platforms among Generation Z would provide a deeper understanding of the broader dynamics of social media use within this generation.

## CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Generation Z's attitudes toward Facebook, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control contribute to their decision to stop using Facebook. Among these three factors, attitudes toward Facebook and subjective norms play the most significant roles in shaping informants' decisions to leave the platform. Informants expressed strongly negative attitudes toward Facebook, perceiving it as a platform where misinformation and hoaxes are widely circulated. In addition, the dominance of users from generations preceding Generation Z—who are perceived to have lower levels of media literacy—has further reinforced these negative attitudes. Some informants also noted that their unfavorable views were strengthened by the abundance of content considered irrelevant to Generation Z's preferences, as well as features perceived as unattractive.

Moreover, the social environment, particularly the migration of peers to alternative social media platforms, plays a crucial role in reinforcing the decision to abandon Facebook. Social environments that hold predominantly negative views of Facebook create social pressure that encourages some informants to disengage from the platform. The combination of these attitudinal and normative factors has driven informants to leave Facebook and transition to other social media platforms. Perceived behavioral control was also acknowledged by a smaller number of informants as a reinforcing factor in their decision to discontinue using Facebook. Limited skills in utilizing Facebook's features and difficulties in verifying information further strengthened their complete discontinuance of Facebook use.

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