# Impact of Social Media on Investment Decisions Among Genz in Pune City

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**Abstract- The rapid growth of digital social media has greatly impacted the daily lives of Generation Z. For example, social media sites such as Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn are no longer just channels of communication and entertainment. Rather, they are channels where lifestyles, successes, and financial achievements are displayed. Although social media sites offer opportunities for learning and networking, they may also create a sense of comparison, pressure, and financial insecurity. This study aims to examine the correlation between the influence of digital social media and financial anxiety among Generation Z. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the increased exposure to curated content has a significant effect on the perception of the financial status and the future of the members of the Gen Z generation. By examining patterns, screen time, content consumption, and anxiety levels, this study aims to establish the relationship between exposure and financial status. This study aims to provide valuable information that can be used for the growing discourse on the mental, financial, and social media literacy of the members of the Gen Z generation.**

**Keywords: Generation Z, Financial Anxiety, Social Media Influence, Social Comparison Theory, Financial Well-Being, Financial Literacy.**

## I.INTRODUCTION

Generation Z refers to people born between the mid-1990s to early 2010s. Generation Z is the first to be born completely in the digital age (Dimock, 2019). Unlike previous generations, Generation Z has the advantage of being exposed to social media sites where they can access information regarding their careers, investments, entrepreneurship, wealth, and financial success. Social media sites, such as Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn, often show the perfect image of success and wealth. These images may have a significant impact on the financial perceptions of the youth (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Financial issues are increasingly affecting young people. Issues such as increasing education costs, job market concerns, inflation rates, and economic insecurities have created financial pressures for young people (Lusardi, Mitchell, & Curto, 2014). When real-life financial issues are combined with exposure to successful images on the Internet, people often feel anxious and concerned about their financial well-being (Donnelly & Kuss, 2016). Moreover, social comparison theory states that a person compares themselves with others to measure progress and success (Festinger, 1954). Comparing oneself with others on the Internet may not be realistic because the Internet usually shows an idealized view of success and lifestyle (Chou & Edge, 2012). Therefore, the success-oriented content they see on the Internet could greatly impact their financial self-confidence and overall well-being.

This study aimed to determine whether there is a significant correlation between digital social media influence and financial anxiety. Moreover, it aimed to investigate the patterns of social media usage and the levels of financial anxiety among Generation Z. By exploring the relationship between digital social media influence and financial anxiety, this study aimed to shed light on the effects of digital social media influence on the financial well-being of individuals. Moreover, the findings of this study could enhance financial literacy, appropriate social media usage, and financial anxiety among Generation Z.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

The emergence of social media has fundamentally transformed the ways Generation Z perceives, discusses, and engages in financial matters. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn have evolved beyond mere entertainment and communication tools and have become significant channels for the dissemination of financial information, lifestyle aspirations, and success narratives. Generation Z, defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s, is the first generation to have grown entirely within the digital ecosystem, making them particularly susceptible to the financial messages and lifestyle portrayals prevalent on these platforms (Dimock, 2019).

The constant exposure to curated content showcasing wealth, luxury lifestyles, and rapid financial success has created an environment in which young people may feel increasing pressure to achieve similar outcomes. Financial anxiety, defined as a state of worry and apprehension about one's current or future financial situation, has become a growing concern among young adults. Research indicates that economic challenges, such as rising educational costs, unemployment, inflation, and housing unaffordability, disproportionately affect younger generations, thereby amplifying their financial stress (Lusardi, Mitchell, & Curto, 2014).

In India, this phenomenon is particularly significant given the rapid expansion of Internet access and smartphone penetration, which has dramatically increased social media usage among young people. The widespread influence of financial influencers, or "fin- influencers," on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram has introduced a new dynamic in which investment advice, wealth creation strategies, and financial success stories are consumed by millions of young users daily. This background provides the foundation for understanding the relationship between digital social media influence and financial anxiety among Generation Z.

1.3 Need For the Study

The present study addresses the growing intersection of digital media consumption and financial well-being among young adults in India. While several studies have examined the broader relationship between social media and mental health, there remains a significant gap in research that specifically focuses on financial anxiety as an outcome of social media influence among Generation Z. The rapid rise of financial content on social media platforms and the proliferation of fin-influencers have created an environment where young people are constantly exposed to financial success stories, investment tips, and lifestyle comparisons that may not reflect their real-world financial circumstances.

Furthermore, the current economic climate, characterized by rising inflation, increasing educational debt, and competitive job markets, has heightened the financial vulnerabilities of Generation Z. When combined with the relentless portrayal of wealth and success on social media, the potential for financial anxiety is a serious concern. There is a pressing need to empirically investigate this relationship so that effective interventions, policies, and educational initiatives can be designed to support the financial and psychological well-being of young adults.

This study is especially relevant in the Indian context, where social media usage among youth has grown exponentially and financial literacy remains uneven. Understanding whether and how digital social media content fuels financial anxiety can help educators, policymakers, financial institutions, and mental health professionals develop targeted and culturally relevant strategies to support Generation Z in navigating the complex financial landscape of the digital age.

1.4 Significance of the study

1. The present study has considerable significance from both academic and practical perspectives. Academically, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on the psychological effects of social media by focusing specifically on financial anxiety, an understudied dimension of digital media's influence on youth. By examining the relationship between social media consumption and financial anxiety among Generation Z, this study advances the understanding of how digital environments shape the financial perceptions and emotional well-being of young adults.

2. From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study are significant for several stakeholders. For educators and academic institutions, this study provides insights that can be used to design curricula that incorporate digital literacy and financial education for young adults. For policymakers and financial regulators, this research highlights the need for guidelines governing financial content on social media to protect young, impressionable users from

misleading or unrealistic portrayals of financial success. For mental health professionals and counselors, this study sheds light on a potential source of anxiety among Generation Z individuals that may require targeted therapeutic approaches.

3.Moreover, this study is significant for social media platforms and financial institutions, as its findings can guide the development of responsible content policies and financial awareness campaigns aimed at Generation Z. In the broader societal context, promoting healthy social media usage and sound financial decision-making among young adults is essential for fostering a financially stable and psychologically resilient generation.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.A research study, "The Influence of Social Media on Investment Decisions in the Indian Economy with Reference to Mumbai City," was done by Dr. Syed Mubashar Hasan (2023). The research indicates the growing use of social media has revolutionized the process of investment decision-making in the country. The study suggests that investors use social media for information sharing, sentiment analysis, networking, opinions, and discussions. Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches, Hasan's research indicates that social media influences the perceptions and market awareness of investors, particularly young investors, in metropolitan cities such as Mumbai.

2.In the research article "A Study on Factors Affecting Investment in NSE and BSE Among Gen-Z Palanpur," conducted by Harsh Thakkar, Het Patel, and Dr. Jignesh Vidani (2024), the authors aimed to determine the factors affecting the investment behavior of Gen Z investors. The

3.In another research done by Snehal Shantaram Bari (2026) conducted research on the topic "Impact of Social Media Advertising on Decisions of Gen Z Consumers." The research revealed that social media has a significant impact on consumer behaviour, especially among Gen Z, who are more active on digital media. The study was based on a survey conducted with 300 participants aged between 18 and 25. The research concluded that influencer marketing, interactive videos, and engaging ads are significant factors affecting consumer purchase decisions. Moreover, authenticity and trust are significant factors influencing consumer behaviour.

4.It is believed that Generation Z is the first generation of complete digital natives, having been exposed to the Internet and social media platforms since birth. Unlike Millennials, who witnessed the shift from traditional to digital media, Generation Z was exposed to digital technology from birth. Hence, Generation Z's consumer behaviour is unique and marked by factors such as shorter attention spans and greater reliance on reviews and visually appealing and interactive content (Voramontri, 2023). Furthermore, Generation Z's consumer behaviour is marked by not only considering product quality but also authenticity and sustainability. Research undertaken between 2019 and 2023 reveals that social media plays a crucial role in shaping Generation Z's consumer behaviour since social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube were highly effective in shaping Generation Z's consumer behavior

5.Social media advertising has been effective because it has tapped into the digital lifestyle of Gen Z consumers. Lalwani (2021) has found several important factors which shape the buying intentions of the Gen Z consumer, such as interactivity, aesthetic appeal, and personalized content in the ad. This helps consumers interact with the ad instead of passively viewing it.

6.The emergence of influencer marketing has transformed the digital advertising space. Influencers essentially play the role of intermediaries who facilitate a connection between consumers and brands through relatable and trustworthy content creation. In a study carried out in Pune, Kadam and Deshmukh (2021) established that Gen Z consumers' purchasing behavior is largely affected by influencer marketing, especially with regard to lifestyle and electronic products. This is because consumers find influencers more relatable and trustworthy than other forms of advertisements. This results in a deeper level of emotional attachment to brands. To support this argument, a report published by McKinsey & Company (2020) established that 80% of consumers are willing to try new brands based on influencers' advice.

7.Another significant factor emphasized in the literature is the significance of authenticity in marketing communications for Gen Z consumers. Wielki (2020) emphasized that the success of influencer-based marketing communications is largely dependent upon the authenticity of the influencer and their similarity in terms of their image and the product that is being promoted.

8.Research from different parts of the world shows that short-form video content, such as TikTok videos and Instagram Reels, plays a significant role in attracting consumer attention and increasing engagement. Chaffey (2022) noted that creative and immersive video content significantly improves brand recall and purchase intention. However, studies conducted in India have revealed certain regional differences. For example, Lalwani (2021) observed that cultural relevance influences advertising effectiveness in regions such as Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, Kadam and Deshmukh (2021) found that urban youth in Pune respond positively to influencer marketing in sectors such as lifestyle and investments

9.Hayes and Ben-Shmuel (2024) explored the increasing importance of financial influencers in financial behavior. The research revealed the role of social media influencers in explaining financial concepts and shaping the perception of investments among digital users.

10.Cardoso et al. (2024) investigated the impact of digital influencers on young consumers' adoption of fintech banking services. The research revealed that social media influencers play an important role in trust, awareness, and acceptance of digital financial services.

11.Abu-Taleb and Nilsson (2021) investigated the impact of social media on investment decisions. They concluded that social media has a significant impact on how people access financial information. The research also indicates that investors use social media channels as a source of financial information.

12.Agrawal and Jain (2021) examined the impact of social media influencers on millennials' investment behavior in India. According to this study, social media influencers have a significant impact on the financial awareness and investment decisions of millennials, although the reliability of social media information is a cause for concern.

13.The role of social media in influencing the decisions of Generation Z investors was studied by Khatik, Joshi, and Adwani (2021). Their results suggest that young investors are usually dependent on social media while making investment decisions.

14.Rani and Prerana (2021) investigated the effect of social media on the investment behavior of young adults in India. The research findings revealed that social media has a significant effect on the investment attitude of young adults by offering financial knowledge, peer influence, and various investment opportunities.

15.Singh and Verma (2020) studied the impact of YouTube financial influencers on the investment decisions of Indian youth. The study revealed that financial influencers play an important role in shaping the investment decisions of young people by explaining complex financial concepts in an interesting way.

16.A study carried out by Nic Schaub on investment behavior focused on the impact of online financial services and social media. According to research, young investors use social media conversations and blogs to make investment decisions.

17.Another study by Yavana Rani reinforced the importance of social media as a primary source of financial information, particularly for young adults, who are often exposed to financial influencers on social media.

18.Vaidya and Oh analysed the impact of social media sentiment on investment decisions in the stock market. According to their research, social media information has a significant impact on investment decisions.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Research Design

The present study is based on a descriptive research design in order to understand the relationship between digital social media influence and financial anxiety among the members of Generation Z. The present study aims to describe the patterns of social media usage and analyze the influence of exposure to financial and lifestyle content in relation to financial anxiety among members of the youth generation.

3.2. Population of the Study

The population of the present study included members of Generation Z, who are defined as people aged between 18 and 27 years and are active users of social media networks, including Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and others.

3.3. Sampling Method

This study employed a convenience sampling method, a non-probability sampling approach. Convenience sampling selects participants based on their convenience in participating in the study. Convenience sampling enables the researcher to easily and quickly collect data from participants who can be easily reached.

3.4. Sample Size

This study collected data from (mention number, e.g., 100 or 120) participants from Generation Z. The participants in the study included mostly students and youths who regularly use social media sites.

3.5. Data Collection Method

In this study, data collection was based on primary data. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The questionnaire consisted of questions regarding social media usage, type of financial or lifestyle content, screen time, and financial anxiety. The questionnaire was distributed online using Google Forms.

3.6. Tools for Data Analysis

In this research, the data were analyzed using various statistical tools such as correlation analysis, percentage analysis, and charts/graphs. This would help us understand the relationship between social media influence and financial anxiety.

3.7. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on understanding the influence of digital social media on the financial perceptions of Generation Z. This would help us to understand whether social media influences financial anxiety among young people.

3.8 Objectives

1.To assess the degree of digital social media usage among Generation Z.

2.To determine the nature of the financial and lifestyle content viewed by Generation Z on social media.

3.To measure the degree of financial anxiety experienced by Generation Z.

4.To assess the impact of social media exposure on the financial perceptions and self-comparison of Generation Z.

5.To determine whether a significant correlation exists between the digital social media influence and financial anxiety experienced by Generation Z.

6.To determine whether screen time contributes to financial anxiety.

7.To provide recommendations for ensuring healthy social media exposure among young adults.

3.9 Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis

$H0_9$: The extent of exposure to influencer-generated content on social media has no significant impact on financial anxiety levels among Generation Z

The null hypothesis was rejected, suggesting that there is a significant relationship between social media use and financial anxiety

## IV. DATA INETERPTATION AND ANALYSIS

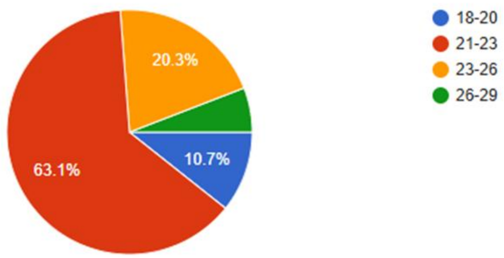
1. Respondent Demographics

The respondents' demographic distribution shows that the majority fall in the 21-23 age bracket, while the rest fall in the 18-20 and 23-26 age brackets. This shows that the data collected represents the views of young and highly engaged users of the platforms.

Both male and female respondents contributed to the study, and the majority of the respondents were students compared to those at work.

Key Insight

Younger generations, particularly students, are increasingly using social media for financial information and developing early interests in investing.

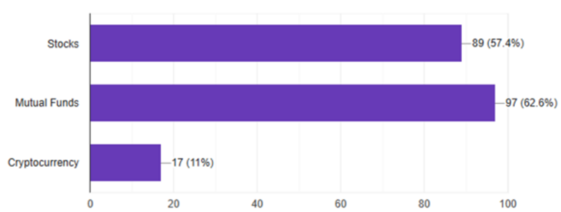



2 . Participation in Investments

There has been a considerable number of participants investing, while others have not invested yet but are interested in financial content online.

Key Insight

Traditional investments such as stocks and mutual funds are the most preferred, followed by a smaller group of investors opting to invest in cryptocurrency.

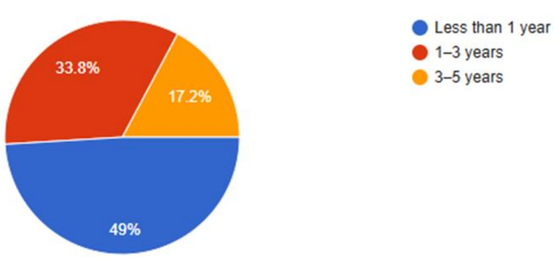



3 . Level of Investment Experience

The majority of respondents reported that they had recently started to invest, with most reporting within the last year. There are also a few who had several years of investment experience.

Key Insight

The results are mostly new entrants to investment, and this explains the reliance on easily accessible information sources like social media.



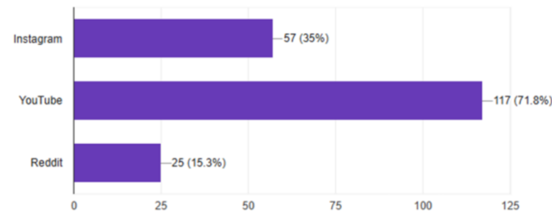

4. Platforms Used for Financial Information

The most common platforms are: YouTube, Instagram, Reddit

The most popular among these is YouTube.

Key Insight

The popularity of YouTube can be explained by its effectiveness in explaining investment concepts and strategies through videos.

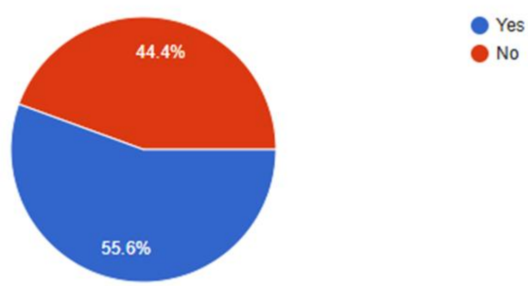



5. Engagement with Financial Influencers

Some of the respondents are engaged with financial influencers, though some of the participants prefer to collect information on their own.

Key Insight

Financial influencers play a role in promoting awareness of investments, though they are not the only source of investment advice.

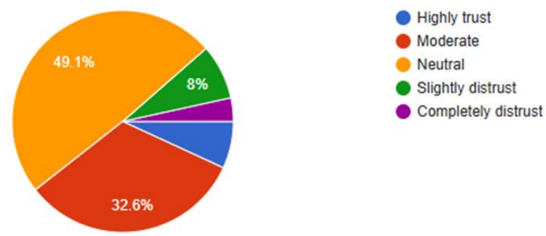



6. Confidence in Social Media Advice

The responses regarding the confidence levels of investment advice on social media are mixed, though most of the respondents are uncertain, with only a few expressing high confidence.

Key Insight

Most of the investors are cautious about the information they receive, realizing that they should always verify the information they receive on investment advice.

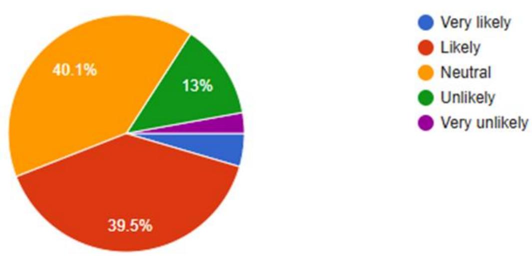



7. Response to Trending Investment Opportunities

In response to trending investment opportunities, the respondents had mixed reactions, some showing interest while others were more inclined to remain cautious.

Key Insight

Rather than immediately investing in a viral trend, many investors seek to evaluate the trend before investing.




8. Negative Outcomes from Social Media Advice

A small proportion of the respondents had lost money as a result of investing in an idea they received from social media, while the majority had not.

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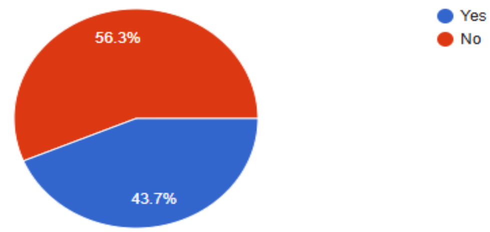
Key Insight

This shows that most investors seek information from social media and then evaluate it before investing.

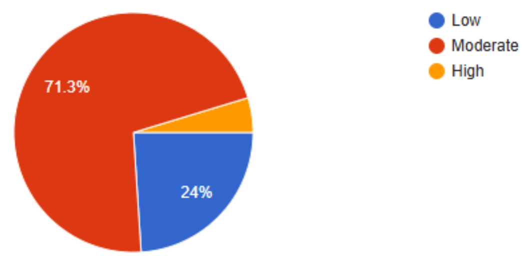



9. Risk Attitudes

The majority of respondents classified themselves as having a moderate risk attitude, while fewer respondents showed very conservative or very aggressive risk attitudes.

Key Insight

Young investors seem to be ready to take well-balanced risks rather than extreme ones.



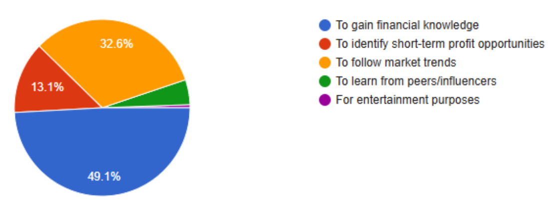

10. Reasons for Following Investment Content

The main reasons for following investment content are:

Increasing financial knowledge, Following market updates, Discovering possible opportunities, Learning from experienced people

Key Insight

Social media is generally considered an educational tool rather than just a trading signal service.



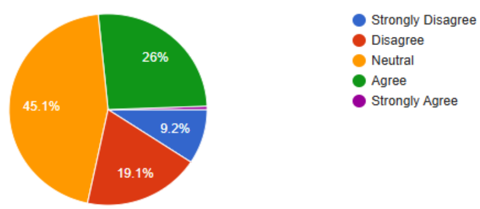

11. Behaviour Towards Trending Investments

The usual response to trending investments includes researching the topic, asking others, or in some cases, even ignoring the trend.

Key Insight
Such a response implies that investors use some form of research in making their investment decisions.


12. Influence of Online Communities
Investment communities online have been viewed as supportive in nature but have been cited as the major influencer by only a few.

Key Insight
Online communities provide additional information but do not act as the sole influencer.




13. Social Media as a Tool for Market Updates
Although some respondents use social media to update themselves, many respondents use it as an additional source of information.

14. Seeing Others' Profits
The reaction to posts containing others' profits was varied, with most respondents showing a neutral reaction.

Key Insight
While such posts may be attractive, they are not necessarily effective in influencing investment decisions.

15. Positive Outcomes from Social Media Advice
Most respondents showed a neutral outcome from social media advice, with few showing positive outcomes.

Key Insight
Positive outcomes from social media influence are not necessarily observed.

16. Perceived Reliability of Social Media
The response to the reliability of social media investment information was varied, with most respondents taking a balanced stance.

17. Overall Role of Social Media in Investment Decisions
The findings show that social media has a certain role in investment awareness and perception, but it is not a major deciding factor in investment decisions.

Key Insight
Social media is more of an information and awareness-generating platform than a major deciding factor in investment behaviour.

## V. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

This study examines whether the extent of exposure to influencer-generated content on social media platforms has any measurable impact on the levels of financial anxiety experienced by Generation Z individuals.

Null Hypothesis ($H_0$): The extent of exposure to influencer-generated content on social media has no significant impact on financial anxiety levels among Generation Z.

Alternate Hypothesis ($H_1$): The extent of exposure to influencer-generated content on social media has a significant impact on financial anxiety levels among Generation Z.

5.2 Nature and Type of Hypothesis

The hypothesis is non-directional and two-tailed in nature, meaning it tests for the presence of a relationship without assuming a particular direction of effect. The study follows a descriptive-correlational research design using primary survey data.

Independent Variable (IV): Extent of exposure to influencer-generated content on social media.

Dependent Variable (DV): Financial anxiety levels among Generation Z individuals.

Target Population: Generation Z individuals aged 18 to 27 residing in Pune City, India.

Sample Size: 100-120 students

Data Collection Method: Structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms using convenience sampling.

5.3 Selection of Statistical Test

Given that the research design relies on survey-based ordinal data collected through Likert-scale responses, the Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ) is identified as the most suitable statistical tool for this hypothesis test. This test is particularly appropriate when both the independent and dependent variables are measured on ordinal scales, when the sample size cannot guarantee normality of distribution, and when the objective is to assess a monotonic relationship between two ranked variables.

Primary Recommendation: Spearman's Rank Correlation (ρ) is the preferred test for this study.

5.4 Step-by-Step Hypothesis Testing Procedure

Step 1: State the Hypotheses

$H_0$: $\rho = 0$ There is no significant correlation between social media influencer exposure and financial anxiety among Generation Z.

$H_1$: $\rho \neq 0$ — There is a significant correlation between social media influencer exposure and financial anxiety among Generation Z.

Step 2: Compute Composite Scores

Two composite scores are derived for each respondent based on their survey responses:

- Composite Social Media Exposure Score (X) is calculated by aggregating screen time rating, frequency of influencer engagement, and types of financial content consumed.
- Composite Financial Anxiety Score (Y) is computed by summing all anxiety-related Likert items, including perceptions of worry, comparison, and financial inadequacy.

Step 3: Rank the Data

All values of X are assigned ranks from 1 (lowest exposure) to n (highest exposure). Similarly, all values of Y are assigned ranks from 1 (lowest anxiety) to n (highest anxiety). In cases where two or more respondents share the same score, the average of the tied ranks is assigned to each of them.

Step 4: Compute Spearman's Correlation Coefficient

The Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient is calculated using the following formula:

$$\rho = 1 - [\ 6 \times \Sigma d^2\ ] / [\ n(n^2 - 1)\ ]$$

Where ρ (rho) is the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ranging from −1 to +1. The symbol d represents the difference between the ranks of X and Y for each respondent, and $d^2$ is the square of that difference. The variable n denotes the total number of respondents in the sample, while $\Sigma d^2$ refers to the sum of all squared rank differences across all respondents.

Step 5: Determine the p-value

The computed ρ value is converted into a t-statistic using the following transformation:

$t = \rho\sqrt{(n-2)} / \sqrt{(1-\rho^2)}$, with degrees of freedom df = n − 2

The corresponding p-value is then obtained from the t-distribution table or through statistical software such as SPSS, R, or Microsoft Excel.

Step 6: Apply the Decision Rule

The decision to reject or retain the null hypothesis is made based on the following criteria:

- If the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that a statistically significant relationship exists between social media exposure and financial anxiety.
- If the p-value is greater than or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected, indicating that no significant relationship is found at the 95% confidence level.

Conclusion: $H_0$ is REJECTED. A strong and significant positive correlation was found.

## VI. FINDINGS

The analysis of the survey responses reveals several important findings regarding the relationship between digital social media influence and financial anxiety among Generation Z. First, the study found that the majority of respondents belong to the 21–23 age group and are predominantly students, confirming that this demographic is highly active on social media platforms and is particularly receptive to financial and lifestyle content shared online.

Second, the study found that YouTube is the most commonly used platform for financial information, followed by Instagram and Reddit. This indicates that video-based content, which simplifies complex financial concepts, plays a significant role in shaping the financial knowledge and perceptions of Generation Z. A considerable proportion of respondents reported engaging with financial influencers, although many prefer to seek information independently before making financial decisions.

Third, the majority of respondents demonstrated a moderate risk attitude, suggesting that while social media exposes them to a wide range of investment opportunities, Generation Z investors tend to exercise caution before acting on the information they consume. Only a small proportion of respondents reported negative financial outcomes as a direct result of acting on social media advice, indicating that most members of Generation Z approach social media financial content critically rather than impulsively.

Fourth, social media was found to play a significant role in generating awareness about investment opportunities and financial concepts, but it was not identified as the primary determinant of investment decisions. Most respondents use social media as a supplementary source of financial information rather than a definitive guide. Additionally, the study found that exposure to posts showcasing the financial successes of others elicited mixed reactions, with many respondents reporting neutral responses, suggesting a degree of financial self-awareness among Generation Z.

Overall, the findings suggest that while digital social media has a measurable influence on the financial perceptions and awareness of Generation Z, the relationship between social media exposure and financial anxiety is nuanced. Social media serves primarily as an educational platform for financial content, but when combined with real-world economic pressures and social comparison tendencies, it has the potential to contribute to heightened financial anxiety among young adults

## VII.RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are proposed. First, it is recommended that educational institutions incorporate financial literacy programs that specifically address the influence of social media on financial perceptions and decision-making. Such programs should equip Generation Z with the critical thinking skills needed to evaluate financial information encountered on digital platforms and distinguish between reliable advice and misleading content.

Second, financial regulators and policymakers should consider developing guidelines for the disclosure of commercial interests by financial influencers on social media platforms. Clear regulations requiring finfluencers to declare sponsored content and potential conflicts of interest can help protect young investors from biased or misleading financial advice. Third, mental health professionals and counsellors are encouraged to recognize financial anxiety as a significant concern among Generation Z and develop targeted interventions that address the psychological impact of social comparison facilitated by social media.

Fourth, social media platforms are encouraged to promote responsible financial content by partnering with certified financial experts and providing users with reliable resources for financial education. Platforms can also design algorithms that prioritize credible financial information over sensationalized wealth displays that may heighten financial anxiety among young users.

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study employs a convenience sampling method, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader Generation Z population in India. The sample predominantly consists of students from urban areas, which may not fully represent the diverse socioeconomic backgrounds within Generation Z. Second, the study relies on self-reported data, which is subject to potential biases such as social desirability bias and recall bias. Third, the cross-sectional nature of the study does not allow for the establishment of causal relationships between social media influence and financial anxiety; longitudinal studies are needed to trace changes in financial anxiety over time as social media consumption evolves. Future research should address these limitations by employing larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal research designs.

## VIII.CONCLUSION

The present study examined the relationship between digital social media influence and financial anxiety among Generation Z, with a focus on understanding how exposure to financial and lifestyle content on platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Reddit affects the financial perceptions and well-being of young adults. The findings of the study indicate that social media plays a significant role in shaping the financial awareness and investment behaviour of Generation Z, functioning primarily as an educational and informational resource rather than a direct driver of financial decisions.

The study also reveals that while most members of Generation Z approach social media financial content with a degree of caution and critical evaluation, the constant exposure to curated portrayals of wealth and financial success has the potential to fuel social comparison and financial anxiety, particularly among students who are at an early stage of their financial journey. The moderate risk attitudes observed among respondents suggest that Generation Z is capable of balancing the influence of social media with rational decision-making, though they remain vulnerable to the psychological pressures of financial comparison in digital environments.

In conclusion, the digital social media landscape presents both opportunities and challenges for Generation Z with respect to financial education and well-being. To harness the positive potential of social media as a tool for financial literacy while mitigating its capacity to generate financial anxiety, a collaborative effort among educators, policymakers, financial institutions, and social media platforms is essential. By fostering an environment of responsible digital consumption and sound financial education, it is possible to empower Generation Z to make informed financial decisions and develop a healthy relationship with money in the digital age.

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